



**STRATEGY  
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**UKRAINE AND U.S. SECURITY**

BY

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**UKRAINE AND U.S. SECURITY**

by

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## ABSTRACT

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Ukraine is strategically located in Europe, bordering both Russia and the NATO countries of Hungary and Poland. It possesses a great deal of potential for developing into a European power. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, U.S. strategy toward Ukraine has lacked a broad, strategic foundation; rather, it has been narrowly focused and short-sighted. Future U.S. policy should focus on assisting Ukraine to become more westernized. American diplomats should seek the support of two key multi-national institutions—the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization—to achieve the desired end state of integrating Ukraine with Western Europe. While the United States must use the entire spectrum of elements of power, these two multinational institutions can further U.S. efforts to establish democratic capitalism and privatization in Ukraine and in setting the security framework for the region.

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## UKRAINE AND U.S. SECURITY

Ukraine is strategically located in Europe, bordering both Russia and the NATO countries of Hungary and Poland. Additionally, Ukraine has significant natural resources that are easily accessible. Overall, it possesses a great deal of potential for developing into a European power. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, American strategy toward Ukraine has lacked a broad, strategic foundation and has been too short-sighted. U.S. policy should focus on assisting Ukraine to become more westernized—a far-reaching strategy that uses all elements of national power to protect American interests in the region.

This study offers a brief historical background that elucidates many current Ukrainian actions and explores Ukraine's long relationship with Russia. Subsequently, it analyzes Ukraine's strategic location, showing why its geography, as well as its abundant resources and rich soil, cannot be ignored. Ukraine's relationships with Russia, Poland, and the United States include both successes and failures during recent years and set the framework for future policy. In light of these bilateral relationships, the United States needs to establish a coherent policy that utilizes its diplomatic, economic, military, and informational elements of power to shape Ukraine's future and shape its relationship with Russia and Western European countries. While Russia no longer maintains its superpower status, she still remains a critical part of any U.S. policy toward Ukraine. Ukraine is highly dependent upon Russia, especially for its energy needs. Moreover, Russia continues to be influential in world politics and must be considered in any U.S. and Ukraine bilateral actions.

Ukraine clearly has the potential to be an invaluable ally to the United States and our European allies. So American diplomats should use their influence to gain the support of two key multi-national institutions to achieve the desired end state of integrating Ukraine with Western Europe: the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. While the United States must as well rely on all instruments of power, these two institutions can strongly support U.S. efforts to establish capitalism and privatization in Ukraine and set the security framework for the region.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

To many westerners, Ukraine seemed to have almost magically appeared on the world scene on 24 August 1991, when it declared independence from the Soviet Union. With the exception of the nuclear power plant accident at Chernobyl on 26 April 1986, most Americans had never heard of Ukraine until it declared independence. Then U.S. strategists took notice because of the large number of Soviet nuclear weapons that remained so close to NATO

countries following Ukraine's declaration of independence. Yet, Ukraine has a rich history. Indeed its territory has been inhabited since the Stone Age. This history has molded contemporary Ukraine, and much of this history has been shaped by its geography and its relationship with Russia.

Ukraine is located on an extremely fertile and mineral-rich plain, and it has historically been a "crossroad between East and West, North and South."<sup>1</sup> This combination of fertile soil and rich minerals, along with its central location, has attracted traders and invaders over the years. Ukraine has often been a battleground. During World War II, for example, Ukraine lost one-sixth of its population.

Ukraine has had the reputation as being "the bread basket of Europe."<sup>2</sup> This reputation for natural wealth goes back to early written references by Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Arab writers who recorded the colonization of the Black Sea Coast. The Greek historian Herodotus raved about the Dnipro River, landing its abundance of fish and its banks overflowing with rich harvests.<sup>3</sup>

The period from the ninth through the thirteenth centuries thoroughly documents the era of Kyivan (formerly Kievan) Russia. This historical relationship between Ukraine and Russia provides much of the basis for the strong cultural ties between the two countries today. During this period, Europe was undergoing profound changes. During the ninth century, the current Ukraine was located at the intersection of the trade route linking "the Scandinavians to Byzantium and the silk route between Asia and Russia."<sup>4</sup> By the tenth century, Kyiv (previously Kiev) was the capital of a political conglomerate which had grown into the largest political entity on the continent. Kyiv itself had a population of 40,000; four hundred years later, London would achieve so large a population.

During the eleventh and twelfth centuries, Kyivan Russia reached the zenith of power under Vladimir the Great and Iaroslav the Wise. But it began its decline in the late twelfth century under the pressure of a new political foe – the Mongols. The Mongol invasion of 1237 and subsequent destruction of Kyiv in 1240 caused damage that took centuries to recover.<sup>5</sup> Under Mongol rule, Kyiv lost its role as political and commercial center. However, Kyiv's historical precedent as a critical part of Russia was set and continues to the present.

