

# Is There Such a Thing as a "Just War" in the Modern World?

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To justify the State of Israel's current indiscriminate killing of women and children in Gaza, the Israeli regime's supporters generally put forward a one-line explanation: "Israel has a right to defend itself." This simple-minded incantation is deployed as if it is the final word. It is meant to communicate this idea: "some people from Gaza killed some Israeli citizens in October 2023. Therefore, the Israeli state can morally and legally kill any person in Gaza indiscriminately."

Women and children are being starved as a result of Israel's bombing campaign? It doesn't matter because "Israel has a right to defend itself." Many of the people targeted had nothing to do with the October 2023 attack? It doesn't matter because "Israel has a right to defend itself."

In modern warfare, where modern weaponry means entire cities are leveled and whole populations can be wiped off the map, this sort of thinking is despicable. Tel Aviv is hardly alone in this sort of thinking, however. Those who *fund* the Israeli carpet bombing—the American state—has a long history of behaving this way. In Japan, Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq, Americans routinely targeted noncombatants relying on lazy claims that amount to little more than saying that Japanese children deserved to be firebombed because they were born Japanese. Did those children have anything to do with the attack on Pearl Harbor? It doesn't matter because "America has a right to defend itself."

As the historian Ralph Raico points out in his lecture "The World at War," Americans had not yet become so morally depraved before the Second World War. Referring to American glee over the firebombing of Tokyo, which Robert McNamara says may have killed 100,000 Japanese civilians in one night, Raico says:

*I can't imagine anyone in America in 1914 who would have greeted with joy the destruction of a Japanese city and the death of a hundred thousand people. You ask anybody in America. You ask Theodore Roosevelt himself! That old sissy probably would faint. You ask anybody, "Would you will the total annihilation of a Japanese city?" "What are you talking about? Are you crazy? What do you mean annihilation of a city? What are we, Tamerlane? What are we, Genghis Khan?"*

In the twenty-first century, however, it doesn't matter how many cities we obliterate because we have apparently moved beyond the idea of morality in war. There are no limits because "Israel/America has a right to defend itself."

In the past, however, more civilized Europeans attempted in a variety of ways to restrain states during wars. Ideologically and philosophically, one of the more influential ideals for conduct in warfare has been so-called Just War Theory. One notable aspect of Just War Theory is that it limits which conflicts can be considered morally defensible while also limiting the behavior of states while fighting a "just war." Many of the details behind Just War Theory vary over time, but International Relations scholar Vincent Ferrara summarizes it this way:

- 1. A just war can only be waged as a last resort. All non-violent options must be exhausted before the use of force can be justified.*
- 2. A war is just only if it is waged by a legitimate authority. Even just causes cannot be served by actions taken by individuals or groups who do not constitute an authority sanctioned by whatever the society and outsiders to the society deem legitimate.*
- 3. A just war can only be fought to redress a wrong suffered. For example, self-defense against an armed attack is always considered to be a just*

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cause (although the justice of the cause is not sufficient—see the next point). Further, a just war can only be fought with “right” intentions: the only permissible objective of a just war is to redress the injury.

4. A war can only be just if it is fought with a reasonable chance of success. Deaths and injury incurred in a hopeless cause are not morally justifiable.
5. The ultimate goal of a just war is to re-establish peace. More specifically, the peace established after the war must be preferable to the peace that would have prevailed if the war had not been fought.
6. The violence used in the war must be proportional to the injury suffered. States are prohibited from using force not necessary to attain the limited objective of addressing the injury suffered.
7. The weapons used in war must discriminate between combatants and non-combatants. Civilians are never permissible targets of war, and every effort must be taken to avoid killing civilians. The deaths of civilians are justified only if they are unavoidable victims of a deliberate attack on a military target.

It is also notable that many advocates of Just War Theory state that *all* of these conditions must be met for a war to be just. That is, once “our side” violates even *one* of these conditions, “our side” has given up its moral legitimacy as a belligerent.

### **Does Anyone Actually Care about Just War Theory?**

Looking over this rather extensive list, many will say to themselves: “wow that’s a long list. In fact, it’s much too long, and if we stuck to that list virtually no war would be considered a just war.”

That, of course, is the idea. Just War Theory strongly suggests that nearly modern wars are conducted in a way that is morally indefensible.

Does anyone actually care about Just War Theory, though? In an era when one’s morality is more dictated by nationalism and political ideology, rather than by one’s religious convictions, we find that not even Christians seem to take this seriously.

In spite of the fact that, historically speaking, Just War Theory was central to Christian political thinking, many modern Christians are likely to regard it as good “in theory” but not really worth the risk if it means “our side” is less likely to win.

On Radio Rothbard this week, Eric Sammons, the editor-in-chief of the longstanding Catholic magazine *Crisis*, joins me to discuss the state of foreign-policy thinking among Catholics. Sammons explains how, even though Just War Theory continues to be explicitly endorsed by the Catholic hierarchy, the Catholic rank and file either doesn’t know about it, or doesn’t care.

As Sammons explains, Catholics have become beholden to modern political ideologies that are quite in conflict with the historical and traditional political ideals of their own church.

Even the old Catholic Left, which had been so reliably antiwar during the mid-twentieth century, as largely disappeared as the American Left doubled down on supporting whatever new war Obama, Biden, and Clinton foisted upon the American people, and on Washington’s foreign victims.

As Sammons notes, however, there is reason for hope. Among conservative Catholics there is a rising skepticism of the regime’s prowar narratives and a decided lack of enthusiasm about the state’s ongoing calls for ever more support for American intervention across the globe. Many younger Christians appear to be less gullible than their parents and grandparents who simply deferred to supporting whatever the American state said was the next great military crusade.

# Nullification 101: Five Core Principles You Need to Know

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Nullification is THE rightful remedy for all unconstitutional acts – usurpations of power. Understanding the five core principles that make up its foundation is essential to getting back on the path to the Constitution and liberty.

## 1. POWER FROM THE PEOPLE

Government is merely their agent.

This foundational principle of the American system is simple but powerful: all government power originates from the people. George Mason made this clear in the *Virginia Declaration of Rights*, emphasizing that government officials are not masters but servants:

*"That all power is vested in, and consequently derived from, the people; that magistrates are their trustees and servants and at all times amenable to them."*

This principle was carried forward to the framing and ratification of the Constitution, with many of the leading founders citing it as essential. James Wilson put it plainly:

*"The truth is, that, in our governments, the supreme, absolute, and uncontrollable power remains in the people."*

Wilson's words highlight that no government entity, law, or official stands above the people. Government exists because the people created it – and they can restrain or alter it as necessary. St. George Tucker underscored this point, rejecting any notion of government as master:

*"It being one of the great fundamental principles of the American governments, that the people are the sovereign, and those who administer the government their agents, and servants, not their kings and masters."*

This wasn't just theory – it was the backbone of the Constitution itself. First Chief Justice John Jay explained that the Constitution is essentially a set of instructions for agents hired to manage a portion of the people's affairs, always under the people's oversight:

*"The Constitution only serves to point out that part of the people's business, which they think proper by it to refer to the management of the persons therein designated – those persons are to receive that business to manage, not for themselves, and as their own, but as agents and overseers for the people to whom they are constantly responsible, and by whom only they are to be appointed."*

At its core, this principle means that government is authorized to act only within the powers the people have delegated to it through their Constitution.

## 2. CONSTITUTIONAL SUPREMACY

The Constitution – not the government – is supreme.

A government delegated power by the people must operate within the boundaries the people have established. In the American system, those boundaries are defined by the Constitution, which stands above all laws, policies, and government actions.

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Thomas Jefferson made this point clear in the *Kentucky Resolutions of 1798*, warning of the dangers if the government were allowed to determine the scope of its own powers:

*"The Government created by this compact was not made the exclusive or final judge of the extent of the powers delegated to itself; since that would have made its discretion, and not the constitution, the measure of its powers."*

Jefferson warned that allowing government to judge its own powers would make constitutional restraints meaningless, replacing constitutional supremacy with arbitrary decisions based on the government's own discretion.

