

Weekly Commentary 32 – August 2023

On “ticking time bombs...”

How about that? Biden just called China a ticking time bomb, referring to its slowing economy...

To make sure that I am quoting the man correctly, here is a Reuters report with the exact words spoken:

Biden misstates China's GDP growth, calls its economy a 'ticking time bomb'

By [Nandita Bose](#) and [Jeff Mason](#)

August 12, 2023

SALT LAKE CITY, Aug 10 (Reuters) - U.S. President Joe Biden on Thursday called China a "ticking time bomb" because of economic challenges including weak growth, but misquoted the country's growth rate.

"They have got some problems. That's not good because when bad folks have problems, they do bad things," Biden said at a political fundraiser in Utah.

Biden said on Thursday he did not want to hurt China and wanted a rational relationship with the country, but had a dire prediction about the country's future.

"China is a ticking time bomb ... China is in trouble. China was growing at 8% a year to maintain growth. Now close to 2% a year," he said.

Data from China's National Bureau of Statistics showed the economy grew 4.5% in the first quarter and 6.3% in the second, with gross domestic product up just 0.8% in April-June from the previous quarter after a 2.2% expansion in the first quarter. There was no immediate comment from China's foreign ministry.

Biden's remarks were reminiscent of comments he made at another fundraiser in June when he referred to President Xi Jinping as a "dictator." China called those remarks a provocation.

Those comments came shortly after U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken completed a visit to China aimed at stabilizing relations that Beijing described as being at their lowest point since formal ties were established in 1979.

On Wednesday, Biden signed an executive order that will prohibit some new U.S. investment in China in sensitive technologies like computer chips. China, which has the world's second largest economy, said it was "gravely concerned" about the order and reserved the right to take measures.

China's consumer sector fell into deflation and factory-gate prices extended declines in July, contrasting with inflation elsewhere in the world.

The United States, the world's largest economy, has fought high inflation and seen a robust labor market.

Reporting by Nandita Bose, writing by Jeff Mason; Editing by Cynthia Osterman, Heather Timmons, Philippa Fletcher

Yes, Biden is talking about an economy that is growing at about 5 percent this year or more accurately 4.5% in Q1 and 6.3% in Q2, compared to his own economy which is growing at 2.4% in Q2 above the 2.0% in Q1. So not only was he wrong in his numbers, but to interpret 4.5% and 6.3% as a “ticking time bomb”, then 2.4% and 2.0% would be carnage after the proverbial bomb goes off.

Is that mistake, a deliberate taunt or is it a sign of a deteriorating mental faculty?

Certainly, Biden is no economic guru. But can't he be relied to even read simple numbers a first grader would be able to do...btw, those are not my words...they are the exact words which Trump has used: “Our country is being destroyed by a man with the mind, ideas and IQ of a First Grader,” Trump wrote.

Bloomberg also castigated Biden for getting simple facts wrong.

President Joe Biden blasted China's economic problems as a “ticking time bomb,” saying during a political fundraiser that the Asian nation was in “trouble” because its growth has slowed and it had the “highest unemployment rate going.” He also blasted Chinese leader Xi Jinping's signature Belt and Road Initiative as the “debt and noose,” because of the high levels of lending to developing economies associated with the global investment program. “So

they got some problems,” Biden said. “That’s not good because when bad folks have problems, they do bad things.”

Biden’s comments, which included **exaggerations about the extent of China’s woes**, are some of his most direct criticisms yet about the US’s top geopolitical and economic rival. The Democrat has sought to walk a fine line between using trade curbs to deter China’s high-tech military advancement and achieving a diplomatic rapprochement with Chinese leaders that could pave the way for a potential meeting this year with Xi.

Josef Gregory Mahoney, a politics and international relations professor at Shanghai’s East China Normal University, said Beijing was unlikely to be “baited” into responding to Biden’s latest barbs. “Beijing knows Biden will resort increasingly to anti-China dog whistle tactics to rally popular support at home,” Mahoney said. “But it’s also important to remember that Beijing heard a lot worse from Trump.” —[David E. Rovella](#)

Mr Mahoney is right. This is the third overt verbal attack on China by a president who wants to be taken seriously on the world stage as the man with Churchillian standing – so that the empire he inherits would not diminish under his watch. In his first personal attack, during his State of the Union address, he asked how many world leaders wanted to be like Xi? The unspoken answer from around the world was that everybody wants to be just like Xi, since there are so many partners in the BRI as well as the SCO and BRICS, all part of China’s sphere of influence, that new applicants are no longer newsworthy. China did not respond even as the number of enthusiastic aspirants for BRICS disproved Biden’s verbiage.

