



# Dan Rice, Special Advisor to CinC Valeriy Zaluzhnyi

The beta test is over. Time for NATO to send in more arms to evict the Russians

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**Dan Rice, a U.S. combat veteran and Special Advisor to Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, Commander-in-Chief of Ukraine's Armed Forces, has recently returned from a trip to the Donbas warzone where he had gone to observe the current battlefield and assess Ukraine's needs to win the war, unjustifiably unleashed by Russia.**

The expert spoke with Ukrinform, for the second time this year, to offer his view of the latest developments, share his opinion on recognizing Russia as a state sponsor of terrorism, and reflect on what needs to be done by allies and partners of Ukraine to put the brutal war to an end, sealing Ukraine's win on the battlefield.

## RUSSIAN MILITARY LEADERS ARE IMMORAL, AMORAL, AND HAVE NO REGARD FOR THE INNOCENT UKRAINIAN CIVILIANS

**What are the major strengths and weaknesses of the Ukrainian and Russian armies in your opinion?**

As for Ukraine's strengths, I have found the Ukrainian Army to be educated, literate, highly motivated, with the will-to-fight, and far better led both politically and militarily. Ukraine is now working very well with NATO to deliver and target key Russian targets all throughout the occupied territories. Every month Ukraine gets much

stronger, with a larger, battle-hardened army that is getting better and more equipment daily. Ukraine has

pushed down authority and decision-making to the lowest levels. Ukrainian officers give their "intent" and inform the soldiers "why" they want something done. This allows the soldiers to figure out and be creative with "how" to achieve it. This allows innovation on the battlefield. We have seen how that innovation allows Ukraine to fight and beat a less innovative, rigid Russia invader.

Russian strengths... Russia has always fought using "mass". Mass artillery, mass armor and a maximum number of troops. Russia uses this strength to its advantage using rolling artillery barrages, ignoring the morals of attacking civilian targets, destroying entire cities in its path. This mass then becomes a weakness, when the Russian army is far from home, on foreign soil, and its command and control, and supply chain is

being effectively targeted using precision-guided weapons deep behind Russia's interior lines within the

occupied territories. It is difficult to supply an army far from home when under accurate fire at all concentrated positions. Russian artillery barrages have significantly weakened, and intelligence confirms it is because Ukrainian attacks on Russian supply depots are wreaking havoc on their supply chain. With more and more NATO weapons being delivered this supply chain issue should start hurting the entire Russian army, with food, winter gear, ammo, fuel, etc.

As for Russian weaknesses, Russian leaders are usually using the old Soviet model of top-down "command and control" leadership. Tell soldiers "what and how" to do something, but not "why". Only the leaders can make decisions, not the soldiers or non-commissioned officers. This makes their army very rigid and not able to make changes quickly on the battlefield. They are not a learning organization. They have attacked the same target and lost, and attacked again and again, and lost repeatedly, using the same battle plan. So leaders are not averse to taking significant casualties. This can help them achieve their military results but comes at a horrible cost for the Russian soldiers and local people.

Russian troops are often illiterate and uneducated; they are more susceptible to Russian propaganda. The troops are often undisciplined and immoral, resulting in atrocities to the Ukrainian military and civilian population, looting and all of the other horrible symptoms. The leaders are immoral, amoral, and have no regard for innocent Ukrainian civilians. They tolerate and seem to encourage war crimes against the civilian population to use as a terror weapon. They are poorly led by rigid leaders that run top-down organizations. This weakness is being exploited by Ukraine by targeting and killing Russian leadership. As the Russian army gets bogged down, the Generals and Colonels need to go further and further to the front and are effectively targeted by western intelligence working with Ukrainian soldiers to kill the command and control of the Russian Army. The lack of discipline on the battlefield can be exploited by better disciplined Ukrainian soldiers who have both the will to fight, and are fighting for Ukrainians, on Ukrainian land. This weakness will also cause Russian morale to continue to weaken.



Speaking of Ukraine's weaknesses, it must be borne in mind that Ukraine started the war with a far smaller

army with far fewer troops, far fewer aircraft, armor, artillery and fewer....everything, which was a weakness.

Ukraine has built up its army since February 24th with even more motivated, educated Ukrainian patriots. Ukraine is still outgunned in most major weapons platforms-artillery pieces, armor units, and number of troops. NATO is working tirelessly to address this weakness by providing more, and better weapons that the Russians will not likely be able to counter. Every day the Ukrainian army gets stronger and better.

## UKRAINIAN TROOPS ARE ABLE TO IMPLEMENT SOPHISTICATED, HIGH-PRECISION WEAPONS SYSTEMS QUICKLY

**Will the West provide Ukraine with all the requested support? What trends are being observed across the Atlantic?**

When I arrived in early May 2022, very few western weapons and ammo were being approved at the time. That has changed dramatically over the past three months. M777's were first approved and then M142 HIMARS and M270 (multiple launch rocket systems) after that. Many other types of NATO 155mm howitzers have been sent. 155mm ammo and many different types of cannons have increased. Multiple Launch Rocket Systems were not only but at least four countries have contributed launchers (M142 HIMARS or M270) each of which can fire the same munitions. Poland has sent T-72s in large numbers. The momentum is encouraging and extremely positive. Not only have the numbers increased, but the Ukrainian soldiers have proven incredibly adaptable to employing new weapons systems – fast, and with deadly results for the Russian invaders.