Although the Duchy of Lithuania expanded southward and gained control of much of the region in 1340, there were few changes in the region until the Islamic Ottomans grew in power in the South and the Catholic Poles grew in strength in the West. As the European population exploded, both groups descended on the fertile lands of Ukraine. Unlike their Mongol and Lithuanian predecessors, the Catholic Poles forced the resident Orthodox nobility to either

convert to Catholicism or lose all of their rights and privileges. Some converted, while others resorted to uprisings. Tensions came to a head in the mid-seventeenth century and culminated in 1648 (the year that the peace of Westphalia was signed). The indigenous group prevailed: "Cossacks had removed the Polish/Catholic influence from Ukrainian territory and set up their own state, the Hetmanate."<sup>6</sup>

In 1654, the leader of the Hetmanate concluded an agreement with the Tsar of Muscovy. This "Treaty of Periaslav" gained the Hetmanate a military ally. Following this treaty, Muscovy's power "began spreading into Ukrainian territories, gradually extending to the Black Sea, the Balkans and Central European areas."<sup>7</sup> Muscovy renamed itself the Russian Empire in 1721 and became the dominant regional power. The Hetmanate gradually lost its autonomy to the Russian Empire. "Central, eastern and southern Ukrainian lands came under Muscovite/Russian rule which was increasingly centralized...[it] turned into an economic colony, cut off from European influences."<sup>8</sup> Ukraine's importance in the Russian Empire became more and more important not only because of its agricultural production but also its minerals, particularly the Donbass Coal Fields. Additionally, Russian historians began recalling Kyivan Russia, demonstrating that Russians and Ukrainians are really one people. By 1865, Russia had banned the Ukrainian language.<sup>9</sup> Over time, the Muscovy ally totally displaced its Hetmanate partner.

"A short-lived independence from Russia (1917-1920) was followed by brutal Soviet rule that engineered two artificial famines (1921-22 and 1932-33) in which over 8 million died."<sup>10</sup> Following World War I, the Bolsheviks incorporated Ukraine into their new republic. As codified in the Treaty of 1922, Ukraine and Russia both became members of the Soviet Union. Meanwhile, the Western Ukrainian territories were divided between the newly created states of Poland, Romania, and Czechoslovakia. World War II devastated Ukraine. The exact amount of Ukrainian devastation is uncertain; however, according to Ukrainian historical expert Andrew Gregorovich,

Every Ukrainian family suffered losses in the war and many had victims of both Hitler and Stalin. Perhaps it is significant that out of three of my relatives who were victims of the war, two were shot by Stalin's USSR and one was shot by Hitler's Gestapo... Ukrainian losses probably numbered 10 million or half of the entire USSR total and twenty per cent of the entire World War II total of fifty million dead.<sup>11</sup>

The Red Army then set Ukraine's current borders at the end of World War II. Many Russians today have a difficult time accepting Ukraine as an independent state because historical writings portray Ukrainians as a subset of the Russian people. This historical ethnicity

dates to the ninth century Kyivan Russia period. Moreover, contemporary Russians believe that Kyiv should be a centerpiece of contemporary Russia. Additionally, Nikita Krushchev gave the Crimean Peninsula to the Ukraine as a gift in 1954. Many Russians believe that Crimea is still Russian territory and do not accept it as part of the independent state of Ukraine. Until Ukraine declared independence in 1991, the arrangement was satisfactory to most Russians as they considered Ukraine as a part of Russia. Whether Crimea is truly Ukrainian or whether it is legitimately Russian remains one of the most contentious issues between Ukraine and Russia today.

### STRATEGIC LOCATION

Ukraine is without question at a strategic location between Europe and Asia and, within Europe, between Russia and Western Europe. As seen in Figure 1, Ukraine borders Russia, Belarus, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Moldova. To the south, it is bordered by the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Not only does Ukraine directly border the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries of Poland and Hungary, but it is also directly across the Black Sea from another NATO country – Turkey.

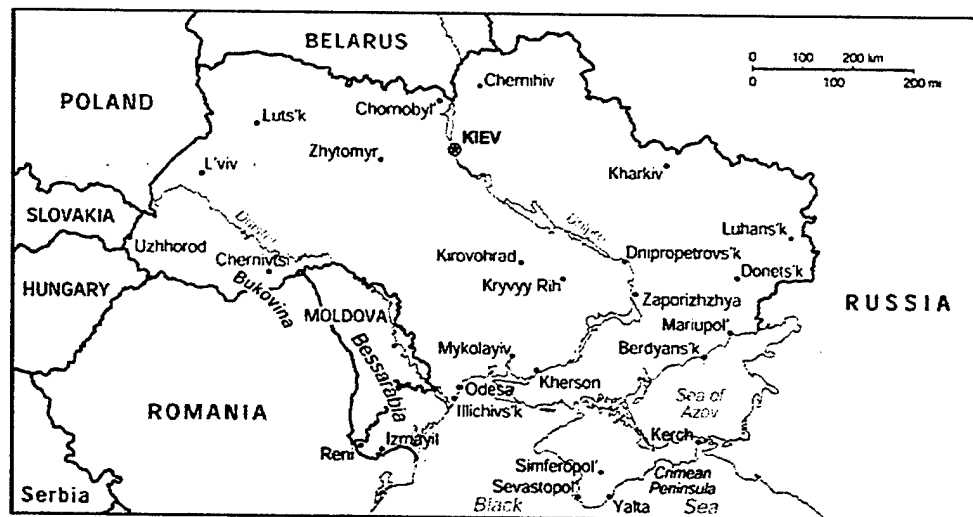


FIGURE 1 – MAP OF UKRAINE

country – Turkey.

Furthermore, Black Sea access places Ukraine at a crossroad between Iran, Iraq and the Middle East and Western Europe.

Thus Ukraine continues its historic function of serving as a crossroad and central hub of transportation corridors and energy routes. Increased world reliance on fossil fuels has made the Black Sea region an invaluable area for the transport of Caspian Sea oil. This has only increased Ukraine's importance as a "major trading hub between Central Asia and Azerbaijan on the one hand and Europe on the other."<sup>12</sup> There is also little doubt that at least some of the

drug trafficking that has been critical to funding the Al Qaeda and other terrorist networks has been transported through Ukraine to Western European markets and beyond.

The total area of Ukraine is approximately 233,000 square miles, which is slightly smaller than the state of Texas. Russia is the only country on the European continent with a larger land mass. Ukraine has a population

of approximately fifty million; its major ethnic groups include

Ukrainian, who comprise 73% of the population and Russian, who make up 22%.