Then Biden called Xi a dictator just after the Blinken visit to Beijing, and China’s Foreign Ministry just called it a provocation, and did nothing else.

Now with this ticking time bomb comment, there has been no immediate response.

Given that both the top two financial news outlets in the world, one from the US (Bloomberg) and one from the UK (Reuters) have stated publicly that Biden is misleading in his numbers, essentially to badmouth his biggest competitor, it does not give credence to the image of a new found command of economics but more a Freudian envy of another leader more successful in advancing his country’s economy and forging economic relationships all over the world.

As for his comment that “bad folks do bad things...”, this is definitely a sad reflection of his own presidency. While the American empire declines, the procrastinating reluctance to accept that has led him to provoke Russia into the Ukrainian war, refuse peace negotiations and that status has now resulted in the destruction of Ukraine as a nation-state, living on alms

and losing the flower of its youth. Other bad things which happened under his watch is a NATO inadequacy to provide enough ammunition to fight his proxy war, not quite “as long as it takes” as he assures the clown leading the effort, but just 18 months. Now he approves the supply of cluster ammunition, shells which carry small bomblets that when delivered into the target zones (which is Ukraine) will kill or maim generations of Ukrainian children when the current war ends, as former US presidents have done to Cambodia and Laos during a previous undeclared war. Mainstream media is mostly silent on this, but independent sources have called this a war crime.

Indeed, bad folks do bad things when they get into trouble.

The Chinese government may not - diplomatically - excoriate Biden for his errors in these first few days, and those who understand Chinese will know how the Chinese internet community will react. One thing is for sure, even Taiwanese commentators are not letting Biden off. One Taiwanese talk show host simply said: Just substitute the word “China” with “America” and they would agree with everything Biden said. Hmmmm...

That leads us to want to check the veracity of the above (Taiwanese) contention. I shall try to identify a few ticking time bombs in the world today facing Biden and see if the Taiwanese commentator is right.

Ticking Time Bomb No 1

Well, as I wrote in my Saturday morning Daily Report, the biggest time bomb in the financial world today is the state of the US National Debt. This is a well known problem, which I have written extensively about. Now I will post an update, and if anyone has Biden’s email address, please forward this to him to remind him he is sitting on the biggest ticking time bomb of them all.

The Fitch downgrade of US debt is the latest sign of trouble for the US economy. We can update on where the problems for the US economy are:

The debt is at \$32 trillion and the Treasury needs to borrow about US\$1.5 trillion every six months. According to the US Treasury’s own website, the borrowing requirement for Q2 (April to June 2023) is \$726 billion. This is \$449 billion higher than announced in January 2023 due to lower cash balances and projections of lower receipts and higher outlays of \$117 billion. During the July-September quarter, the treasury expects to borrow another \$733 billion. With the Fitch downgrade leading to higher borrowing costs, this number is large enough as it is, and will likely be even larger. That means for a full year, the borrowing will be more than \$3 trillion. Even

assuming some of it is used to retire debt, it is simple arithmetic that there the debt servicing will increase every year and before you know it, the borrowing will be \$4 trillion, then \$5 trillion a year. That's every year. There is no doubt in my mind that the national debt will grow to become US\$40 trillion before the end of the decade. Measured against a nominal GDP of about \$21 trillion, that's a huge burden. This is the first of several ticking time bombs Mr Biden is presiding over, and there has not been one speech in recent memory when he has even addressed the issue, let alone propose a solution except blame the Republicans for bringing it up and trying to curb his administration's extravagance.

Obviously the economic dumbfxxks in the Biden administration still think they can print as much money as they need to save their asses. That way of solving problems has been used for the longest time since 1972 when Nixon replaced the gold standard with oil. It has allowed extravagance and fiscal irresponsibility to take root essentially leading to the current ticking time bomb. But nobody is willing to face up to the problem that this state of pretend-nirvana is coming to an end; not even Yellen who continues to blow the trumpet that the US Dollar is still very much the reserve currency of the world.

