

# Tucker “Gets It” - Putin Doesn’t Want American Missiles on His Border

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***“Getting Ukraine to join NATO was the key to inciting war with Russia. We didn’t get it at the time. (But) Now it’s obvious. Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine because he didn’t want Ukraine to join NATO. Putin certainly had other motives as well; people always do, but that’s the main reason Russia invaded. The Russians don’t want American missiles on their border. They don’t want a hostile government next door. Now that is true, whether you are allowed to say it aloud in public or not. It has been true for a long time. A lot has been written about this over many years by serious people. No one who knows anything and is honest, will tell you Putin invaded Ukraine simply because he is evil. Putin may be evil, he certainly seems to be, but he also has strategic motives for doing that, whether you agree with those motives or not. That is irrelevant. Those are the facts.”*** [Tucker Carlson](#), Fox News

Tucker Carlson is right about Ukraine. NATO membership for Ukraine was clearly a provocation aimed at luring Russia into an invasion. And, it worked, too. Putin could not take the risk of having “a hostile government next door” or “American missiles on his border,” so he acted to preempt those threats by sending the tanks across the border on February 24, 2021.

Where Carlson is a little off-base, is when he says that Putin’s actions were prompted by “strategic motives”. That’s not really wrong, it just misses the point. The point is that Washington’s combat troops and missile sites on Russia’s western border would pose a grave threat to Russia’s national security. Putin would have to be out-of-his-mind to allow a development like that. So, he did what any American president would have done if he had been in the same situation. He invaded. This is an excerpt from an article at the World Socialist Web Site:

**The narrative in the media, which presents the invasion as an unprovoked action, is a fabrication that conceals the aggressive actions by the NATO powers, in particular the United States, and its puppets in the Ukrainian**

government....

**In Europe and Asia, the US pursued a strategy aimed at encircling and subjugating Russia.** Directly violating its earlier promises that the Soviet bureaucracy and Russian oligarchy were delusional enough to believe, NATO has expanded to include almost all major countries in Eastern Europe, apart from Ukraine and Belarus.

In 2014, the US orchestrated a far-right coup in Kiev that overthrew a pro-Russian government that had opposed Ukrainian membership in NATO. In 2018, the US officially adopted a strategy of preparing for “great power conflict” with Russia and China. In 2019, it unilaterally withdrew from the INF Treaty, which banned the deployment of intermediate-range nuclear missiles. Preparations for war with Russia and the arming of Ukraine were at the center of the Democrats’ first attempt to impeach Donald Trump in 2019.” ([“The US-Ukrainian Strategic Partnership of November 2021 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine”](#), World Socialist Web Site)

**2001: Bush pulls out of ABM Treaty**  
**2004: US NGOs organize “Orange Revolution” protests in Ukraine**  
**2008: Bush announces plans for NATO to annex Ukraine & Georgia**  
**2013: US Senators John McCain & Chris Murphy join with Nazis at Maidan protests**  
**2014: Ukraine’s democratically-elected government overthrown. Victoria Nuland recorded in phone call choosing Ukraine’s new government. Communist party criminalized. Ethnic cleansing begins in the Donbas. Hunter Biden placed on board of Burisma.**  
**2016: VP Joe Biden withholds aid for Ukraine until General Prosecutor Victor Shokin fired**  
**2019: Trump pulls out of INF Treaty**

This is a brief but excellent summary of events leading up to the Russian invasion on February 24, 2021. Putin and his advisors had been following developments in Ukraine with growing alarm after it became apparent that their worst fears were materializing. The [CIA was not only arming and training paramilitaries](#) in the east in preparation for a war against ethnic Russians in the Donbas, the US was also cultivating an explicitly anti-Russia political party –which contained openly fascist elements– that was designated to implement Washington’s proxy-war strategy. In short, the US fanned the flames of ethnic hatred in order to lay the groundwork for its “Great Power” conflagration with Moscow. Here’s more from the WSWS:

The key to understanding this is **the US-Ukrainian Charter on Strategic Partnership**, signed by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba on November 10, 2021..