Ethnicity	Ukrainian	Russian	Jewish	Other
% of Population	73%	22%	1%	4%

TABLE 1 - ETHNICITY BREAKOUT

Ukraine currently recognizes its strategic location and the importance of leveraging this location to further its national interests. Its geopolitical and foreign policy priorities reflect this strategic awareness:

The priority of an orientation toward integration into the EU [European Union] and the WEU [Western European Union]; the enhancement of a distinctive partnership with NATO, including as a first phase a course toward joining the political structures of this organization, as a cornerstone of European security;

The strengthening of a strategic partnership with the USA and of ties with western European countries in correspondence with national interests and priorities of Ukraine.

The strengthening and consolidation of special relations with strategically important neighbors. Of primary concern are Poland, the Baltic States, Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and states of the Vishegrad group;

The promotion of the formation of a stability belt and regional security structures from the Baltic and Black Seas to the Caucasus and Central Asia;

Active participation in the creation of European and Eurasian transportation corridors along the "Baltic-Black Sea – Middle East" axis as well as along the "Western Europe – Ukraine – the Transcaucases – Central Asia – China" axis; The use of these corridors for the purposes of creating a reliable multi-alternative system of supplying energy carriers and strategically important resources;

A course toward alternative leadership within the territories of the former USSR, first of all in the Black Sea – Caspian Sea region.<sup>13</sup>

## ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

While Ukraine possesses tremendous economic potential, "the greatest threat to Ukraine's independence is not military but economic – in particular, the lack of a coherent economic reform program."<sup>14</sup> Both Ukraine and Western policymakers failed to pay enough

attention to this fact during the period immediately following Ukraine's independence. Consequently, its economy nearly collapsed in 1993 when inflation reached 10,000 percent per month.<sup>15</sup> President Leonid Kuchma introduced an economic reform program in 1994 that brought the economy back from the verge of collapse and bolstered Western confidence in Ukraine's economic potential.

Ukraine is rich in natural resources. It holds an estimated five percent of the world's mineral resources in 8,000 deposits of 90 different minerals.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, these natural resources tend to be conveniently located and easily accessible. The Donets Basin in the southeast has large deposits of coal, and the east central area contains large amounts of iron ore.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, Ukraine has some of the largest deposits of manganese in the world,<sup>18</sup> along with abundant oil, natural gas, salt, sulfur, graphite, titanium, nickel, mercury and timber.<sup>19</sup> "Around these resources, Ukraine has a developed industrial base."<sup>20</sup>

About half of the territory of Ukraine "consists of the exceptionally fertile black chernozem, a type of soil that is ideal for agriculture."<sup>21</sup> Moreover, its temperate continental climate with warm summers across the greater part of the country, is quite favorable for agriculture. The potential of this fertile soil is obvious; indeed Ukraine accounted for approximately one-fourth of the total agriculture of the former Soviet Union. Ukraine continues to boast extensive exports of meat, grain, milk, and vegetables. However, the Chernobyl nuclear accident in 1986 caused significant radiation damage to large portions of some of Ukraine's most fertile soils, and we still do not fully understand the long-term human health consequences and dangers from this radiation.

With its abundance of resources, it is obvious that Ukraine does not have to be a poor country. "Its economy is not underdeveloped but misdeveloped."<sup>22</sup> Yet, Ukraine has made progress as "indicators show that from January-May 1998 the economy showed its first signs of growth."<sup>23</sup> The economy showed additional growth from 2000 to 2001. Furthermore, "Ukraine has succeeded in achieving its short-term economic goals despite the generally negative evaluations of its economic performance."<sup>24</sup> These short-term economic goals sought to create an independent economic unit, introduce market reforms, and join the global economy.<sup>25</sup> While Ukraine has made improvements to its economy, it is inter-dependent with economies of other countries, especially Russia. Nearly all of Ukraine's energy comes from Russia, and Ukraine currently owes a huge debt to Russia.

"Ukraine's long-term economic goals are to reverse the decline which began in the 1960s, create an efficient growth economy and integrate into European structures."<sup>26</sup> Ukraine has a

long way to go to achieve these long-term economic goals. Whether they succeed or fail is dependent upon numerous factors. Success could benefit U.S. interests. As we shall see, economic and diplomatic elements of U.S. power could be applied to assist Ukraine achieve these goals.

## **CURRENT BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Since Ukraine declared independence in August 1991, its relationships with Russia, Poland, and the United States have been vital. Without question, it is in the national interest of all three of these countries to have favorable relationships with Ukraine. "It is a state that is too large and too geographically central to this emerging security environment to be ignored."<sup>27</sup>

Zbigniew Brzezinski was well aware of Ukraine's importance to Russia: "it cannot be stressed strongly enough that without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be an empire, but with Ukraine suborned and then subordinated, Russia automatically becomes an empire."<sup>28</sup> History highlights the importance of Ukraine to the Russian people, and Russia values Ukraine's strategic and economic potential, as well as its vast natural resources. Similarly, Ukraine is highly dependent on Russia, especially for its energy needs.

Sherman Garnett similarly noted Ukraine's importance to both the United States and Poland: "Ukraine now has a chance to be the security keystone for this part of Europe; its failure to become that could mean a collapse of peace for Europe as a whole."<sup>29</sup> While Poland and Ukraine have taken up arms against each other in the past, recently, they have been able to focus on the future rather than dwelling on the past. Hence, they have been able to set the framework for sound diplomatic, economic, and military ties that critically enhance Poland's ability to serve as the geographic bridge for Ukrainian integration into Western Europe.