Given their need to continuously borrow, the US government will try their best to maintain dollar hegemony. But the rest of the world, especially America's major competitors including China and Russia, plus a whole lot of countries in the Global South have no desire to endure endless bouts of sanctions based on the usage of the US Dollar. As such, there is a clear and conscious de-dollarization that has begun. Yes, this effort will take a long time, and will not change the world in a few years, but it's like in Star Wars – the rebellion has begun. All said, from the US policy makers' point of view, there is no scope to lower interest rates that will affect global investors' desire to hold dollars. But it will be a very fine line between keeping the dollar up, maintaining the ability to print dollars that people will be willing to buy and keeping it down to promote economic expansion. These represent competing demands on the direction of US interest rates. Other than Yellen, there is nobody in sight in the current US administration who has demonstrated enough gray matter to be able to navigate this treacherous path.

That is a god-damned ticking time bomb...

And while we are on economic time bombs, is there any reason to worry about China's weak economy? Not if the comparisons are correctly made. Whatever the trajectory of China's economy is in the rest of the year, it is doing better than America, Japan and the EU.

The latest ranking of global economies in Purchasing Power Parity terms (the most accurate way to make international comparisons of GDP), by the World Bank no less, and reported by bne/IntelliNews is as follows:

1.  China: \$30.3 trillion
2.  USA: \$25.4 trillion
3.  India: \$11.8 trillion
4.  Japan: \$5.7 trillion
5.  Russia: \$5.32 trillion
6.  Germany: \$5.3 trillion
7.  Indonesia: \$4.03 trillion
8.  Brazil: \$3.83 trillion
9.  France: \$3.77 trillion
10.  UK: \$3.65 trillion
11.  Türkiye: \$3.18 trillion
12.  Italy: \$3.05 trillion
13.  Mexico: \$2.74 trillion
14.  South Korea: \$2.58 trillion
15.  Canada: \$2.27 trillion
16.  Spain: \$2.18 trillion
17.  Saudi Arabia: \$2.15 trillion
18.  Egypt: \$1.67 trillion
19.  Australia: \$1.62 trillion
20.  Poland: \$1.62 trillion

In PPP terms, China's economy is 20 percent larger than the US'. Is that a problem?

Goldman Sachs plus most of the top investment banks still put the 2023 growth rate for China to be about 5%. Yes, there is definitely a problem with the country's export sector as well as with its real estate market. There is also a high level of debt in the Local Government Financing Vehicles. But the reason the Xi government does NOT go around bad-mouthing its competitors, unlike Biden, is that it is focused on SOLVING the problems rather than engage in the Biden habit of SHIFTING blame and attention away. We don't even see Beijing bothering to retort Biden's constant provocations. The attitude seems to be : if an idiot doesn't even recognize his own far more serious problems ticking under his ass, there is no need to get flustered by meaningless rhetoric. Nonchalance of the Chinese in response to Biden's taunts is very evident.

Time Bomb 2: Hunter

The second long-festering problem facing Biden is his inability to bury the Hunter problem once and for all. The case has recently taken on a new lease of life. In the days running up to the Nov 2020 election, the problems of his youngest son, Hunter Biden, using the father's influence during the days of his vice presidency to corruptly advance business interests in Ukraine and of Biden using the power of his position to avoid criminal investigation did not emerge to hurt his election. Since then, the matter has been simmering, with the Republican opposition calling for a more in-depth investigation especially since in recent weeks, a number of credible whistle blowers have emerged to implicate Biden as a participant in his son's business, including a payoff involving \$5million each. The mainstream media generally underplays the adverse publicity in a Biden-friendly way. And in a rather suspicious legal ploy, Biden handlers had arranged for a plea bargain for Hunter with the US Justice Dept, so that once he gets a gentle rap on the wrist over a couple of minor misdemeanours, he will forever be free from further legal problems.

And Biden, the president, will not have to deal with political attacks on this matter going into 2024.

It was all supposed to sail through the courts easily. But that didn't happen. Here is a NYT report of what happened to the plea bargain:

For President Biden, a Political Liability That May Not Go Away Soon

The collapse of a plea deal and the appointment of a special counsel to investigate Hunter Biden mean the president could face political fallout for months to come.

By Peter Baker

Peter Baker has covered the past five presidents. He reported from Washington.

Aug. 11, 2023

They thought it was over, that they could put it in the rearview mirror. All that Hunter Biden had to do was show up in a courtroom, answer a few questions, sign some paperwork and that would be it. Not that the Republicans would let it go, but any real danger would be past.

Except that it did not work out that way. The criminal investigation that President Biden's advisers believed was all but done has instead been given new life with the collapse of the plea agreement and the appointment of a special counsel who now might bring the president's son to trial.