Chief Justice John Marshall reaffirmed this principle in *Marbury v. Madison*, emphasizing that it is the Constitution – not any government official or body – that holds ultimate authority:

*"In declaring what shall be the supreme law of the land, the constitution itself is first mentioned; and not the laws of the United States generally, but those only which shall be made in pursuance of the constitution, have that rank."*

Marshall's words highlight that not all laws are automatically valid – only those consistent with the Constitution carry legitimate authority. Anything beyond those delegated powers is null and void, no matter how popular, convenient, or widely accepted it may be.

*"Thus, the particular phraseology of the constitution of the United States confirms and strengthens the principle, supposed to be essential to all written constitutions, that a law repugnant to the constitution is void; and that courts, as well as other departments, are bound by that instrument."*

In short, no branch of government is supreme. The Constitution is. Without adherence to this principle, government power becomes unlimited, and the very purpose of having a written Constitution is lost.

### 3. VOID

All acts that go beyond the limits of the constitution are null and void.

This principle was understood long before the Constitution for the United States was written. In 1761, James Otis laid the groundwork regarding the unwritten British Constitution during his famous speech against the writs of assistance:

*"An act against the constitution is void."*

Otis's statement was more than a legal argument – it was a direct challenge to arbitrary power, one of the so-called grievances in the Declaration of Independence. If the government could impose measures beyond its authority without consequence, the concept of a constitution would be meaningless.

Thomas Jefferson carried this principle forward in 1774, emphasizing that British parliamentary acts violating rights weren't just unjust or bad policy – they held no lawful authority.

*"But that we do not point out to his majesty the injustice of these acts, with intent to rest on that principle the cause of their nullity; but to shew that experience confirms the propriety of those political principles which exempt us from the jurisdiction of the British parliament."*

Jefferson's words highlight that unconstitutional acts don't become legitimate simply because they are passed or enforced. Their lack of lawful foundation renders them empty of authority from the start.

*"The true ground on which we declare these acts void is, that the British parliament has no right to exercise authority over us."*

Alexander Hamilton reinforced this idea in *Federalist No. 78*, making clear that any act exceeding delegated authority is fundamentally invalid.

*"There is no position which depends on clearer principles, than that every act of a delegated authority, contrary to the tenor of the commission under which it is exercised, is void. No legislative act, therefore, contrary to the Constitution, can be valid."*

Hamilton's next point is straightforward: allowing unconstitutional acts to stand would invert the entire system, placing government above the people it was created to serve within defined limits.

*"To deny this, would be to affirm, that the deputy is greater than his principal; that the servant is above his master; that the representatives of the people are superior to the people themselves; that men acting by virtue of powers, may do not only what their powers do not authorize, but what they forbid."*

St. George Tucker echoed this sentiment, stressing that laws outside constitutional bounds are not laws at all.

*"Acts of congress to be binding, must be made pursuant to the constitution; otherwise they are not laws, but a mere nullity; or what is worse, acts of usurpation."*

Tucker's use of the term "usurpation" underscores the severity – these are not mere mistakes but outright seizures of power never granted.

Jefferson, writing again in 1798, put it succinctly – reminding that violations of constitutional limits are not just improper, but carry no legal weight whatsoever.

*"Whensoever the General Government assumes undelegated powers, its acts are unauthoritative, void, and of no force."*

In short, unconstitutional acts carry no legitimate authority. Recognizing them as void is essential to preserving the limits of government power and protecting liberty.

#### 4. DISOBEY

Words on paper don't enforce themselves. Never did. And never will.

Recognizing that unconstitutional acts are void is only part of the equation. If those acts are treated as valid despite being a nullity, constitutional limits become meaningless. Identifying a usurpation as void is important – but without action beyond mere acknowledgment, the Constitution's boundaries are easily ignored.

Discussing the Supremacy Clause, Alexander Hamilton made this point in *Federalist No. 33*, explaining that unconstitutional acts should not be accepted as law simply because they are declared as such.

*"But it will not follow from this doctrine that acts of the large society which are NOT PURSUANT to its constitutional powers, but which are invasions of the residuary authorities of the smaller societies, will become the supreme law of the land."*

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Hamilton's words then underscore the need for more than mere verbal opposition. Calling something a usurpation means nothing if it is allowed to stand unchallenged.

*"These will be merely acts of usurpation, and will deserve to be treated as such."*

This principle wasn't new to the founding generation. Algernon Sidney, whose writings greatly influenced American revolutionary thought, put it succinctly in *Discourses Concerning Government* (1680):

*"That which is not just is not law, and that which is not law ought not to be obeyed."*

Sidney's point is simple – laws that overstep rightful authority are not legitimate and should not be obeyed.

Patrick Henry embodied this principle when challenging the Stamp Act of 1765. He first took the position that the internal taxation of the Stamp Act was *"illegal, unconstitutional and unjust."*

But rather than merely declaring it unconstitutional, he insisted that Virginians should not accept its authority.

*"The inhabitants of this Colony are not bound to yield Obedience to any Law or Ordinance whatever, designed to impose any Taxation whatsoever upon them, other than the Laws or Ordinances of the General Assembly aforesaid."*

The First Continental Congress echoed this sentiment in its *Declaration and Resolves* (1774), firmly rejecting Parliament's oppressive measures:

*"To these grievous acts and measures Americans cannot submit."*

Ultimately, recognizing unconstitutional acts as void demands more than words – it requires the courage to treat them as such by refusing to comply with them in practice.

## 5. DUTY BOUND

It is not just a right, or a good idea – it is a duty to oppose unconstitutional acts.

St. George Tucker made this responsibility unmistakably clear:

*"Acts of congress to be binding, must be made pursuant to the constitution; otherwise they are not laws, but a mere nullity; or what is worse, acts of usurpation. The people are not only not bound by them, but the several departments and officers of the governments, both federal and state, are **bound by oath to oppose them**"*

Tucker's words highlight a hard truth: complying with unconstitutional acts isn't just misguided – it's a betrayal of the constitutional oath.

Those who take the oath are obligated to actively resist, not enforce or passively comply with, federal usurpations. Allowing unconstitutional acts to stand makes them complicit in destroying the very system they swore to uphold.

*"For, being bound by oath to support the constitution, they must violate that oath, whenever they give their sanction, by obedience, or otherwise, to any unconstitutional act of any department of the government."*

James Madison echoed this principle in the *Virginia Resolutions of 1798*, stressing that when the federal government exercises powers it was never granted, opposition is not a choice but a duty.

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*"In case of a deliberate, palpable and dangerous exercise of other powers not granted by the said compact, the states who are parties there-to have the right, and are in duty bound, to interpose for arresting the progress of the evil, and for maintaining within their respective limits, the authorities, rights and liberties appertaining to them."*

Madison's use of *duty bound* is no accident – it affirms that states, bound by oath to the Constitution, must act as a line of defense against federal overreach.

Sitting back and hoping things improve is not an option.

Samuel Adams, writing as *Candidus* in 1771 took this obligation even further, making clear that defending liberty isn't reserved for just politicians or other government officials – it's everyone's duty:

*"The liberties of our Country, the freedom of our civil constitution are worth defending at all hazards: And it is our duty to defend them against all attacks."*

Adams understood that liberty doesn't preserve itself. When attacked – whether by foreign enemies or domestic usurpers – it must be actively defended.

Thomas Jefferson summed it up bluntly in his draft of the *Kentucky Resolutions*. Nullification isn't just a tool that should be tried later after everything else fails. It's THE remedy for all unconstitutional acts.

*"Where powers are assumed which have not been delegated, a nullification of the act is the rightful remedy."*

#### **THE KEY**

Nullification isn't just a historical concept – it's **the rightful remedy** for all unconstitutional acts.