**The Charter endorsed Kiev's military strategy from March 2021, which explicitly proclaimed the military goal of "retaking" Crimea and the separatist-controlled Donbass, and thereby dismissed the Minsk Agreements of 2015, which were the official framework for settling the conflict in East Ukraine.**

The US stated that it would "never recognize Russia's attempted annexation of Crimea," and that it "intends to support Ukraine's effort to counter armed aggression," including with "sanctions" and "other relevant measures until restoration of the full territorial integrity of Ukraine."

Washington also explicitly endorsed "Ukraine's efforts **to maximize its status as a NATO Enhanced Opportunities Partner to promote interoperability,**" that is, **its integration into NATO's military command structures.**

**Ukraine's non-membership in NATO is and was, for all intents and purposes, a fiction.** At the same time, the NATO powers exploited the fact that Ukraine is not officially a member as an opportunity to stoke a conflict with Russia that would not immediately develop into a world war." ([World Socialist Web Site](#))

This, of course, is the critical point: For Russia, Ukraine's membership in NATO was "the reddest of red lines". **Since the end of WW2, NATO had expanded from 12 to 30 countries almost all of which pushed further eastward towards Russia's western border.** When the United States indicated it would seek NATO membership for Ukraine at the Bucharest Summit in 2008, Putin's response was uncharacteristically ferocious. Here's political analyst John Mearsheimer with a brief recap:

"... bringing Ukraine into NATO was fraught with danger. Indeed, **at the Bucharest Summit.... both German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicholas Sarkozy, were opposed to moving forward on NATO membership for Ukraine** because they feared it would infuriate Russia. Angela Merkel recently explained her opposition. (She said) **"I was very sure that Putin is not going to let this happen. From his perspective that would be a Declaration of War."** ([John Mearsheimer, "Why 2008 Summit in Bucharest is the main cause of the Ukraine War", You Tube, 1 minute](#))

Putin reiterated Russia's opposition to NATO membership for Ukraine repeatedly in the months leading up to the invasion. Four months prior to the invasion, Radio Free Europe published this report which was a fairly typical expression of Russian concerns:

**The Kremlin has reiterated that any expansion of NATO military infrastructure in Ukraine would cross one of President Vladimir Putin's "red lines"... The latest flare-up in frayed relations among the nations started on September 27 when Lukashenko said the United States is "building up bases" in Ukraine and that he and Putin have "agreed we must do something about it."...**

**Russia staunchly opposes the idea of NATO membership for Ukraine and**



Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov added that Putin has repeatedly noted the issue of the potential broadening of NATO infrastructure on Ukrainian territory “would cross red lines.”

Ukraine began joint military exercises with the United States and other NATO member troops last week, while Russia and Belarus held large-scale drills that alarmed the West. ([“Kremlin Warns Over NATO Infrastructure In Ukraine”](#), Radio Free Europe)



The point we’re making is that the current conflict has nothing to do with claims that Putin is “an aspiring imperialist longing to reconstruct the Soviet empire.” There is no evidence for that at all. **The real issue is NATO expansion and, in particular, the secret agreements between the United States and Ukraine that made Ukraine a full-fledged member of NATO in everything but name.** Take a look at this excerpt from an article by Marcy Winograd:

**The September, 2021, Joint Statement on the U.S.-Ukraine Strategic Partnership reaffirmed Ukraine as a de facto NATO partner,** “to continue our robust training and exercise program in keeping with Ukraine’s status as a NATO Enhanced Opportunities Partner.”