After two world wars in the twentieth century and with recent peacekeeping operations in the Balkans, the United States has an obvious interest in maintaining a stable and secure Europe. Ukraine has a significant geostrategic place in Europe, and American diplomats recognize the significance and importance of a strong bilateral relationship with Ukraine. Ukraine is important to the United States, Russia, and Poland. It recognizes this importance, yet Ukraine is dependent upon on all three for its future prosperity and even survival. Therefore, its relationship with these three countries is absolutely critical.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH RUSSIA**

Russia, without question, would like to remain in a strong partnership with Ukraine for many reasons. Russia continues to view North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries as a potential threat, and NATO expansion has brought this threat closer to Russian soil. The

loss of East Germany, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic as "buffer states" has forced Russian leadership to increase dependency on Ukraine and Belarus to provide security from the NATO and Western European threat. Belarus, which has a higher percentage of ethnic Russians than Ukraine, has exhibited a greater tendency to favor Russia. Consequently, since Russia already has enjoyed a more favorable relationship with Belarus, Russian diplomats have focused their efforts much more toward Ukraine than toward Belarus.

Ukraine appears to be in the process of moving toward closer ties with Russia, rather than attempting to distance itself from Moscow. Since Ukraine is so dependent upon Russian energy, Ukraine "traditionally dampens its pro-Western foreign policy during winter when its demand for energy grows."<sup>30</sup> However, the current tendency to favor Moscow is greater than usual. The primary reasons for this include continued Russian influence in Ukraine and a scandal involving the very highest echelons of Ukraine's government that has caused President Kuchma to "shy away from the West and move toward Russia's more accepting embrace."<sup>31</sup> Kuchma and other Ukraine officials may have been responsible for the murder of a journalist (on-line reporter Hryhory Ganzadze) and may be involved in a cover-up. Strong language from the Bush administration has Kuchma leaning more favorably toward Russia. Additionally, western Europeans continue to shy away from significant investments there because of Ukraine's instability and the risks to private companies that might be inclined to invest.<sup>32</sup>

"The men who run Ukraine come from the Soviet ruling class, the ... nomenklatura."<sup>33</sup> Since there were few qualified bureaucrats to choose from, "it is not surprising that the old provincial ruling class in large measure became the national ruling class."<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, the reign of these former Soviet elites "continues unchecked in Kyiv and creates a huge obstacle to progress, reform and security."<sup>35</sup> These former Soviet elites maintain significant influence in pushing policy and action; they often favor Russian initiatives over Western European privatization and other initiatives. In the eastern portion of Ukraine, where large numbers of people of Russian ancestry continue to live, opposition to privatization remains strong. Consequently, in eastern Ukraine there is a propensity to favor closer relations with Russia than with the West.

Similarly, there is a large Russian population on the Crimean peninsula and a definite inclination there toward favorable relations with Moscow. Nearly two-thirds of the Crimean population is Russian, and even a higher percentage of the populace in that region speaks Russian as their primary language. Russia continues to rely on the Crimean Peninsula to base its Black Sea fleet, especially the port of Sevastopol. This basing is essential for Russia to maintain a strategic presence in the Black Sea area. Consequently, Ukrainians of Russian

descent in Crimea and the leadership in Moscow are both pushing for improved relations in support of Russia's strategic welfare.

Just when privatization was appearing to gain momentum as Ukraine's economy was showing improvement and stabilization, a major scandal unfolded that has the potential for far-reaching and negative consequences for the West. In January 2001, Ukraine's GDP was up by 9.1 percent from the year before and industrial production had increased by 19.5 percent.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, the projected inflation rate was set at only 13.5 percent for the entire year, which was remarkable when compared to the hyperinflation of over 10,000 percent per month experienced eight years earlier. Despite these favorable economic indicators, the scandal has stymied Western investments and may seriously impact Ukraine's bilateral relationships.

President Kuchma appears to be at the center of the current scandal. Audiotapes indicate that Kuchma and other very highly placed government officials may have been responsible for the murder of a journalist (on-line reporter Hryhory Ganzadze) and the subsequent cover-up of the murder plot. Additionally, Kuchma maintains friends whom U.S. officials deem as corrupt and who, in some instances, have very large sums of money in illicit bank accounts. The West has not reacted favorably toward Kuchma as a result of this scandal. However, Russian President Vladimir Putin has seized this opportunity to further Moscow's political aims, while Kuchma realizes his political survival may be tied to improved Russian relations and has acted accordingly.

These improved Russian ties began in October 2000 when pro-western foreign minister Borys Taryshuk was fired and replaced by Anatoly Zlenko, whom Russia regarded as more acceptable. Simultaneously, Kuchma began to speak about improvement in other ties with Russia.<sup>37</sup> A February 2001 summit between Kuchma and Putin resulted in an agreement to greater economic and technological cooperation between the two countries. While the West continues to shy away from investing in Ukraine because of its instability, Russia has increased its investment.

The scandal has caused Kuchma to lose a great deal of confidence from his people. By a five-to-one margin, the public declares absolutely no trust in Kuchma. Furthermore ninety-five percent of the people are dissatisfied with the country and its state of affairs.<sup>38</sup> However, as with many other former communist countries, the president possesses extremely strong powers. For example, he appoints the prime minister (subject to parliamentary approval) and he chooses one-third of the federal judges. He can only be removed from office for "treason or other high crimes"—and then only by an eighty percent vote in parliament.<sup>39</sup>

But numerous factors have caused the Ukrainian leaders to lean toward improved relations with Russia, while distancing themselves from the United States and Western Europe. President Kuchma's political survival may depend upon the strengths of the coalitions he builds. Since prospects of external support appear more favorable from Moscow, he will most likely continue to attempt to strengthen these ties. Additionally, historically strong Russian and former Soviet ties augment this tendency. A reversal in policy may be difficult.