The Founders consistently affirmed that the people hold ultimate authority and that governments must stay within their delegated powers. When they don't, it's not just a right – but a duty – to stop them.

To wrap it up, nullification rests on five essential principles:

- Power comes from the people – Government is nothing more than their agent
- The Constitution is supreme – Not the government, not the courts, not just any federal law
- Unconstitutional acts are void – They carry no legitimate authority, whether government agrees, or not
- Words on paper aren't enough – Limits on power mean nothing unless people are willing to treat unconstitutional acts as void and refuse to comply with them.
- It's not just a right – it's a duty to nullify usurpations of power.

Understanding these principles isn't just about knowing history – it's the key to reclaiming our own Constitution and our own liberty today.

# Another Blackwater? Nearly 100 U.S. mercenaries are in Gaza right now

Armed to the teeth with M4 rifles and Glock pistols and pockets stuffed with their \$10,000 advance plus some, 96 former U.S. special forces veterans are currently stationed in Gaza.

These mercenaries have been hired by UG Solutions, a North Carolina based military contractor, to patrol the intersection that Israel used to separate the north from the south of Gaza. What the Occupation called the "Netzarim Corridor" split Gaza with a fortified wide road to re-supply weapons and tanks as well as providing a vantage point to launch attacks on both the north and the south. Named after the settler encampment in the same area from 1975-2005, the area was once again made into a violent and deadly zone. After the occupation forces withdrew from the intersection, the decomposing bodies and skeletal remains of Palestinian people were found.

In a recruiting email from UG Solutions, they describe the primary purpose of the soldiers as "internal vehicle checkpoint management and vehicle inspection." They claim to be searching for weapons moving in Gaza, of course only on Palestinians, not their or their colleagues' own American and Israeli guns, nor those of the Israeli occupation forces (IOF.) We know this means that these soldiers are doing the work of the occupation forces. Like the checkpoints that slice into the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem, these armed and oppressive checkpoints aim to terrorize Palestinians, securitize their land, and provide outposts for attacks. As the ceasefire unfolds in stages, all eyes should be on these checkpoints to ensure all soldiers are removed, American or Israeli.

The images of these mercenaries, being paid a minimum of \$1,100 a day, standing with their sunglasses and rifles next to Palestinians trying to travel in their own land is infuriating. But it's also revealing. American boots have been on the ground in Gaza many times over the past 15 months of the accelerated genocide, and certainly before that. You might recall the since deleted photograph accidentally posted by the White House's Instagram account that revealed the high-level U.S. Delta Squad were in Gaza, or when American forces assisted the occupation by committing a heinous massacre in Nuseirat refugee camp, killing at least 300 Palestinians and wounding 1,000 more. Not to mention the many, many Americans in the IOF – either settlers or enthusiastic killers travelling from the US – who have had their hand in committing genocide, perhaps recording a video celebrating themselves blowing up a mosque or parading in their victims' undergarments, before returning to the United States – if not after taking a brief vacation to Dubai or Brazil first.

This is not the first time that U.S. private mercenaries have been hired to provide assistance to U.S. military invasions. Blackwater, a private mercenary company also headquartered in North Carolina, was hired to send U.S. mercenaries to both Afghanistan and Iraq shortly after the U.S. invasions. Between 2001 and 2007, Blackwater received \$1 billion in U.S. government contracts. On September 16 2007, Blackwater mercenaries massacred 17 Iraqi civilians, aged between 9 and 77, and wounded more than 30 people in Nisour Square, Baghdad. Four Blackwater mercenaries were convicted of their murders: Dustin Heard, Evan Liberty, Nicholas Slatten, and Paul Slough. Despite the global outrage, Blackwater CEO, Erik Prince, maintained that they acted "appropriately" and, in his first term, Trump pardoned all of the killers.

The Nisour Square massacre is but one example of the violence of Blackwater in Iraq. Between 2005 and 2007, U.S. mercenaries attacked Iraqi civilians at least 195 times. The actions of Blackwater employees revealed in the WikiLeaks' War Logs uncover that these were not only random acts of violence but how the private soldiers were acting in coordination with the U.S. military themselves. Blackwater is but one of the many companies like it exerted imperialist violence on behalf of the U.S. empire. The U.S. government turned to using privatized militaries to outsource accountability and actions, often opting for private contractors in the years after they officially withdrew from countries, or in places where they wanted a presence but fewer U.S. soldiers.

No matter how officials spin it, the presence of U.S. mercenaries in Gaza reveals continued direct American involvement and stake in the genocide of the Palestinian people. These mercenaries fulfill a role, free from scrutiny, that neither the U.S. military nor Israeli occupation forces could with the same guns and boots but different logos. These soldiers, whether it's the IOF, Blackwater, U.S. military, or UG Solutions, only mean violence for the Palestinian people. The continuation of using private mercenaries reflects the same tactics of unaccountability, dehumanization and callous disregard for Palestinian lives that characterizes U.S. foreign policy in the region. We need to make more noise about UG Solutions. They cannot be allowed to silently swoop into Gaza, commit atrocities, and leave pardoned – they cannot be another Blackwater.

Original article: Women for Peace



Speech on the North Atlantic Treaty, by Sen. Robert A. Taft (R-OH)

Senator Robert Taft was son of President/Chief Justice of the United States William Howard Taft. He was Known as "Mr. Republican," and was leader of the post-WWI and WWII non-interventionist populist foreign and domestic policy opposition to FDR's New Deal and Harry Truman's Fair Deal. They were consistently non-interventionist and opposed entering World War II, a position exemplified by the America First Committee. Later, most opposed U.S. entry into NATO and intervention in the Korean War. In addition to being staunch opponents of war and militarism, the Old Right populists of the postwar period had a rugged and near-libertarian honesty in domestic affairs as well.

He was mentor and role model for Congressman Ron Paul.

In his book, *A Foreign Policy for Americans*, Taft stated that "Fundamentally, I believe the ultimate purpose of our foreign policy must be to protect the liberty of the people of the United States. The American Revolution was fought to establish a nation 'conceived in liberty.' That liberty has been defended in many wars since that day. That liberty has enabled our people to increase steadily their material welfare and their spiritual freedom."

*A Foreign Policy for Americans*, by Robert Taft

Ron Paul remains our defender of the republic, a statesman of unblemished character and principled judgment. The twelve-term congressman has for decades courageously spoken out for an American foreign policy based upon a strong national defense of the essential core principles of liberty and justice as established by the Framers, a defense of the territorial integrity of the United States and its national borders.

Both Taft and Paul knew that Peace, prudential diplomacy, free international trade and commerce, and the free exchange of ideas are the key elements to a constitutional foreign policy.

Ron Paul remains first and foremost a realist. America is financially bankrupt due to decades of reckless, irresponsible fiscal and monetary policies pursued by the Fed, the Congress, and the Executive branch of the state. Paul's measured conservative program of strategic disengagement from the unconstitutional pre-emptive wars of the past two decades, coupled with a serious analytical reassessment of the imperial over-reach of 900 military bases in 130 nations, is the only wise course dictated by this unsustainable debt situation.

The American people know the bitter tragedy of war. They are tired of being lied to about these futile conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Libya, Iran and Syria. It is their sons and daughters, husbands and wives, who were seriously maimed, irreparably disabled, and needlessly killed, never to return physically or psychologically intact as they were when they marched off to these egregious follies.

*A Foreign Policy of Freedom: Peace, Commerce, and Honest Friendship*, by Ron Paul

Ron Paul remains the most decisive, authoritative, and substantive consistent voice on the crucial national security issues facing our nation.

Here are Senator Robert Taft's prescient remarks concerning why he opposed NATO:

...Why did I vote against the Atlantic Pact? I wanted to vote for it-at least I wanted to vote to let Russia know that if she attacked western Europe, the United States would be in the war. I believe that would be a deterrent to war... We issued just this warning in the Monroe Doctrine, and though we were a much less powerful nation, it prevented aggression against Central and South America. That was only a President's message to Congress, and there were no treaty obligations, and no arms for other nations. But it was one of the most effective peace measures in the history of the world. I would favor a Monroe Doctrine for western Europe.

