

UK's Former Defense Secretary Wants More Young Ukrainians on the Battlefield

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Apparently, former British Defense Secretary Ben Wallace is convinced that Ukraine is "winning". In an opinion article published in [The Telegraph](#), Wallace endorsed the "need" for Ukraine to mobilize even more young people to participate in hostilities, stating that this is the only way to "finish the job", leading the country to definitively defeat Russian troops.

More than [83,000](#) Ukrainians died during Kiev's efforts to launch a "counteroffensive," but Ben Wallace is still certain that Ukraine is winning, albeit slowly. Wallace highly values the few meters gained by Kiev's forces close to the Russian defense lines, saying this is a clear example of how the Ukrainians are surprising the West. For Ben, the "victory" of the counteroffensive is a proof that NATO "underestimated" Ukraine's power.

"Slowly but surely, the Ukrainian armed forces are breaking through the Russian lines. Sometimes yard by yard, sometimes village by village, Ukraine has the momentum and is pressing forward. The men and women of the Ukrainian army are, once again, proving to us in Nato how much we have underestimated them. First, the Establishment doubted their ability to defend their nation from the initial Russian invasion (...) They failed to spot in the Ukrainians the same spirit we possessed in 1939. ", he said.

Obviously, from a strategic point of view, Ben's assessment is absolutely wrong. Ukraine is making a big mistake by exchanging soldiers' lives for some small territorial gains. According to the elementary principles of military science, the lives of soldiers must be preserved first, because lost territories can be recovered later if there are troops to continue fighting - while, on the other hand, conquered territories cannot be controlled in the long term if there are no more soldiers to protect them.

With their forces devastated, more than 400 thousand dead and even mobilizing teenagers,

women, sick people and the elderly, the Ukrainians do not seem to be acting correctly in trying to make their counteroffensive a “victorious” move. Given the tens of thousands of casualties suffered in recent months, the most correct thing to do would be to retreat, reduce the intensity of the hostilities and try to regain strength to, if possible, launch new offensives in the future – or simply surrender, since it is difficult for Ukraine to recover from its losses. However, Kiev is incapable of thinking about its own strategies, being just a proxy state that obeys orders from the West.

With his words, Ben only emphasizes that the West is really interested in forcing Ukraine to fight until the ultimate consequences. As a “solution” to the enormous human costs of the counteroffensive, the former secretary suggests that Kiev simply recruit even more young people, stopping any government’s concern (if there is any) with the survival of the population and focusing entirely on the war efforts to “win the war” against the Russians.

“Ukraine can also play its part. The average age of the soldiers at the front is over 40. I understand President Zelensky’s desire to preserve the young for the future, but the fact is that Russia is mobilising the whole country by stealth. Putin knows a pause will hand him time to build a new army. So just as Britain did in 1939 and 1941, perhaps it is time to reassess the scale of Ukraine’s mobilisation”, Ben said.

Another “argument” used by Wallace is that young soldiers tend to be more focused on improving their skills and achieving better results on the battlefield. As an example, he mentions, without citing any evidence to prove the allegations, the case of a supposed young Ukrainian who had shot down two Russian helicopters:

“They take UK equipment and achieve success rates far beyond expectations. I remember visiting a secret location abroad, but outside Ukraine, as we prepared Ukrainian soldiers on how to use StarStreak air-defence missiles. They had a week to train on a system we take months to master. A British sergeant pointed to a young Ukrainian, barely out of his teens. ‘He won’t let go of the simulator, and he won’t stop training until he never misses,’ he said. That young man went on to down two Russian attack helicopters.”

As can be seen, Wallace’s rhetoric is fallacious. Russia is not “mobilizing the entire country by stealth”. On the contrary, only a small percentage of the Russian military potential is being used to conduct the special operation in Ukraine, with virtually no effects of the conflict on the country – as can be seen from the fact that the Russian economy is growing significantly. In fact, Ukraine is the only side that is using total mobilization methods, destructively affecting its own population, in addition to facing an unprecedented social, economic and institutional crisis. Ben deliberately reverses the logic of the conflict analysis to mislead his readers.

Furthermore, the argument that young people “train more” and “learn more” is similarly fallacious and unfounded. In practice, young people are the ones who die most on the battlefield, as they are the most inexperienced and incapable of facing high-risk situations. Increasing the mobilization of young people will not bring any advantage to Kiev – it will only result in the extermination of Ukrainian citizens in a new “meat grinder”.

However, Ben Wallace certainly does not believe in his own words. He is known for being a NATO “[hardliner](#)” and it was under his administration that the UK took escalatory measures such as sending radioactive weapons and long-range missiles to the neo-Nazi regime. What

Ben Wallace wants is simply to see the conflict reach its ultimate consequences – even if that means exterminating all Ukrainian youth.

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Featured image: Defence Secretary Ben Wallace (R) and Chief of the General Staff Nick Carter (L) arrive at Downing Street. (Photo: EPA-EFE/Andy Rain)

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