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES

Since Ukraine declared independence in August 1991, the United States has invested billions of dollars in this former Soviet country. Yet U.S. policy toward Ukraine has often lacked long-term focus and has generally been centered on short-term issues. Formal relations between Ukraine and the United States began in January 1992 when Ukraine formally became a state. Initially, the United States focused on nuclear issues. Most Americans involved in this diplomacy were experts in nuclear and arms control issues; however, they lacked knowledge and expertise on Ukraine, its history and geopolitics, aside from the strategic arms talks at hand.<sup>40</sup> When the two countries resolved the nuclear issues, diplomatic relations focused mostly on NATO expansion and a general desire to maintain a stable post-Cold war relationship in the region. American-Ukrainian relations seemed to be improving during the latter part of the 1990s; however, the current scandal involving President Kuchma appears to be moving Ukraine closer to Moscow, to the detriment of its partnership with the United States.

In 1991 U.S. "officials, with the exception of then Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, largely looked at the Ukrainian declaration of sovereignty and subsequent moves to separate Ukraine from the USSR with shock and horror."<sup>41</sup> There were real fears among American politicians and nuclear experts on how a newly independent Ukraine might use its existing nuclear arsenal. Although the United States had a large and active Ukrainian-American community that approached the legislative and executive branches of the American government, policymakers largely discounted their advice and insights. Consequently, the United States focused almost exclusively on nuclear issues. Ukraine, on the other hand, treated the nuclear question "as part of a whole package of issues from debt-relief to the division of the Black Sea Fleet that defined Russian-Ukrainian relations."<sup>42</sup> By 1993, Zbigniew Brzezinski had formed a small American-Ukrainian Advisory committee that brought together prominent Americans with Ukrainian counterparts. This committee issued recommendations to expand the focus on nuclear disarmament with an appreciation for the strategic importance of an independent and stable Ukraine.<sup>43</sup>

By the middle of 1996, all former Soviet nuclear warheads had been removed from Ukraine. After the first two years of attempting to negotiate nuclear disarmament in Ukraine, the United States began to link the nuclear issues to other security, political and economic issues. This broader approach paid a significant dividend toward successful nuclear disarmament. Additionally, it created conditions for a potential lasting diplomatic relationship. A key element for removal of all nuclear warheads from Ukraine was U.S. financial incentives. For example, the United States paid Russia for highly enriched uranium which then provided Russia the assets required to compensate Ukraine for removal of the nuclear weapons.

By the end of the 1990s, American-Ukrainian relations continued to improve. In October 1996, Foreign Minister Udovenko visited Washington, and both Ukraine and the United States "declared their relationship a full-fledged strategic partnership."<sup>44</sup> Then Ukraine voiced support for NATO enlargement in the 1996 -1997 timeframe, and the United States spearheaded efforts within NATO to establish a special NATO - Ukrainian partnership, which was highlighted in a special charter adopted in the mid-1997 Madrid Summit. Additionally, in 1998 Ukraine disassociated itself with a Russian deal to provide nuclear technology to Iran, even though Ukrainian sponsorship would have been economically favorable, especially to their Kharkiv region.<sup>45</sup>

Militarily, Ukraine has participated in the NATO's Partnership for Peace (PfP) initiatives. Additionally, Ukraine has served as a coalition member in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, where they have provided ground support as well as helicopter support as a part of peacekeeping operations. However, Western European countries and the United States continue to shy away from investing in Ukrainian privatization, while Russia has been investing. This Russian investment, coupled with western responses to the scandal that is threatening President Kuchma's legitimacy, has the Ukrainian leadership drifting farther away from the United States and Western Europeans and toward its former Soviet partners in Moscow.

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH POLAND

Ukraine's "most promising and important regional partner is Poland."<sup>46</sup> Poland quickly recognized the security benefits of an independent Ukraine. During the three years following Ukrainian independence, Kyiv and Warsaw made significant progress toward an improved relationship. However, some of this momentum stalled from 1993 through 1994 mostly because of Poland's increased efforts to focus westward in support of NATO expansion, rather than eastward toward Ukraine. Now that Poland is a full member of NATO, it is once again looking eastward.

Historically, much of Ukraine was often a part of Poland. On several occasions Poles and Ukrainians have taken up arms against each other. However, following Ukraine's declaration of independence, both countries were able to look beyond historical tensions and stumbling blocks over borders, and they formed an institutional network for cooperation at the highest levels.<sup>47</sup> Poland was the first country to recognize Ukraine's independence, officially doing so in December 1991. In August 1991, President George Bush warned Ukraine against "suicidal nationalism,"<sup>48</sup> while "many in Poland understood the importance of a stable, independent Ukraine as a check on the reconstitution and reach of Russian power."<sup>49</sup>

In 1992 and 1993, several high-level Polish leaders visited Kyiv, including Lech Walesa, who declared, "It is impossible to imagine Europe without a democratic and independent Ukraine."<sup>50</sup> In January 1992, the two countries signed a modest military cooperation agreement. Then in May 1992 they signed a friendship treaty. This initial Polish-Ukrainian relationship served to eliminate potential tensions and set the foundation for a long-term cooperation. However, both countries had other pressing diplomatic and economic concerns. So, they focused on other more pressing issues. With Ukraine's hyperinflation at the forefront and political stability in question from late 1993 through 1994, Poland began to focus more toward the West. Moreover, Poland saw an improved probability for NATO membership, and its "ambitions in the West prevented it from standing too close to a Ukrainian state clearly unprepared for NATO or other Western institutions."<sup>51</sup>