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But the Atlantic Pact goes much further. It obligates us to go to war if at any time during the next 20 years anyone makes an armed attack on any of the 12 nations. Under the Monroe Doctrine we could change our policy at any time. We could judge whether perhaps one of the countries had given cause for the attack. Only Congress could declare a war in pursuance of the doctrine. Under the new pact the President can take us into war without Congress. But, above all the treaty is a part of a much larger program by which we arm all these nations against Russia... A joint military program has already been made... It thus becomes an offensive and defensive military alliance against Russia. I believe our foreign policy should be aimed primarily at security and peace, and I believe such an alliance is more likely to produce war than peace. A third world war would be the greatest tragedy the world has ever suffered. Even if we won the war, we this time would probably suffer tremendous destruction, our economic system would be crippled, and we would lose our liberties and free system just as the Second World War destroyed the free systems of Europe. It might easily destroy civilization on this earth...

There is another consideration. If we undertake to arm all the nations around Russia from Norway on the north to Turkey on the south, and Russia sees itself ringed about gradually by so-called defensive arms from Norway and Denmark to Turkey and Greece, it may form a different opinion. It may decide that the arming of western Europe, regardless of its present purpose, looks to an attack upon Russia. Its view may be unreasonable, and I think it is. But from the Russian standpoint it may not seem unreasonable. They may well decide that if war is the certain result, that war might better occur now rather than after the arming of Europe is completed...

How would we feel if Russia undertook to arm a country on our border; Mexico, for instance?

Furthermore, can we afford this new project of foreign assistance? I think I am as much against Communist aggression as anyone, both at home and abroad; certainly more than a State Department which has let the Communists overrun all of China... But we can't let them scare us into bankruptcy and the surrender of all liberty, or let them determine our foreign policies. We are already spending \$15,000,000,000 on our armed forces and have the most powerful Air Force in the world and the only atomic bomb. That, and our determination to go to war if Europe is attacked, ought to be sufficient to deter an attack by armed force.

We are spending \$7,000,000,000 a year on economic aid to build up those countries to a condition of prosperity where communism cannot make internal progress. Shall we start another project whose cost is incalculable, at the very time when we have a deficit of 1,800,000,000 dollars and a prospective deficit of three to five billion? The one essential defense against communism is to keep this country financially and economically sound. If the President is unwilling to recommend more taxes for fear of creating a depression, then we must have reached the limit of our taxpaying ability and we ought not to start a new and unnecessary building project...

But, finally, I believe there is only one real hope of peace in the world to come—an association of nations binding itself to abide by a law governing nations and administered by a court of legal justice. Such a judicial finding must not be subject to veto by any nation and there must be an international force to enforce the court's decree. Such a plan can only succeed if the public opinion of the world is educated to insist on the enforcement of justice.

The United Nations looks in this direction but it can be improved and should be. This pact might have set up such a system between the nations of western Europe. It unfortunately did not do so. We should undertake to make it a model to which the United Nations may later conform. But as set up, it is a step backward—a military alliance of the old type where we have to come to each others' assistance no matter who is to blame, and with ourselves the judges of the law.

# Norway's Nonviolent Resistance in WWII: The Power of a Paperclip, Part 1

by Wendy McElroy



The 1942 Norsk (Norwegian) teachers' resistance is one of the most successful campaigns of nonviolent defiance waged against the Nazis during World War II. About 12,000 to 14,000 strong, the teachers acted with unusual cohesion and courage. But the movement was not remarkable primarily for the extreme heroism it displayed; many resistance movements of the time showed equal courage. The teachers' resistance is incredible because the resisters were average people who did not aspire to heroism. These ordinary people were simply unwilling to comply with unjust laws, especially when the laws damaged children. Without violence or expressions of hatred, a large and influential segment of society said "no" to cooperating with evil. The teachers' resistance shows what can happen when average people disobey rather than violate their consciences.

## The resistance begins

The Nazis and their collaborators took all resistance seriously, of course, including nonviolence. It did not matter if the resistance was expressed in minor ways. For example, after pins and badges with national symbols were banned, Norwegians on the street and students in classrooms wore paperclips in their lapels or linked together as jewelry; the paperclips signified the unity of Norwegians against Nazism. Wearing a paperclip was soon outlawed, and teachers were ordered to search their students for the pieces of criminally bent metal. One of the resistance leaders, a schoolteacher named Haakon Holmboe, later explained, "What was done often seemed ridiculous, but it had the effect of uniting all the opposition forces." Eventually, the Nazi backlash that started over such small matters as a paperclip would lead to the death of schoolteachers.

Norway had wanted to remain officially neutral during World War II as they had done during World War I. The public feeling was anti-German, but Norway was also self-consciously peaceful, with a strong pacifist presence through popular organizations such as Folkereising mot krig — the Norwegian section of War Resisters' International. Indeed, Norway still prides itself as being "the peace nation" that bestows a Nobel Peace Prize every year.

Germany needed Norway's ice-free harbors to protect such shipping and to exert its control over the North Atlantic.

Geography made Norway's invasion inevitable, however. The British and French had mined the Norwegian coast to disrupt iron ore shipments from Sweden that were vital to the German war effort. Germany needed Norway's ice-free harbors to protect such shipping and to exert its control over the North Atlantic. On April 9, 1940, Germany invaded. Norway gave a conventional military response, assisted by the British and French. But the outcome was a foregone conclusion. Overwhelmed, Norway surrendered on June 10, and Germany's five-year occupation began. Nazi envoys and their collaborators didn't speak of occupation, of course. The German army was there to protect Norway's neutrality against British-Franco aggression, they explained. The explanation failed to draw Norwegian applause or gratitude.

## The rise of Quisling

After a few missteps on his part, the Nazi-puppet Vidkun Quisling became the face of power in Norway. Quisling was a Norwegian politician who had formed a fascist party called Nasjonal Samling (National Gathering) in 1933. A devout Nazi, Quisling had met with Hitler personally and gained Dur Führer's official support. Quisling wasn't the Germans' first choice, however. They had hoped to capture King Haakon VII and the Norwegian parliament in order to give the occupation a patina of legitimacy; then, the Germans could replace the government with their own men. The king and the parliament foiled this plan by escaping to London, where they formed a government-in-exile. Next, the ship carrying the Nazi's chosen replacement government sank en route. Quisling became the best alternative still standing.

The best for Germany, that is. The Norwegian people viewed Quisling as a traitor and a German mouthpiece. The depth of public anger toward him can be judged by the fact that in 1945, the "peace nation" sentenced him to death by firing squad for high treason. Since WWII, the word "Quisling" has been a synonym for "a traitor who collaborates with the enemy."

Most Norwegians didn't want to obey the Germans or Quisling, but they were not prepared for an occupation.

Most Norwegians didn't want to obey the Germans or Quisling, but they were not psychologically or otherwise prepared for an occupation. They probably hoped for life to continue on as it had been before. "In the summer of 1940," Holmboe recalled, "there was no feeling of 'Now we are going to resist.'" In the autumn of 1940, however, Quisling demanded that government employees sign an oath of loyalty to his regime. For the people who refused, violence was used as persuasion; this created even more resistance.

Some Norwegians resisted by taking up arms, but most dismissed violence as impractical due to Germany's massive military advantage. Illegal newspapers multiplied. But how else could they resist? As Holmboe explained, Norwegians confronted a classic problem of pacifism: There "is a burglar on your door and you have to fight him." But how? "Nowhere ... did the idea of non-violent resistance come in," Holmboe continued. "Instead of an idea, it developed as ... a way to do something. I don't think we realised the theoretical point at all. We just felt that something must be done, and we must do it."