**.... the Partnership Interoperability Initiative (PII) encouraged favored non-NATO nations, then Australia, Finland, Georgia, Jordan and Sweden-the NATO farm team- to share intelligence and participate in NATO-led military interventions, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, and join in euphemistically-labeled “war games.”**

**For Ukraine’s support of NATO operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, as well as**

**cyber defense and Black Sea maritime maneuvers**, NATO in 2020 welcomed Ukraine into **the club of favored NATO wannabes, awarding Ukraine special status as the 6th Enhanced Opportunity Partner (EOP) to receive military training and participate in the multinational NATO Response Force (NRF)** of land, air, and sea troops and Special Operations Forces to deploy in a flash, wherever commanded. Such B list status allowed Ukraine to integrate into NATO's military command structures to prepare, plan and conduct joint operations.

### **The NATO Farm Team**

The degree of present-day involvement of “enhanced opportunities partners” in NATO remains a mystery shrouded in secrecy, even as **NATO conducts mock nuclear exercises** during Europe's largest war since the second world war. For two weeks in October fourteen NATO countries, most unnamed, participated in the annual training and flying missions commanding **fighter jets and B-52 capable nuclear bombers**, albeit without live warheads, over Belgium, the United Kingdom and the North Sea in a dress rehearsal for a nuclear attack on Russia.

**According to the Federation of American Scientists, Steadfast Noon participants were to practice conducting strikes with US nuclear equipment loaded onto fighter jets of non-nuclear NATO countries—a violation of the spirit of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).**

One does not need a cinematic Hollywood imagination **to envision Ukraine, part of NATO's farm team, one day agreeing or rather inviting the US and NATO to install nuclear equipment on Ukrainian fighter jets targeting Russia**—or go one step further to install nuclear weapons in Ukraine itself, much as the US has installed its nuclear weapons in the NATO countries of Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey.

Now **the argument that Ukraine was not a NATO country, would never be allowed to join NATO, had nothing to do with NATO and, therefore, posed no existential threat to Russia falls flat. As does the argument that Ukraine posed no nuclear threat to Russia because it had agreed to transfer back to Russia the nuclear weapons left in Ukraine following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.**

**Who needs nuclear weapons when you can borrow them like a prom dress or store borrowed nukes in your air base garage?**

...“the November 2021 US-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership committed the US and Ukraine to joint defense and security operations “deepening cooperation in areas such as Black Sea security, cyber defense and intelligence sharing ..” ([“Letter to the Left on Ukraine”](#), Marcy Winograd, Code Pink)

Brilliant analysis, and right to the point. Ukraine didn't need to be formally entered into NATO because the US stealthily bestowed defacto membership on them out of the public eye. Naturally, Putin and his lieutenants knew what was going on, but the media made sure that everyone else remained in the dark. And all of this sleight-of-hand was going on just months before Putin was forced to invade. It's actually shocking.

Let's summarize:

**Ukraine was being armed and trained by its partners at NATO**

**Ukraine was participating in military drills and maneuvers conducted by NATO**

Ukraine had been **“integrated into NATO’s military command structures”** including “support of NATO operations... cyber defense and Black Sea maritime maneuvers”

**Ukraine was sharing “intelligence and participating in NATO-led military interventions, such as Iraq and Afghanistan.”**

**Ukraine participated in “mock nuclear exercises” with NATO**

Ukraine (and its NATO allies) endorse the retaking of Crimea from Russia (“unwavering commitment to Ukraine’s ....territorial integrity... including Crimea”)

Does it sound like Ukraine snuck into NATO through the back door?

It does.

**This summary helps to show that Ukraine’s non-membership in NATO is largely “a fiction.”** Ukraine has been fully-integrated into the anti-Russia Alliance in every way except formal approval. Ukraine’s Strategic Partnership with the US, which was signed by both parties in 2021, underscores this point. **It also helps “to clarify” -as Marcy Winograd notes- “that the United States and NATO provoked the war.”** Indeed, Washington has put a significant amount of time and energy into a project that is aimed at crossing all of Russia’s redlines, directly challenging Russia’s basic security interests, and forcing Russia to invade a neighboring country. Simply put, Washington placed a gun to Russia’s head and threatened to pull the trigger.

Fortunately, Putin responded in the way that best ensured the safety and security of his own government, his own country, and his own people. We would expect any responsible leader to do the same.

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