**How effectively are the Ukrainian servicemen mastering Western weapons?**

The Ukrainian soldiers are very adaptive at weapons, ammo, systems and procedures, and adapt their tactics and procedures based on the new weapons systems very efficiently and effectively. Because the Ukrainian population is so highly literate (99%), and well trained, battle-hardened and experienced, it makes sense that they would be able to implement these sophisticated, high-precision and lethal weapons systems quickly.

**Putin's minimum goal: what territories of Ukraine does he might plan to annex?**

I do not have any more information than anyone else here. Whatever he attempts to annex will not be recognized internationally, so it will be merely Russian propaganda theater.

## IF UKRAINE GETS ATACM, THERE WILL BE NOWHERE WITHIN UKRAINE FOR RUSSIA TO HIDE THEIR COMMAND-AND-CONTROL SYSTEMS AND SUPPLY DEPOTS

**How long is Russia capable of waging a war given the current dynamics of hostilities?**

It appears that Russia is having more and more difficulties conducting war in Ukraine. Ukraine has done an excellent job of attacking command and control, supply depots and concentrated troop formations. The logistics system of the Russian army requires centralized depots, due to the palletized manner of logistics. This makes better and better targets for HIMARS or M777 precision guided strikes. If, and hopefully when, Ukraine gets the ATACMs munitions, there will be nowhere within Ukraine for Russia to hide neither their command-and-control systems nor supply depots. ATACMs are fired from the standard HIMARS M142 platform, or the M270 MLRS platform. ATACM has a range of 300 km and it would be agreed between NATO and Ukraine that no ATACMs could be fired outside of Ukraine territory. Maintaining an army that does not control the skies, and will be under fire at any location that they occupy in Ukraine, will likely prove to be an impossible task for the Russian army.

**Western and Russian armored vehicles: what are their strong and weak features?**

The battlefield was littered with various generations of Russian armored vehicles from T-62s main battle tanks through T-90 main battle tanks. They are better in the defense as a dug-in firing position. In the offense they are just a larger target with more inevitable casualties for the Ukrainian anti-tank and artillery. The Russians are notoriously poor at maintenance and after six months of war, the equipment is breaking down, artillery and tank barrels cannot fire in perpetuity without blowing up, and that is what is happening.



## THE RUSSIAN ARMY IS NOT A LEARNING ARMY, WHEREAS THE UKRAINIAN ARMY IS A LEARNING ORGANIZATION

**What is the likelihood of anti-war sentiments emerging in Russia?**

Russia, like many authoritarian dictatorships, has strong control over information. Unfortunately, their propaganda is fairly effective since they control most information sources within Russia. Public sources do show a high degree of support from the population for the "special military operation" as they call it. Morale in the Russian army is, and should, continue to drop significantly. We are told new units coming in to give some rest to old, tired units, are not allowed to have contact with the outgoing unit to avoid demoralizing them. This is a bad sign for Russia. The new troops do not learn from the old troops, and will make the same mistakes and take high casualties. Yet another example of why the Russian army is not a learning army, whereas the Ukrainian Army is a learning organization.

**What do you believe is the most important factor that could help Ukraine win on the battlefield?**

Leadership and the will to win. The brave Ukrainian soldiers beat the Russian back at the Battle of Kyiv through better leadership, better strategy and tactics, and making use of limited precision guided weapons, used very efficiently while being outgunned 10:1. Now in the south and the east, the average soldier cannot get to within range of the Russians because the Russians have longer range artillery. They have better leadership, better soldiers, and the will to win. The weapons are coming, but until those units get long range artillery, they cannot go on the offensive.

## MCDONALD'S PULLING OUT OF RUSSIA WILL BE HIGHLY VISIBLE TO THE RUSSIAN POPULATION, AND NO PROPAGANDA CAN HIDE THAT FACT

**What do you think is the real impact of war on Russian economy?**

The Russian GDP has increased because of the war, due to the rising fuel prices and the fact that 35% of Russia's GDP comes from energy. So Putin is in better financial shape, oddly, due to the war. The people, however, are suffering more now than before and it will only get worse. War is kinetic and immediate. The invasion had an immediate negative impact on Ukraine's economy and GDP. Sanctions are much slower but can cause the Russian government, oligarchs and people, to suffer. But it takes time. Each month that goes by it will get worse and worse. One of the by-products of Ukraine's effective communications strategy, is that not only are western governments supporting Ukraine and against Russia, but global corporations are nearly all against Russia. VISA, Mastercard, American Express all pulled out of Russia. Starbucks abandoned 500 stores and they are committed to never returning. When McDonald's opened in Moscow it was symbolic of the end of the Cold War. McDonald's pulling out hundreds of stores throughout all of Russia will be highly visible to the Russian population, and no propaganda can hide that fact.