"In 1995, increasing worries about the direction of Russian policy once more shifted Ukrainian-Polish ties to center stage in both capitals."<sup>52</sup> Senior officials from both countries met to rejuvenate their partnership, and "Poland played a key role in pressing for Ukraine's full membership in the Central European Initiative in October 1995."<sup>53</sup> Additionally, the two countries upgraded their defense ties and explored military cooperation in NATO's Partnership for Peace Program.<sup>54</sup>

Since Poland became a full NATO partner, both Poland and Ukraine have strengthened their bilateral relationship. Evidence includes the military agreement both countries signed on January 22, 2001 that "envisages expanding their joint [combined] military unit and further cooperation in military technology."<sup>55</sup> Poland has clearly acknowledged the need to look eastward as well as westward to maintain regional security and stability. Accordingly, Poland has renewed its relationship with Ukraine. Poland's relationship to Ukraine may one day serve as the initial "bridge" to the success of post-Cold War NATO and any future expansion of the alliance.

## **FUTURE AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD UKRAINE**

"The United States recognizes Ukraine as a pivotal and strategic player in bridging the gap between Eastern Europe and the West."<sup>56</sup> Future American policy toward Ukraine must be based on an ends, ways and means approach and utilize all elements of national power to arrive at a comprehensive policy that supports a strong, mutually beneficial relationship between Ukraine and the United States. It is clear that the United States must use its power and influence to include Russia, Western Europe and other countries in the region in this policy. A simple agreement between Ukraine and the United States cannot and will not have the impact of a multilateral agreement with NATO nations, the European Union (EU), and former Soviet Union nations. Clearly the ends that the United States wants to achieve can be characterized by its three core national objectives: enhance America's security, bolster America's prosperity, and promote democracy and human rights abroad. In general terms, the ways to accomplish these objectives are through appropriate application of elements of national power – diplomatic, military, economic, and informational. Perhaps most important, however, is that these four elements of national power be fully synchronized through the interagency process and with other nations in order to attain the desired synergistic effect, which is lost when each element of power is applied without consideration of the other elements.

### **DIPLOMATIC**

The diplomatic effort should not focus directly on the United States and Ukraine. Rather, the diplomatic effort should be directed at partnerships that include Poland, Russia, Ukraine, and other former Soviet countries, as well as Western European countries that can serve to promote regional stability. It would also be prudent for the United States to exercise its political power by using existing alliances such as NATO and the EU to further improve Western partnerships with Ukraine. In 1989 while serving as the Commander of United States Forces Command, Colin Powell predicted that if "tomorrow morning we opened NATO to new members we'd have several applications on our desk within a week – ...maybe even Ukraine."<sup>57</sup> Ukraine fully understands the importance of NATO. Consider President Kuchma's description of NATO as "the only real guarantor of security on the continent."<sup>58</sup> Yet, Kuchma also understands the importance of Russia and will not accept any agreements without considering their impact on Ukraine's relationship with Russia. While the timing might not be propitious for including Ukraine in the next round of NATO expansion, the possibility of Ukraine's future membership in the alliance should be left open.

The current scandal involving the Ukrainian President and many of his key advisors, caused Kuchma to unleash a political offensive and "let loose the militia and security services, who brutally beat some protestors and started criminal procedures against others."<sup>59</sup> While "President George W. Bush, Secretary of State Colin Powell and various European leaders have all warned of the dire consequences that await Ukraine's leaders should they pursue a path of repression,"<sup>60</sup> these leaders must now acknowledge that Kuchma may not be the pro-Western savior he was once thought, or at least hoped, to be. The Ukrainian people have without a doubt lost confidence in President Kuchma. Even though he will try to survive politically, the United States should pressure Ukraine to reduce the executive powers of the Ukrainian government and install a better system of checks and balances among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. While this diplomacy will take time and will not serve to immediately remove Kuchma from office, it will put in place a framework for decreasing presidential power and pave the way for long-term changes that will allow removal of corrupt senior officials. Economic incentives that must be linked to measurable improvements to the system of checks and balances could facilitate this initiative.

"The European Union has a partnership and cooperation agreement with Kiev [Kyiv], but European officials are still skeptical of Kiev's [Kyiv's] long-term prospects and orientation."<sup>61</sup> During her recent visit to Kyiv, Condoleezza Rice expressed the American diplomatic message that "Ukraine's integration into Europe depends on democratic reforms, transparent probes into killings of journalists and fair elections."<sup>62</sup> Decreased corruption will lessen this skepticism and likely increase privatization and improve overall relations with Western Europe, which in turn could contribute to improved stability in the region. The United States should use its diplomatic influence to pressure the EU to increase Ukrainian support, yet link this support to measurable democratic improvements, such as a decrease in power of the executive branch. Diplomatic rhetoric must be carefully synchronized with economic and informational initiatives to maximize the overarching effort to strengthen Ukraine and bring her closer to EU nations and the United States.

## MILITARY

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has provided the framework for military commitments in Europe since shortly after World War II. Much has changed in the last twelve years since the removal of the Berlin wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union. "The low levels of conventional forces, the reduced strategic nuclear presence, and the absence of battlefield deployments of tactical nuclear weapons create favorable military conditions in the

region – certainly the most favorable in several generations.”<sup>63</sup> Consequently, NATO has made some significant changes since the end of the Cold War. The most noteworthy has been NATO’s expansion, adding Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic to the alliance and bringing the number of NATO members up to nineteen. While NATO should continue its transformation to accommodate the changing world, the United States should use its influence in the alliance to leverage NATO to focus some of its military efforts toward Ukraine. Once again, all policies and efforts toward Ukraine must take into account ongoing Russian initiatives.