What had been a painful but relatively contained political scandal that animated mainly partisans on the right could now extend for months just as the president is gearing up for his re-election campaign. This time, the questions about Hunter Biden's conduct may be harder for the White House to dismiss as politically motivated. They may even break out of the

conservative echo chamber to the general public, which has largely not paid much attention until now.

It remained unclear whether Hunter Biden faces criminal exposure beyond the tax and gun charges lodged against him by David C. Weiss, the prosecutor first appointed in 2018 to investigate him by President Donald J. Trump's attorney general. It may be that Attorney General Merrick B. Garland's decision to designate Mr. Weiss a special counsel with more independence to run the inquiry means that there is still more potential legal peril stemming from Hunter Biden's business dealings with foreign firms.

Yet it may amount to less than meets the eye in the long run. Mr. Weiss's announcement abandoning the plea agreement he originally reached with Hunter Biden on the tax and gun charges means he could take the case to trial in states other than Delaware, where he is U.S. attorney and has jurisdiction. Some analysts speculated that requesting special counsel status may be about empowering him to prosecute out of state.

"Friday's announcement feels more like a technicality allowing Weiss to bring charges outside of Delaware now that the talks between sides have broken down," said Anthony Coley, who until recently served as the Justice Department's director of public affairs under Mr. Garland. "It will have limited practical impact."

The Hunter Biden Investigation

President Biden's son Hunter has been under investigation since 2018 over his foreign dealings, drug use and finances.

- ***Special Counsel:*** *The investigation appeared to be near an end in June after Hunter Biden agreed to enter a plea agreement. But a judge delayed the deal, and the prosecutor in the case was elevated to special counsel status, a stunning reversal. Still the move might not change much in practice.*
- ***A Political Liability:*** *With the appointment of the special counsel, what had been a relatively contained political scandal could now go on for months just as the president is gearing up for his re-election campaign.*
- ***What Democrats Think:*** *More than a dozen officials, operatives and pollsters told us that Hunter Biden's legal troubles were less worrisome than other concerns about the president, such as his age and his low approval ratings.*
- ***Republicans Are Skeptical:*** *Republican presidential candidates largely scoffed at the news about the special counsel's appointment, with some casting doubt on the official's independence.*

Even if so, a trial by a jury of Hunter Biden's peers would be a spectacle that could prove distracting and embarrassing for the White House while providing more fodder to the president's Republican critics. The president's advisers were frustrated as a result and resigned to months of additional torment, even if they were not alarmed by the prospect of a wider investigation.

"After five years of probing Hunter's dealings, it seems unlikely that Weiss will discover much that is new," said David Axelrod, who was a senior adviser to President Barack Obama. "On the other hand, anything that draws more attention to Hunter's case and extends the story into the campaign year is certainly unwelcome news for the president's team."

As it happened, Mr. Garland's appointment of Mr. Weiss as special counsel did not solve part of the problem it was meant to address. A special counsel designation is intended to insulate an investigation from politics, but the attorney general's decision still drew fire from Republicans who derided the choice of Mr. Weiss because he had signed off on the original plea agreement, which they had described as a "sweetheart deal."

Never mind that Mr. Weiss was a Trump administration appointee whom the Biden administration kept on to show that it was not attempting to tilt the case in favor of the president's son. Since Mr. Trump and his allies did not like the apparent outcome of the investigation, some have painted Mr. Weiss as a lackey of the Biden administration and have showcased whistle-blowers who said the prosecutor had been hamstrung even though he insisted he was not.

"This move by Attorney General Garland is part of the Justice Department's efforts to attempt a Biden family cover-up," said Representative James R. Comer of Kentucky, the Republican chairman of the House Oversight and Accountability Committee who has led congressional investigations into the president's son.

Such attacks also serve the purpose of discrediting Mr. Weiss in advance if in the end he does not confirm their unsubstantiated charges of corruption against the Biden family. Testimony and news accounts have indicated that Hunter Biden traded on his name to make money and a former business partner has said that his father was aware. But no evidence has emerged that the president personally profited from or used his power to benefit his son's business interests.

Still, other Republicans said the party should welcome the appointment of Mr. Weiss as special counsel. There would be no need for one if there was nothing to investigate, they argued, and it was Mr. Biden's own attorney general now saying there was a need.