**Is it possible for Russia to oppose or counter heavy Western weaponry?**

War is a dynamic, fluid and constantly changing environment. So there are always ways to counter weapons system, given enough time with the right amount of money, technology, innovation and motivation. Most of the western weapons of N LAW, Stinger, Javelin, HIMARS, Switchblade, M777 precision-guided munitions, Gray Eagles, Harpoons have each been incredibly successful against the Russian army. Russia has been aware of most of these platforms for a long time and has not been able to successfully counter them elsewhere. It is unlikely that Russia could significantly counter these weapons' in the short term- in the next few years. With enough of these weapons shipped into Ukraine, it is only a matter of time until Ukraine achieves victory and evicts the Russians in my opinion.

**How likely do you think is that the weapons supplied by the West will be used not as intended and agreed with partners?**

In my experience with the Ukrainian Army over the past three months we have found the Ukrainian military to be solidly united with the desire to fight and destroy the Russian army. I believe Ukraine is one of the greatest allies of the United States and have confidence that weapons delivered to the Ukrainian soldiers will not be diverted elsewhere and have no concerns that Ukrainian leadership would violate any agreement. We have trust in Ukrainian people, political and military leadership, and in the brave Ukrainian Soldiers. And that is why I am constantly writing and speaking publicly within the United States, recommending getting the right number of weapons (more) to Ukraine immediately to drive the Russians out of Ukraine and help the "First Army of Peace" win back its territory, people, culture and peace.

## THE LACK OF INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS ACTS OF PUTIN'S AGGRESSION WAS WRONG, AND ONLY EMBOLDENED HIM TO TAKE MORE

**If Putin had known that the war would drag on for so long, would he have decided to invade Ukraine?**

With regards to Putin's state of mind, one can only guess. Putin over-estimated his own army's capabilities, under-estimated Ukraine's capabilities, and under-estimated the west's response. The West's response to Putin can be attributed to the leadership of one person: President Zelensky. Putin invaded Chechnya (1999), Georgia (2008), Syria (2017), Crimea and Donbas (2014) and the world did not react in this way, or even close. The lack of international response to those acts of Putin's aggression was wrong, and only emboldened him to take more. President Zelensky's leadership in February and March 2022, simply inspired the nation and the world and is the reason why NATO and the west are now rallying around Ukraine.

## THE ENTIRE RUSSIA ARMY SHOULD BE DESIGNATED AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

**The latest Russian atrocity against Ukrainian POWs in a penal colony in Olenivka has caused major outcry in Ukraine, which once again is calling on western powers to recognize Russia as a terrorist state. What do you think about the initiative?**

Agree 100% that Russia as a country should be listed as a state-sponsor of terrorism, joining Cuba (2021), North Korea (2017), Iran (1984) and Syria (1979). At the same time, the entire Russian army should be designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. No Foreign Terrorist Organization, ISIS, Al Qaeda, HAMAS, Hezbollah, FARC, ISIL, Boko Haram, etc) has killed as many innocent civilians through terrorist activities as the Russian Army over the past two decades in Chechnya, Syria, Georgia, Donbas, Crimea and this 2022 invasion of Ukraine. The Russia Army has likely killed more than all those terrorist organizations combined – so of course it should be labeled with the same label.

Putin's leadership and the leadership of his generals have been horrible, and the entire world is disgusted by Putin's actions, his Generals' actions and strategies, and the behavior of Russian soldiers across the Army. The long list of state-sponsored terrorism against the people of Ukraine is well known and documented for the world community. President Zelensky and General Zaluzhnyi's leadership has been inspirational to Ukraine and to the entire free world. This war is a "just war". It is good vs pure evil. And Ukraine will win because of better leadership, better people, and now the world's support.



## THE OBVIOUS SOLUTION TO END THIS WAR IN UKRAINE'S FAVOR IS THE NEED FOR MUCH MORE LONG-RANGE ARTILLERY AND MULTIPLE LAUNCH ROCKETS

**How would you assess your latest visit to Ukraine's frontlines?**

Few if any Americans have been there and none that I know of who have American military experience and have in depth knowledge of the capability of the weapons systems that are flowing into Ukraine largely funded by the US taxpayer through Foreign Military Financing (FMF). We were able to observe the METT-T (Estimate of the Situation) analysis and understand the need and the impact these systems will have. We were also able to assess the morale of the Ukrainian Army and the leadership of these "citizen-soldiers" many of whom joined the Army after the 24 Feb invasion.

**In the end, what do you think must be done now to push this Russian evil out of Ukraine as soon as possible?**

The obvious solution to end this war in Ukraine's favor is the need for much more long-range artillery and multiple launch rockets. Ukraine has proven it can effectively deploy and destroy Russian units using these systems. The beta test is over. Time for NATO to send in more of artillery pieces and ammo to win the peace and evict the Russians.

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