NATO countries, Russia, and Ukraine have already been heavily engaged in recent NATO expansion activities as well as potential future expansion. Both Russia and Ukraine are engaged in Partnership for Peace exercises and peacekeeping operations in the Balkans. Military operations in both Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo have demonstrated that Americans, Ukrainians, Russians and dozens of other countries can, in fact, work together toward the common goal of keeping the peace and providing a safe and secure Europe. The American military in the region allows both the Russians and the Ukrainians to observe American military equipment and personnel in action. While this openness provides excellent intelligence for potential future adversaries, it also demonstrates the true American military might and provides a deterrent from attacking U.S. forces. Additionally, the American military has enough contact with the Russians and Ukrainians to show how American democracy has contributed to U.S. prosperity, thereby modeling the potential advantages privatization and pro-democratic changes could have in their respective countries.

It is unlikely that Russia will become a member of NATO any time soon, and it is also unlikely that Russia will warmly embrace further NATO expansion. Nevertheless, the recent war against terrorism has served to bond NATO with Russia for the common goal of eliminating terrorists. America should encourage NATO to continue these partnerships with Russia and Ukraine in future military activities. The near-term payoff might be slight; however, the long-term benefits could be significant.

Diplomats should encourage the Ukrainian military to participate in NATO sponsored activities. Friendships and collegiality among military officers in the Balkans can have lasting implications in the military realm as well as lay the groundwork for future diplomatic activities. Demonstrations of American and NATO military might in current operations make the military element of power a tremendous deterrent – and a potential threat – to be used in future diplomatic negotiations.

## ECONOMIC

The United States has invested heavily in Ukraine. While hindsight might indicate more efficient and effective uses of such investment, overall they have stimulated some pro-Western reform. The U.S. investments were a primary factor in removing the nuclear arsenal in Ukraine. These funds have led to a better relationship between Ukraine and the United States:

The billions of dollars of foreign aid sent during the 1990's have not been squandered, and Ukraine today has significant pro-reform and pro-democracy forces, along with a new entrepreneurial class free from the corrupt oligarchic system. These factors as well as the growing disaffection of some of Kuchma's backers have left the president vulnerable and susceptible to pressure.<sup>64</sup>

Future economic aid should come as a comprehensive package that is linked to economic assistance to Russia and Western European countries to ensure the objectives achieved are comprehensive rather than unfavorable to other countries and potentially counterproductive. The United States should exercise its leadership to support appropriate loans and grants from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Economic incentives should be linked to assurances that the Ukrainian government will improve its system of checks and balances among the legislative, judicial and executive branches of government. This would lead to a more democratic government and reduce the likelihood of major presidential scandals in the future. Currently, Ukraine cannot remove or even censure a corrupt president. Specifically, the United States should use its influence to convince the IMF to repay some of Ukraine's energy debt to Russia with the understanding that Ukraine will undergo pro-democratic reforms. This will not only relieve Russian and Ukrainian financial difficulties, but will also support needed reforms in both countries.

The European Union should be a central vehicle of Ukrainian reform. The United States can influence the EU by linking trade agreements and monetary and defense incentives to the EU's agreement to provide favorable economic incentives to Ukraine. The EU has the potential to favorably impact privatization and other pro-Western reforms. Furthermore, the EU should link their efforts to democratic reforms that serve to decrease corruption in the region.

All aid packages should be conditional upon guarantees of improved human rights and the rule of law, as well as guarantees for freedom of the press. Economic incentives to the media and other information operations venues would serve to provide resources that could strengthen the system of checks and balances within the government. Aid should be coupled with initiatives to fight corruption and expose corrupt politicians. It should also be linked to exposing activities of the Nomenklatura (former Soviet elites) who have been influential, especially in Kyiv, in hindering pro-democratic progress.

Used properly, the economic element of power can have a significant impact toward the favorable achievement of United States national objectives in the region. Sound economic policy can definitely serve to promote democracy and human rights abroad and bolster American security through a more stable Europe. Perhaps the most important impact of the economic instrument of power is its provision of the framework and monetary resources that enable the diplomatic, informational and military elements to achieve their full effects.

## INFORMATIONAL

The informational element of power can be extremely influential in shaping public opinion of the Ukrainian people, as well as Western allies and Russians. Linking monetary aid to freedom of the press in Ukraine, gives the media the opportunity to highlight democratic successes to fifty million Ukrainian citizens and to fully expose corrupt officials. Additionally, potential improvements to the existing system that include a more stable and equal division of power between, legislative, judicial and executive branches of power can be broadcast to the masses to gain popular support of pro-democratic improvements. Exposing the Nomenklatura and their activities would reduce support for corrupt former Soviet activities that do not promote democracy or bolster human rights abroad, or contribute to domestic welfare.

The media and other information operations are powerful tools to convince Western European allies to take advantage of investment opportunities that lead toward privatization and pro-democratic reform in Ukraine. Linked with economic incentives, this campaign could convince investors to take acceptable risks and thus improve the chances of success for private industry initiatives in Ukraine.

The information operations campaign should highlight the vast natural resources available in Ukraine and its strategic crossroads location. Not only does Ukraine have a diverse and bountiful reserve of minerals that are easily accessible, it serves as a transportation hub to the Middle East, Asia, Western Europe, and Russia. A meager investment today truly has enormous potential for long-term financial success because of Ukraine's geographic position. Convincing media arguments for investment opportunities coupled with examples of successful private companies already in the region, would effectively increase pro-democratic investments in Ukraine.

An effective information operations effort would also target Russia in order to gain popular Russian support for democratic initiatives in Ukraine as well as highlighting repressive Nomenklatura actions and corrupt official activities. By aggressively influencing the Russian populace about the positive aspects of democratic reform in Ukraine, the media can also

effectively instill potential advantages in the minds of the Russian leadership. All of this educational initiative would support diplomatic initiatives with the Russian leadership that can improve stability in Ukraine and promote long-term security in the region.