"It shows that there is more than just smoke," said Douglas Heye, a longtime Republican strategist. "It makes it impossible to define this now as simply a House Republican or MAGA thing. This has to be covered differently now. And as we've learned from other special counsel investigations, where a special counsel starts is not necessarily where it ends up."

For the White House, the attorney general's Friday afternoon announcement was an unpleasant surprise, a head-snapping reversal from just seven weeks ago, when the president's team thought it had turned a corner with Hunter Biden's agreement with Mr. Weiss to plead guilty to two tax misdemeanors and accept a diversion program to dismiss an unlawful gun possession charge.

The Biden camp was deeply relieved that five years of investigation had added up to nothing more serious. The president made a point of inviting his son, who has struggled with a crack cocaine addiction, to a high-profile state dinner two days later in what was taken as a spike-the-ball moment declaring victory over the family's pursuers. The fact that Mr. Garland was also at the state dinner, hanging out just across an outdoor tent from the man his department was prosecuting, left even some Democrats feeling uncomfortable.

But any sense of relief was premature. When Hunter Biden showed up at the Federal District Court in Wilmington, Del., on July 26 to finalize the plea deal, it all unraveled under questioning from a judge in just a few hours. At the heart of the matter was a disagreement

over what the agreement meant. Hunter Biden and his lawyers thought it ended the investigation, while prosecutors made clear it did not.

The Hunter Biden legal team wants certainty that a guilty plea would end the matter, given that Mr. Trump has vowed to prosecute him if elected president. But as Mr. Weiss revealed on Friday, subsequent negotiations intended to iron out the disconnect have reached an impasse, making a trial all but certain to be the next step and making it easier for Republicans trying to shift attention from Mr. Trump's three indictments.

They are, of course, hardly comparable cases. Hunter Biden was never president and never will be president, and even the most damning evidence against him does not equate to trying to overturn a democratic election in order to hold onto power. But it has been a useful strategy for Republicans to complain about what they call a "two-tier justice system."

Three-quarters of Republicans believe the president's son got preferential treatment in the plea deal, compared with 33 percent of Democrats, according to a poll by Reuters and Ipsos in June. But most voters indicated that they thought Mr. Biden was "being a good father by supporting his son," and only 26 percent said they were less likely to vote for him as a result of Hunter's legal troubles.

The president's strategists have argued that Republican attacks on Hunter Biden did not work in the 2020 election when Mr. Biden beat Mr. Trump or in the 2022 midterm elections when Democrats did better than anticipated. Nor, they added, has the issue resonated with voters who will be important to the president's re-election in 2024, meaning independents and disappointed Democrats.

That is an assumption that in the months to come will be put on trial, in effect, at the same time as the president's son.

Peter Baker is the chief White House correspondent and has covered the last five presidents for The Times and The Washington Post. He is the author of seven books, most recently "The Divider: Trump in the White House, 2017-2021," with Susan Glasser. More about Peter Baker

What can I say? According to a newspaper, the NYT, that cannot be counted as more friendly to Joe Biden than any other media, the case of Hunter now having to go through a "special counsel" investigation is the very definition of a ticking time bomb.

Time Bomb 3: Ukraine

Biden and the collective west face a major problem in the Ukraine war. It is no longer news the Ukrainian armed forces have failed in its counter-offensive to dislodge the Russians from the occupied territories in the east and south of the country. We saw that admission in two influential liberal voices in the western media – Time magazine and CNN – and I have cited these articles in previous Commentaries. An explosion of such admissions have been seen in recent days. Here are some headlines from top-rated western media:

Alarm grows as Ukraine's counteroffensive falters, Aug 10, 2023 published in thehill.com

Slow counteroffensive darkens mood in Ukraine, Aug 10, 2023 published in The Washington Post

Western allies receive increasingly 'sobering' updates on Ukraine's counteroffensive, Aug 8, 2023 published in CNN.