Meanwhile, Quisling began to implement his ideal of a Mussolini-style corporate state. The system is characterized by state officials managing the economy by organizing society into large interest groups or "corporations" under state control. As a pilot project and a blueprint for imposing corporatism, Quisling chose one of Norway's most established and esteemed interest groups — schoolteachers.

## Teachers and students fight back

Quisling's corporatism started with small steps at first. His portrait was hung in every school, for example, but even these small measures were deeply resented and largely rejected. When a Nasjonal Samling

12 Youth Front emerged, many students refused to "join" the mandatory organization that was modeled after the Hitler Youth in Germany. This was part of a larger refusal by most Norwegian youth to cooperate with authorities. Instead, young people wore covertly nationalist symbols and made gestures to show support for the King of Norway; they turned their backs as German soldiers walked by; when school inspectors entered a classroom, students burst into patriotic song. The authorities pushed back; when Oslo high school students refused to join the Nazi Youth Front, Nazis beat teachers and teenagers alike. Beatings, arrests, and bribes did not work, however, and the Nazis gave up trying to enforce membership.

In June 1941, the established teachers' union was eliminated due to the mass resignations that followed a Nazi attempt to assume control. Through illegal meetings, a group of teachers drafted a list of four points upon which Norway's teachers were admonished to stand firm. In his pamphlet "Tyranny Could Not Quell Them: How Norway's Teachers Defeated Quisling and What it Means for Unarmed Defence Today," Gene Sharp, an American political scientist and a global leader in the movement for nonviolent action and resistance, described these points of resistance:

- (1) Any demand for the teachers to become members of Quisling's party, the Nasjonal Samling;
- (2) Any attempt to introduce Nasjonal Samling propaganda in the schools;
- (3) Any order from outside the school authorities;
- (4) Any collaboration with the Nasjonal Samling youth movement.

During December 1941 and January 1942, the list circulated among Norway's teachers. Its spirit was captured by what became known as the Teachers' Pledge to Students:

I will not call upon you to do anything which I regard as wrong. Nor will I teach you anything I regard as not conforming with the truth. I will, as I have done heretofore, let my conscience be my guide, and I am confident that I shall then be in step with the great majority of people who have entrusted to me the duties of an educator.

By early February 1942, Quisling went full throttle on converting the school system into an education factory for fascism. Teachers must pledge fealty to German occupiers and teach Nazi values to students. Quisling declared all teachers to be members of a new national teachers' organization that was under the leadership of the Hirden (the Hird). A Norwegian version of the Gestapo, this uniformed paramilitary cracked down violently on dissidents. The Hird was notorious for prisoners who suddenly died in its custody, for example.

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An estimated 90 percent of Norway's teachers refused to join the mandatory new union.

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On February 11 and 12, 1942, resistance leaders met secretly in Oslo. Sharp gave a sense of the meeting's atmosphere. The leaders "saw Quisling's step as the moment they had been waiting for and [they] shared the view of the teachers: if they accepted this beginning, there would be no clear later point of resistance. They would finally have to accept the logical consequences of the first step." The resistance focused on the teachers, undoubtedly because Quisling was also doing so.

Months earlier, Holmboe became the general resistance contact for a large rural district in eastern Norway, with Hamar as its center; Hamar was a small town about 130 kilometers north of Oslo and Holmboe's home. His job was to select a reliable representative from different professional groups in the district, none of whom knew each other's role; if anyone was caught and tortured, this ignorance would limit the damage inflicted. Holmboe was also responsible for teachers in his district.

He described the ingenuity with which resistance leaders in Oslo spread instructions to outer regions. "A friend telephoned me one afternoon," Holmboe explained, "and asked me to meet him at the railway station. There he gave me a small box of matches." The box contained a statement in response to the demand that teachers join the new organization established by Quisling. Holmboe continued, "My job was to circulate it secretly among the teachers in my district. That was all I knew. I didn't know who the 'leaders' were who met in Oslo." After handing him the match box, Holmboe's friend boarded another train and left. The statement read:

According to what the Leader of the new teachers' organization has said, membership in this organisation will mean an obligation for me to assist in such [fascist] education, and also would force me to do other acts which are in conflict with the obligations of my profession. I find that I must declare that I cannot regard myself as a member of the new teachers' organisation.

The teachers were to duplicate this statement in individual letters addressed to the Education Department. They were to sign their own names and include real addresses. All letters were to be posted personally on the same day: February 20, 1942. The teachers knew the extreme danger of expressing even passive resistance, and many were bookish people, not warriors. In his booklet "Tyranny Could Not Quell Them," Sharp wrote about a teacher who was isolated in the mountains. Before posting his letter, the nervous man "telephoned long distance to Mr. Holmboe to be sure that everyone else was really carrying out the plan — despite the probability that the telephone was tapped."

An estimated 8,000 to 10,000 teachers wrote to the Education Department. "If there had been even as many as 4,000 or 5,000," Holmboe declared, "we should have regarded the action as a success." As it happened, it was "very, very moving to see the reaction." He explained the high response rate. "It was a matter of conscience. We just couldn't do those things [ordered by Quisling]. We could not have looked into the faces of family and friends if we had not made this protest." An estimated 90 percent of Norway's teachers refused to join the mandatory new union.

On February 25, Quisling closed all schools for a month, claiming that a "fuel crisis" did not permit the buildings to be heated. Closing the wood-heated buildings in forested Norway made little sense. People demanded to know the real reason their children were at home. Ironically, the school closures were instrumental in making the entire nation aware of the teachers' resistance, which had received no coverage in the official media.

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## We Need to Talk About Trump – the Twin of Evil and Stupidity

HUA BIN • MARCH 3, 2025 • 900 WORDS • 19 COMMENTS • 11 NEW

Just weeks into his second term, Trump has generated an avalanche of global headlines from his clash with Zelensky, tariff wars against all, talk of annexation of Canada and Greenland, and many more.

One little but telling episode went barely noticed and commented by the mainstream media. Trump posted a 33-second AI video on his Truth Social of a future what he termed Trump Gaza, showing how Gaza will be turned into a Dubai-like metropolis with him and Israeli Netanyahu sunbathing on the beach sipping cocktails, a grinning Elon Musk devouring hummus, a golden Trump statue, etc. Of course, the blissful paradise will arrive after the Jews cleanse Gaza of Palestinians with US help.

The video made me sick. This is pure moral evil displayed for all to see. I cannot think of any modern leader, let alone the leader of the self-claimed “free world”, putting on such a humanly repulsive and unredeemable show in front of the whole world. And with impunity.

People say Trump is bat-shit crazy so don't take him seriously. People say we live in an Orwellian world where “war is peace” and “the IDF is the most moral army in the world” and in that world, Trump's behavior is normal. People say Trump has long been bought off by Jewish money and he is just acting out on behalf of his masters. People say Trump is so stupid that he does not even know what he is doing is stupid.

While all those are true, they cannot explain how such sheer evil and stupidity is tolerated. It may be too much to ask for virtue from the leaders in the world we live in today. But normalizing evil and stupidity is one step too far. How did we get here?

We all know most Americans are decent people who would never do anything so plainly wrong like what Trump did. But why was there not an angry uproar? Why the passivity and indifference? Don't people think there will be blowback from normalizing the evil and the deranged? Is there no fear of God anymore?

I think Hannah Arendt's “banality of evil” theory can explain what is in play here. When people witness harassment or bullying but choose not to intervene, we are in a situation of banality of evil. Evil, according to Arendt, becomes banal when it acquires an unthinking and systemic character. Evil becomes banal when people build distance from it, justify it and even participate in it. There are no moral conundrums or revulsions. Evil does not even look like evil, it becomes faceless.

Very similar to the phenomena of demeritocracy which I wrote about in an earlier essay ([\(100\) The West is a Demeritocracy – by Hua Bin – Hua's Substack](#)), the banality of evil becomes a reality when ordinary people rationalize patently deviant and deranged behavior such as Trump's Gaza video.