## **CONCLUSION**

Much has changed since the end of the Cold War. Any diplomatic relationship with Ukraine must be different from what it would have been prior to its declaration of independence in 1991. Yet the United States must recognize the geostrategic importance of Ukraine and develop a broad and comprehensive policy that furthers American national interests in an important region. U.S. policymakers must ensure that Western European efforts, as well as initiatives with Russia, are fully coordinated with any bilateral United States – Ukrainian agreements.

Additionally, American policy must exploit the entire interagency and international process to synchronize U.S. diplomatic, military, economic, and informational elements of power to ensure that its ways and means are used to maximum effectiveness to achieve U.S. national objectives. The United States should use its influence in organizations such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union as a framework for Ukrainian initiatives. All initiatives should be tied to measurable criteria that move Ukraine toward a more democratic and less corrupt nation. An economically sound and more democratic Ukraine will contribute positively to a more secure and prosperous Europe and will likewise strengthen U.S. interests in the region.

The twentieth century is often regarded as the century of war in Europe. A far-reaching and coherent U.S. policy that serves to link Ukraine with Western Europe could lead to a twenty-first century known as the century of peace and integration in Europe. Effective use of U.S. elements of power to integrate Ukraine into Europe is key to maintaining a stable and secure Europe and to implementation of U.S. national strategy.

WORD COUNT = 7,271

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Marta Dyczok, Ukraine, Movement without Change, Change without Movement, (Amsterdam, Netherlands: Gordon-Breach, 2000), 10

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 10

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 11

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 11

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 12

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 15

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 16

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 17

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 17

<sup>10</sup> CIA World Factbook, Ukraine, [www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/up.html](http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/up.html), 2001.

<sup>11</sup> Andrew Gregorovich, "World War II in Ukraine," Forum Ukrainian Review No. 92 (Scranton, PA: Ukrainian Fraternal Association Publishing), 1995

<sup>12</sup> Duygu B. Sezer, "Ukraine, Turkey and the Black Sea Region," Ukraine in the World, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press), 1998, 83

<sup>13</sup> B. Parakhonsky, "Ukraine in Core Geopolitical Outlines," in Ukraine 2000 and Beyond: Geopolitical Priorities and Scenarios of Development, (Kyiv, Ukraine: National Institute for Strategic Studies and National Institute for Ukrainian-Russian Relations), 1999, 5-6

<sup>14</sup> F. Stephen Larrabee, "Ukraine's Place in European and Regional Security," (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Publications), 1998, 250

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 250

<sup>16</sup> Dyczok, 68

<sup>17</sup> Encarta, 1

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 1

<sup>19</sup> CIA World Factbook, Ukraine, 2

<sup>20</sup> Dyczok, 68

<sup>21</sup> Encarta, 1

<sup>22</sup> Dyczok, 68

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 69

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 69

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 69

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 70

<sup>27</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press), 1997, 7

<sup>28</sup> Zbigniew Brzezinski. "The Premature Partnership," Foreign Affairs, March/April 1994, Vol 72, Number 2, 80

<sup>29</sup> Garnett, 10

<sup>30</sup> Taras Kuzio, "Increasingly Assertive Russia Poses Challenge for U.S. Policy," in The Ukrainian Weekly, Vol. LXIX, No. 10, March 11, 2001, 2

<sup>31</sup> Adrian Karatnycky, "Meltdown in Ukraine," Foreign Affairs, May/June 2001, Vol 80, Number 3, 73

<sup>32</sup> Sherman Garnett, "Reform, Russia and Europe: The Strategic Context of Ukraine's NATO policy," in From Madrid to Brussels: Perspectives on NATO Enlargement, ed by Stephen J. Blank, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute), 1997, 81

<sup>33</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe, 30

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 30

<sup>35</sup> Stephen J. Blank, From Madrid to Brussels: Perspectives on NATO Enlargement, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute), 1997, x

<sup>36</sup> Karatnycky, 74-75

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, 80

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 75

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 80

<sup>40</sup> Sherman Garnett, "U.S.-Ukrainian Relations," in Ukraine in the World, ed by Lubomyr A. Hajda, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998, 104

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 104

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 104

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 105

<sup>44</sup> Sherman Garnett, "Reform, Russia and Europe: The Strategic Context of Ukraine's NATO policy," in From Madrid to Brussels: Perspectives on NATO Enlargement, ed by Stephen J. Blank, (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute), 1997, 80

<sup>45</sup> Sherman Garnett, "U.S.-Ukrainian Relations," in Ukraine in the World, 105

<sup>46</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe, 85

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 85

<sup>48</sup> Taras Kuzio, "Increasingly Assertive Russia Poses Challenge for U.S. Policy," 3

<sup>49</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe, 87

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 87

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 89

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 89

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 89-90

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 90

<sup>55</sup> Taras Kuzio, "Increasingly Assertive Russia Poses Challenge for U.S. Policy," 3

<sup>56</sup> Andrew Nynka, "Interview: An Academic and Professional Viewpoint of Ukraine," in The Ukrainian Weekly, Vol. LXIX, No. 33, August 19, 2001, 3

<sup>57</sup> Colin Powell and Joseph E. Persico, My American Journey, (New York, NY: Random House), 1995, 403

<sup>58</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe, 101

<sup>59</sup> Karatnycky, 83

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 83

<sup>61</sup> Sherman W. Garnett, Keystone in the Arch: Ukraine in the Emerging Security Environment of Central and Eastern Europe, 131

<sup>62</sup> Nynka, 4

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 131

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 84

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