On The Front Line: Ukraine's Counteroffensive Yields Small Gains, Aug 10, 2023 published in Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

Is Ukraine's counteroffensive turning out to be a bust? Aug 11, 2023 published in yahoo.com

Ukraine's counter-offensive against Russia yields only small gains in first 2 months, Aug 5 2023 published in BBC

Casualties mount as Ukraine's counteroffensive continues slow progress, 8 August 2023 published in PBS

Is Ukraine's counteroffensive failing? Kyiv and its supporters worry about losing control of the narrative, Aug 4, 2023 published in NBC News

Ukraine war latest: Counteroffensive is 'challenging', says Zelensky as Western pressure mounts, 8 August 2023 published in the Kyiv Independent

The above headlines say it all. These articles can be googled and the narrative has indeed changed. From one trumpeting a plucky Ukrainian defence, holding their own against a demoralized Russian conscript army lacking weapons because of economic sanctions, and suffering a high casualty rate, to more accurate reporting in which the UAF cannot even make any progress towards the first line of fortified defence and taking catastrophic casualties in both men and materiel while trying. In short, the Ukrainian army has failed, the ineffectiveness of "wunder-weapons" - flamboyantly self-rated by NATO manufacturers to be such - and the outright lying in the propaganda by the collective west have all failed.

The truth is now out.

And the disappointed people reassessing the truth are now painting a dismal picture of panic throughout Ukraine and the collective west, waiting for the time when Russia will deliver the fatal coup-de-grace.

Add to this the news that "Zelensky says all officials in charge of military recruitment offices dismissed amid corruption scandal" (Aug 11, 2023) in CNN, there is hardly any doubt how the war is going. I mean, how bad can corruption in Kyiv be? They are effectively

condemning young conscripts who have no bribes to give to brutal deaths. Who is ultimately responsible for this tragic state of affairs?

This is a big problem for Biden, who has been cheerleading the Ukrainian effort, regardless of the debilitating corruption of his puppets. Since the beginning of the conflict, his wild claims that “the Russian ruble will become rubble”, that he will support Ukraine “as long as it takes” and more recently that “Russia has already lost the war” are all sounding empty. His political future is staked out on a Russian military defeat and if that does not happen, there will be a political price to be paid. As it becomes clear that his policies have resulted in the continuation of an incompetent and corrupt government under Zelensky that has wasted \$46.6 billion in military aid so far plus another \$30 billion in financial aid, somebody (of course, it’s Biden, the man where the buck stops) will have to answer for it. This is particularly since Trump has been calling for an end to the conflict and that he can bring peace in Ukraine “in 24 hours”. The war could become an election issue if the shit show in Ukraine goes on.

The increasingly evident failure of NATO, led by America, to contain Russia in Ukraine shows up a major policy difference between Trump and Biden. Trump despises NATO; Biden tries to involve them even halfway around the world to take on China. But just in Ukraine, where NATO should not have any reason to fxxx up, that is exactly what is happening. Here is another independent article in Medium by my favourite Canadian-Sri-Lankan writer, Inda, who pens the following piece:

[NATO Has Failed In Ukraine](#)

By indi.ca • 9 Aug 2023

What do these fuckers know about winning a land-war in Western Asia (Europe)?

NATO wants to blame Ukraine’s failure on its legacy Soviet thinking. But the Soviet Army (and early Ukrainian Army) were quite competent compared to the horror-show counter-offensive NATO has unleashed. This failure is not because Ukraine failed inasmuch as NATO gave them bad advice and frankly fraudulent training. Ukraine’s failure is *because* NATO training and advice, not despite it.

NATO is like a playground bully training someone for a professional cage match. What the fuck do they know? NATO has *never* fought a peer army. Their offensive career has consisted exclusively of pulverizing poor countries without functional air defenses. Ukraine — after a year of its own pulverization — looks more like one of the third-graders NATO beats up on than a NATO Army.

The truth is that there is really no such thing as a NATO Army. There’s only a NATO Air Force and whatever fuck boy militia has been appointed as their street team. When was the last time NATO fought a tank battle? When was the last time NATO had their communications jammed? When was the last time NATO lost any significant men or matériel

and had to recover them? Neither NATO nor its American overlords know much about fighting toe-to-toe on the ground. They've got their head in the clouds, poor people in their crosshairs, and they have nothing but abstract theory to teach Ukrainians. Now that theory has hit a hard reckoning against the immovable object of Russia. NATO is like a playground bully training someone for a professional cage match. What the fuck do they know? NATO has *never* fought a peer army. Their offensive career has consisted exclusively of pulverizing poor countries without functional air defenses. Ukraine — after a year of its own pulverization — looks more like one of the third-graders NATO beats up on than a NATO Army.

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Even within imperial propaganda (NYTimes, WSJ, etc), it's not disputed that Russia has a commanding plane, helicopter, drone, and artillery advantage, ie command of the skies. Whatever Ukraine throws up, if it flies, it dies. Their Air Force is fundamentally grounded. The theoretical delivery of F16s in six months (once enough pilots learn English and once every airfield is pristine) won't change the reality on (and increasingly under) the ground. Ukraine has no command of the skies, which is the core assumption that NATO always operates under.