Evil in the modern world can thrive not only in the hands of deranged individuals but in the hands of those who simply fail to confront it. They do not act out of a desire to inflict harm but rather out of a deep intellectual and moral paralysis.

When such apathy and indifference is institutionalized, I call the society the Stupidity society, where ordinary people develop a disregard of moral responsibility and passively accept the most deranged rhetoric and behavior and unjust ideologies.

Here I am not talking about the clinical type of stupidity defined as low intelligence, lack of mental capacity, or “being slow” colloquially. I am talking about the kind of stupidity that transcends a mere intellectual shortcoming or a simple lapse in judgement.

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This kind of stupidity is not merely a weakness. It is a profound and destructive social force that is much more dangerous than evil itself. It is a form of resistance to critical thinking and an active refusal to reflect on actions and ideas. Unlike evil which can be confronted and restrained through reason, such stupidity is impervious to intellectual engagement. It resists awareness, self-correction and the capacity for change.

Such stupidity is different from ignorance. Ignorance stems from a lack of knowledge but stupidity is a deeper more entrenched condition, an unwillingness to embrace facts or new viewpoints. Stupid individuals do not simply lack knowledge, they actively reject the possibility of learning or evolving their perspectives based on facts. They cling to their unexamined beliefs and reject challenges that might force them to confront uncomfortable truths as a result.

This intellectual laziness often masquerades as loyalty or patriotism.

Stupidity is not simply an absence of thought. It is a refusal to think critically which makes it an insidious and self-perpetuating force. In this sense, stupidity is far more dangerous than ignorance because it closes the door to growth and understanding. This dangerous mindset finds its most terrifying expression when the passive compliance of ordinary citizens become immunized to evil, as we witnessed in Trump's Gaza video.

This compliance is so destructive not as a result of active malice but rather the resistance from individuals who have become numb to moral and intellectual inquiry.

We already know Trump himself is both evil and stupid. The really important question for us is "has the US reached the nirvana of stupidity and evil"?

## Hundreds Killed in Syria's Northwest in Fighting, Mass Executions

134 Alawite civilians reportedly executed in villages across northwest

by Jason Ditz / March 7, 2025 at 4:03 pm ET / News / Alawites, Syria

Thursday's reports of fighting between the Syrian government and Alawite militias in Latakia Governorate have exploded into what some are calling an outright insurgency, with hundreds of people killed and reports of the ruling Islamists of the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) carrying out mass executions of members of the Alawite minority.

Exact figures are difficult to confirm so far, but between Thursday and Friday over 200 people have been killed in the ongoing fighting. This includes combatant death tolls of 50 government fighters and 45 militia members.

The fighting centered on Jableh, in Latakia Governorate, where Alawite militias carried out an organized joint attack on HTS government forces. Large numbers of government reinforcement have been sent to the area, but only some are involved in the fighting in and around Jableh.

Other government forces attacked Alawite villages across the area, including al-Mukhtareyah in Homs Governorate, al-Haffah and al-Shir in Latakia Governorate, and smaller villages in the immediate vicinity of Jableh and Baniyas. They reportedly rounded up Alawite men and carried out summary executions. 134 civilians were reported killed in those incidents. Mostly men were executed, but 13 women and 5 children were also said to have been slain,

The death toll in al-Mukhtareyah alone from executions was at least 30. The government has not directly commented on the killings, but state media quoted an unnamed official attributing them to people "seeking revenge" for the violence against government forces the day before.

The government has imposed a curfew across Homs, Tartus, and Latakia Governorates, and the UN has issued a statement urging both sides to refrain from adding to the enormous tensions that now exist in the area.

The fighting around the Alawites has picked up precipitously since December, when the HTS led forces that ousted the Assad government. Assad was himself an Alawite, and the government has launched multiple violent crackdowns on Alawite parts of the country, presenting it as a move against "remnants" of the Assad forces. Indeed, even the fighting in Jableh was presented as attacks by militias loyal to one of Assad's old generals.

# The Ruination of the Ukraine

HANS VOGEL • MARCH 7, 2025 •

When in 1991 for the second time in the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Ukraine became independent, it seemed to possess all the requirements for being a successful, happy and prosperous nation. Of the fifteen sovereign states that emerged from the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Ukraine was seemingly the most privileged. Its vast stretches of highly fertile farmland, the so-called Black Earth, produced great quantities of wheat, corn and potatoes. At the same time, the Ukraine was an industrial powerhouse, with manufacturing concentrated in cities like Donetsk and Kharkov (home of the famous Antonov aircraft plant). In 1975, Ukrainian steel output equaled that of West Germany, Europe's industrial powerhouse. In 1988, when it was still a Soviet republic, Ukrainian GDP would make it the world's eleventh-biggest economy.

Today, it ranks forty-fifth. On account of its per capita GDP (PPP), the Ukraine is one of the poorest European nations. It has lost more than half of the 52 million inhabitants it boasted at independence, since there are at most only an estimated 25 million left in the area controlled by the Kiev regime. Quite an impressive achievement in a mere thirty-five years of independence.

Yet independence seemed to hold so much promise! The US government and many Americans with Ukrainian antecedents and roots immediately took a lively interest in the new sovereign nation. These included descendants of Slavic immigrants from the Ukraine, or Little Russia, as it was still called a little over a century ago, but mostly descendants of Jews who left that part of Russia for a better life in the New World.

The Americans arrived with their full arsenal, including the usual panoply of NGOs and above all "international" financial entities such as the World Bank and the IMF. These instruments had proven extremely effective in subjecting and keeping US control over Latin American nations.

The US thus began the dismantling of the Ukrainian economy, taking away what appeared most valuable and disposing of the rest, chaining the country to the US and US-dominated international organizations while taking control over its finances. In the process, Ukrainian manufacturing industry, employing millions, was gutted and eventually taken apart. Ukrainian politicians were only too eager to play along and not to miss the golden opportunity to stuff their pockets. According to the Corruption Perception Index (CPI), the Ukraine is one of Europe's most corrupt countries, among notorious places like Moldova. In other words, one might say the Ukraine was being made a European clone of a classical Latin American banana republic such as Nicaragua or Honduras.

In 1994, the Ukraine became completely subjected to the banksters of Wall Street, the IMF and the World Bank, when Victor Yushenko was appointed head of the nation's central bank. As American looters and advisers, followed by eager profiteers from Europe, swarmed over the country, another great robbery began.

Ten years later, in 2004, through its NGOs and other instruments such as the National Endowment for Democracy, the US organized a local Color Revolution, the "Orange Revolution," which led to the election of Yushenko as president. By that time, the Ukraine had already given proof (in 2003) of its loyalty to the US by sending 1,600 troops for the occupation of Iraq after the US had conquered it.

One could say the Ukraine was being transformed into the European equivalent of Cuba in the 1960s: a superpower's stronghold on another superpower's very doorstep, such as Cuba had been for the Soviet Union on America's doorstep. The difference was just that the Ukraine was ruled precisely the same way as Cuba from 1902 to 1959: as a mere US protectorate, with the local US ambassador as a proconsul.

Another decade later, in 2014, after President Victor Yanukovitch, yielding to common sense and Russian pressure, reneged on signing a free trade and association agreement with the European Union (the political arm of NATO), the US engineered the "Revolution of Dignity," also known as Euromaidan. The intervention was successful, leading to the election of a new

president: chocolate czar Petro Poroshenko. Proceeding to enact a series of anti-Russian decrees, the new regime provoked a rebellion in the regions (oblasts) of Donetsk and Lugansk, each with a majority of Russian speakers. The two regions went on to declare autonomy, whereupon the Kiev regime unleashed a wave of retributive violence against the local civilian population, resulting until 2022 in the deaths of more than 14,000 residents.