NATO training has not only failed in Ukraine, it has failed Ukraine, full stop. NATO has not trained Ukraine, it has betrayed them.

NATO/America (same thing) have thrown Ukraine into a fight *they would never get into themselves*. How do I know they'd never get into it? Because they're not fucking in it, are they? They're standing back and 'advising' and egging Ukraine's corrupt government on, not actually putting planes in the sky and (official) boots on the ground. If NATO did get into this fight, it would be a fight, which is simply not something they're used to. Like I said, NATO are playground bullies with nukes, not a tried-and-tested army. Their whole point was deterring Russia with nukes, their conventional equipment/training is just for playing dress up, or blowing up the murderous playground they've made of the Global South. NATO is used to blowing shit up on computer screens, not seeing their comrades blown up in front of them. They're fundamentally cowards.

Like true cowards, they're trying to throw Ukrainians under the bus for the failure of the much-publicized counter-offensive. As corrupt and criminal as the Ukrainian government is,

Ukrainian troops are undeniably brave, especially their forced conscripts, who are effectively prisoners. The problem is not their training, it's their mission, which is to attack massed defensive lines without air cover. This is a suicide mission and there's no amount of training that can prepare you for running through minefields while artillery rains down on you from above. This is simply not a situation commanders should order people into at all. This is not something NATO has done or ever would do, *it's the conditions NATO is used to imposing on other people*. And, in this way, NATO is attacking Ukraine as much as Russia. As Henry Kissinger said about America "It may be dangerous to be America's enemy, but to be America's friend is fatal." Same goes for its proxy force NATO, and gods help the proxy of a proxy.

The obvious response to a post like this would be 'well, what should Ukraine do?' What any sane country should do after this performance, and honestly before. Do not trust NATO unless you're in NATO. Do not trust Americans bearing 'gifts' and Europeans making promises. These fuckers have their own agenda and, if you're not already a made member of NATO, they have no security to offer you. They'll just make your country another battlefield and move onto the next one. Ukraine is not on a list of countries NATO has helped, that's a null set. Ukraine is just the latest on the list of countries NATO has obliterated. At this point, the NATO-trained, NATO-equipped counter-offensive offend nothing but common sense and the human conscience. A playground bully simply cannot train you in the martial arts.

Well, well, well... Trump has always found NATO ineffective. And he has complained loudly about it. Now that has been proven by the dismal performance of the so-called NATO trained proxy army which is being massacred by the very country NATO is set up to defend Europe against. If Trump becomes president again, I would expect him to pull the US out of NATO, and, against the irrelevance of NATO after Ukraine, to lead the US into another isolationist phase of its history, abandoning Europe to become an entity that has to come to terms with living with its neighbours, however disagreeable, on the same continent. Trump, if he succeeds to win a second term in the White House, will be even more MAGA than he has ever been.

Biden is therefore sitting on a ticking time bomb that will make him historically irrelevant, with the ghastly reputation of setting up alliances which his country cannot live up to. China can see this clearly, as this blogger does, and it is hardly worth the words to engage in an altercation with an old fool in the White House who is displaying the senility to cite basic economic data incorrectly, and to grandiosely boast an economic vitality and military prowess that he has so far failed to deliver to his allies everywhere.

The further implication of this is that his ambition for Churchillian stature is all but over. Even Churchill lost it all. Biden? We can only speculate, based on his track record so far. He cannot deliver on Build Back Better infrastructure, he cannot deliver on non-interventionist economic policy domestically, flipping between easy and tight monetary policies when none of this is happening in a supposedly "socialist" but actually non-interventionist China, and he certainly cannot deliver on military success against Russia, a

country much smaller economically than China. From my assessment of Taiwanese opinion that seems to be gathering pace, the Ukrainian disaster, and betrayal, will dampen any enthusiasm for a war of secession in Taiwan with the support of American arms, to enable the Biden White House to use such a conflict to dissipate the growing economic strength of China. Take on China? Fat chance...

Which will make his comment "I don't want to hurt China, but I will be watching..." supremely comical...

Yup, "watching China" overtake his American empire in every way that his country used to claim as "exceptionalism".

Helplessly, perhaps wistfully, and no doubt, painfully.

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Un-Influencer in a World full of Hubris