The Americans, now firmly in control of the Ukraine, had set their eyes on taking over the naval base in Sebastopol on the Crimean Peninsula. This region was also overwhelmingly inhabited by Russian speakers. A US takeover of the base would have deprived the Russian navy of its strategic southern base, which was absolutely essential. Within days of the end of the “Revolution of Dignity,” Russian army units were sent to the Crimea so as to secure it for Russia and prevent the US from seizing the Sebastopol base. On 11 March, the Crimean regional assembly and the Sebastopol City Council proclaimed the region’s independence, which was approved by a referendum a few days later. A month later the Crimea joined the Russian Federation.

The Americans were boiling with impotent rage when their plan to take over Sebastopol fell through. They assuaged it somewhat by having their “international community” refuse to recognize the legality of the Crimea joining the Russian Federation. But what next? The Obama regime, in which the neocons of the PNAC played a key role, opted for a false flag incident to bring about an armed confrontation with Russia, which they were fully confident the US and NATO would win hands down. On July 17, 2014, the Americans, with the connivance if not the assistance of the Dutch Rutte government, organized the shooting down, by Ukrainian air force fighters, of a Malaysian jetliner carrying two hundred Dutch citizens. The MH-17 was shot down and crashed in the breakaway region of Donetsk. Immediately, the Russians, accused of covertly aiding the rebels in Donetsk, were blamed for downing the jetliner. Needless to say, there is no evidence whatsoever to support that claim. Incidentally, one may presume that Rutte’s appointment as NATO Gensec is the reward for his loyal cooperation in the MH-17 scam.

Although the “Russo-Ukrainian War” started in 2014, it was being fought in a very low-key fashion, especially on the Russian side. The Ukrainians, on the other hand, aided and abetted, often led even, by the Americans and their NATO vassals (especially the English), embarked on a vast armament program in preparation of a major confrontation with Russia.

In late 2021, Russian President Vladimir Putin, in an effort to end the bloodshed in Donetsk and Lugansk and to settle the issue in a permanent manner, sent repeated proposals to the US Biden regime and to NATO. However, since no one cared to answer, in February 2022 Russia launched the Special Military Operation (SMO).

Once again, the US and its European vassals shrieked with rage at another violation of their “rules-based” order. As a matter of fact, under these rules only the US and Israel are permitted to do the thing Russia had then just done. However, it created exactly the situation the US and NATO had been preparing for all along. Thus the NATO proxy war against Russia began, which was supposed to result in the collapse and partition of the Russian Federation.

In their decades-long conceitedness and hubris, Western ruling elites and their media outlets and assorted “experts” were convinced their superior Western arms would easily prevail. To their utter shock, however, those Western weapons proved inferior to the Russian ones. Moreover, the Ukrainian armed forces had been trained according to NATO standards, which in themselves are inferior to those of the Russian armed forces. Although individual Ukrainian soldiers certainly did not lack courage and commitment, they turned out to be cannon fodder for the Russian army and its superior weaponry.

At the moment, three years after the SMO began, the defeat of the Ukrainian military can no longer be hidden from the public by means of fake news and daily doses of disinformation. More than one million Ukrainian soldiers have died on the battlefield, which means that at least two million others have been wounded, many of whom will remain crippled for life.



Although thanks to Russian tactics, civilian losses are very low, it is no exaggeration to say that the war has aggravated the Ukraine's demographic collapse. Millions of Ukrainians, including numerous men of military age, have fled to other European countries. More than two million have found refuge in Poland, where Ukrainian doctors and nurses have taken over wide swaths of the medical system. Over one million are now in Germany, almost a million in the Czech Republic. Big colonies of Ukrainians are to be found (in descending order) in Italy, Romania, Slovakia and the Netherlands. Before the war started, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians had already left their beloved homeland to find better lives in the Americas, but also in Russia, where there is a high demand for all imaginable kinds of work. So much for the patriotism of Ukrainians!

With the eventual defeat of the Ukrainian armed forces and their NATO and US sponsors in sight, it is understandable that movements are being made in both camps to reach a formal understanding. The newly elected US President Donald Trump is presently acting like a catalyst in this delicate process.

Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky, the not untalented comedian who was carefully selected and prepared for the office, remains faithful to his role of steadfast war leader against overwhelming odds and puts up a show of resilience and determination. Yet it looks increasingly like he is the leader of a mere empty shell. The Ukrainian economy has suffered tremendously from the war. The electrical grid needs to be completely rebuilt and other elements of the infrastructure also require enormous investments and effort to be brought back up to standard.

Zelensky's recent performance in the White House in the row with Trump and Vice President Vance should not distract attention from what has likely already been decided by Trump and Putin. Both want an end to the military operation in the Ukraine, but it is Russia that dictates the terms. Zelensky and Trump want to save face and Putin will surely allow Trump to do that.

The Ukraine will emerge amputated and scarred, mourning its dead and resenting the millions of Ukrainians who have left and are likely to return. It will be sort of a miracle if a rump Ukraine around Kiev, securely tied to Russia, will survive.

History has few examples in which a nation possessing all sorts of advantages was destroyed within a mere four decades. The Ukraine constitutes a unique case from this point of view.

It is extremely sad that the Ukraine was not destroyed by the common Ukrainian people. All they want is what most people in the world truly want: to lead healthy, happy lives with their family and friends, to be safe and to eat decent food. The country has been destroyed by the US and its NATO vassals and a clique of banksters, aided by a small clique of ruthless Ukrainian politicians.

Actually, the Ukraine is just another failed state, propped up with tremendous amounts of money that chiefly finds its way to the pockets of legions of corrupt politicians and businessmen in the US, Europe, Israel and the Ukraine.

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# The Unz Review • An Alternative Media Selection

*A Collection of Interesting, Important, and Controversial Perspectives Largely Excluded from the American Mainstream Media*

## Suddenly, Leaving NATO Is on the Table!

RON PAUL • MARCH 3, 2025 • 600 WORDS • 12 COMMENTS Q&A

Over the weekend, President Trump's Department of Government Efficiency head Elon Musk made quite a stir with just two words posted on his social media platform, X. Responding to a post that, "It's time to leave NATO and the UN," Musk replied, "I agree." The comment immediately made the rounds on social media and also on mainstream and alternative media.

Was this the Elon Musk who owns X speaking, or was it the Elon Musk who has become one of President Trump's closest advisors? Does it even matter? Having someone so close to the US president who advocates finally extracting the US from these international organizations is a significant and very positive shift for the United States.

With the truth coming out about how USAID has been working against US interests for decades, the disinfectant of public scrutiny is now turning to our membership in – and generous funding of – international organizations like NATO and the United Nations.

I have long advocated our exit from NATO. At the end of the Cold War, with its very reason for existence gone, NATO decided to look for other ways of stirring up trouble. First NATO involved itself in the first Gulf War and then it decided its mission should be to bomb Serbia to smithereens – in the name of "human rights." I agree with the late Sen. Robert Taft, who argued at the time NATO was formed that we should not join the "Atlantic Alliance."

It has become much clearer these past few months just how far NATO has shifted away from US interests. Even though the United States funds a whopping 70 percent of NATO's cost, our own NATO "allies" are working against the United States as President Trump attempts to pull us back from the brink of war with Russia.

A simple telephone call between Presidents Trump and Putin was met with hysteria among NATO member countries, and just as US and Russian high-level delegations were meeting in Saudi Arabia to look for way to walk back from a war footing, our "allies" decided to hold their own summit in opposition to the US move. In Paris our "partners" pledged to continue their failed Ukraine policy and to ridicule the United States for looking to try something different.

To add insult to injury, right at the center of the table in Paris was none other than the Secretary General of NATO himself, former Dutch politician Mark Rutte! The message was very clear: "we are working against you – we push war while you push peace – but you must keep footing the bill."

Also over the weekend Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT) and Rep Thomas Massie (R-KY) echoed Elon Musk's sentiment, with Sen. Lee posting a chart showing the wildly disproportionate amount of US taxpayer dollars that go to funding NATO with the statement, "Get us out of NATO." Rep. Massie added to Lee's comment, "NATO is a Cold War relic that needs to be relegated to a talking kiosk at the Smithsonian."

As in the time of Sen. Robert Taft, the sentiment against NATO membership is coming from the conservative end of the US political spectrum. With President Trump's clear mandate to pursue his "America first" agenda we have the best opportunity in decades to sever our damaging and expensive entangling alliances across the globe. Let's start with NATO!

*(Republished from The Ron Paul Institute by permission of author or representative)*

The way to crush the bourgeoisie is to grind them between the millstones of taxation and inflation.

– Vladimir Lenin

## Why Is Europe Making Itself Irrelevant

PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS • MARCH 3, 2025 • 500 WORDS Q&A

Readers want to know why the UK PM and European leaders—really, non-readers, misleaders, bad leaders—want war with Russia over Ukraine. My answer is that they don't.

What would they go to war with? According to the European “leaders,” they already have given all their weapons to Ukraine and have nothing with which to fight a war. The only way Europe can send any money to Ukraine is to get the EU central bank to print euros to send to Ukraine. Moreover, the NATO force structure depends on the United States. Without the US, Europe lacks a force structure that can support a war. Trump has ruled out war with Russia and read Zelensky the riot act. Unless Putin makes a fantastic mistake, I expect the conflict to end.

Perhaps what is going on with Europe's is that EU governments, after sending so much money and weapons to Ukraine backed by claims that Ukraine was winning and would win, want to be able to say that Trump sold out Ukraine in order to avoid accountability to the deceived populations of Europe. They can blame Trump for denying Ukraine and NATO a victory.

The European talk of sending “peacekeepers” to Ukraine is nonsense. Putin intends a settlement, an over-and-done-with event, not a ceasefire with European “peacekeepers.” Trump can't get a settlement if he sides with the EU against Putin. If Trump and Putin don't accept “peacekeepers,” it can't happen.

Here is a thought. Trump sees economic growth as fed by opportunity. He sees more opportunity in business deals with Russia, India, China, the rest of Asia, and Africa than he sees in Europe. Trump understands that it was sanctions and the weaponization of the dollar that produced BRICS and the search for an alternative for central bank reserves and international payments. To save the dollar's role as reserve currency, Washington needs to stop bullying. Trump, like Putin, wants deals that work for everyone, not wars. In a world in which the dollar is not used as a weapon against other countries, BRICS is not necessary.

Trump sees tariffs in a different way than indoctrinated free-market economists. Tariffs don't prevent trade. They ensure that countries have something with which to trade. Moreover, tariffs are a tax on consumption, not a tax on factors of production such as labor and capital. And as I emphasize, tariffs in place of income tax eliminates the resurrection of a form of slavery established in 1913 when government was given partial ownership of the labor of every working citizen.

We have little to lose by supporting Trump and keeping him focused on his agenda. We should not add to problems for Ukraine's sake, or for Israel's sake, or some other non-American interest. There are sufficient unaddressed threats around, such as AI and the creation and release of another virus, to knock Trump's agenda off balance.

Life is a challenge. Making good decisions is a difficult thing to do. Let's try for a change to meet the real challenges and to make good decisions. Trump has given us an opportunity we have not had for a long time. Be thankful for it.

Either some Caesar or Napoleon will seize the reins of government with a strong hand, or your republic will be as fearfully plundered and laid waste by barbarians in the twentieth century as the Roman Empire was in the fifth, with this difference, that the Huns and Vandals who ravaged the Roman Empire came from without, and that your Huns and Vandals will have been engendered within your own country by your own institutions.

— Thomas Babington Macaulay, *Letter to Henry Stephens Randall* [1857]

Our screen-based culture is flat and temporal, very immanent, very now, in some sense very ephemeral. None of those characteristics is conducive to openness to transcendence.

**F**irst Things editor Mark Bauerlein spoke September 12 at Belmont House, in Washington, D.C., about his latest book, *The Dumbest Generation Grows Up*, the sequel to his 2008 *Dumbest Generation*. Both books are about the consequences of letting a generation come of age on screens. The earlier book warned against potential effects; the latest examines what happens when that generation crosses the line into what should be chronological adulthood.

Readers can delve into Bauerlein's books to digest the full range of problems the screened generation faces. I'll limit myself to three.

**First, screen dependency decimated reading** and, consequently, knowledge skills. Screen-based learning was originally touted as a way to tailor education to an individual child's interests and levels, but—especially after the Covid lockdown—it has become apparent that putting the libraries of the world at the click of a button has not elevated the literacy or cultural levels of young people.

When Pope Francis recently spoke of getting people (especially seminarians) to read literature, in part to get them off screens, I argued that the papal proposal failed to account for how screens change the way people approach reading. They're not just "different delivery modes." They fundamentally differ in how each approaches a fixed text as well as how they condition the writing of that text. Let's just say, James Fenimore Cooper would not have had a career as a Tweet writer.

**Second, building on the previous argument**, Bauerlein criticizes screens for caging young people in youth culture. Books at least occasionally force young people to engage in what once used to be called "higher culture," that is, something beyond the interest level of the contemporary teen or young adult. In many ways, it is an "anti-intellectual" culture. Social media reinforces these youth-centric foci by its "friending" mechanisms, which reinforce the predominantly youth world and ethos for its users. Instead of cross-generational fertilization, the youth orientation of social media, argues Bauerlein, boxes young people into a youth ghetto, with all the callowness such confinement would likely entail. Far from being "diverse" or "inclusive," it frames a world that is generationally (and culturally) monochromatic and exclusive of worldviews other than its own.

**Third—and to me the most important of Bauerlein's arguments**—is the immanentizing effect of screens. Bauerlein touched on this argument briefly at the conclusion of his remarks, but it perhaps is the most important of them: the here-and-now, youth-centric, temporal focus of screens leaves no room for the transcendent. How does Transcendence break into social media?

And, if the transcendent does not find a place in social media, where do God or any of the "existential questions" fit in? Do they even *become* questions? Do they even get considered? Bauerlein does not think it coincidental (neither do I) that, as social media came to dominate generations, those generations also produced the phenomenon of religiously disaffiliated people we call "nones."

The culture and ethos of the screen is flat and temporal, very immanent, very now, in some sense very ephemeral. None of those characteristics is conducive to openness to transcendence. They in fact foster an indifference to, if not alienation from, more transcendent realities.

The outcome is not, however, merely religious disaffiliation. It arguably also goes hand in hand with other phenomena, such as the greater indices of depression and mental illness among youth, social dysfunctionality, and even suicide. This is especially rampant in the teen years and especially among teenage girls who, struggling to establish their own sense of identity, suffer from being immersed into a peer culture that is often negative, unconfident, and even guilt-ridden. Such are the wages of immanence.

**Many years ago, Jacques Maritain** in another context criticized the contemporary immersion into the here and now to the exclusion of transcendence. He called it the "minotaur of the immanent." In many ways, he was prescient about our current dilemmas.

The Minotaur was a hybrid, a “non-conforming” half-human, half-animal beast born of bestiality. He was imprisoned in the labyrinth on Crete into which fourteen Athenian youth—seven men and seven maidens—were regularly sent for the Minotaur to devour. It was only Theseus who eventually slew him (and managed to retrace his way, thanks to a string, out of the labyrinth).

Today’s Minotaur of the Immanent may not be half-bull, half-man, but it continues to devour young people otherwise in the bloom of youth. It devours them not by eating them alive but by eating away their natural openness to something (and Someone) bigger and beyond themselves. It contents them with the flatness of this world by blinding them to the adventures of setting out into the deep of life with God as one’s pilot.

Bauerlein struck on something sapping our evangelical and “youth ministry” efforts, a major reason why we have a growing number of “nones.”

Where is today’s Theseus?

# CRISIS

MAGAZINE

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