



STRATEGIC ALERT

By Robert Porter Lynch¹ – March 14, 2022



Everyone is Asking Questions:

- **What's going on in Putin's Mind?**
- **What's his real aim?**
- **Will Russians let him get away with atrocities?**
- **How should the Western World Respond?**

Understanding Putin is no easy task. His mind operates on a totally different “frequency” than normal people.

During this crisis, I've been asked a 144 questions on Quora.com about Putin.

Here is a synopsis of those answers to help you, your friends, and family try to wrap your thinking around this enigma.

You may wonder: What this has to do with my key focus: Collaborative Excellence? We need to understand the dark people in organizations and civilizations to be sure we don't fall victims to their onerous intentions.

This compilation may be helpful to you, or your children, or if you are a teacher, for your students.

While these are my own perspective on the issues, perhaps they will stimulate further discussion and a deeper understanding of the harsh realities.

And more important, we can start charting a path for a better world to arise like the Phoenix out of the tragic ashes Putin has left in his wake.

¹ For Bio see: <https://iclinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/RPorterLynch-Resume-Writings-Programs-Cases.pdf>

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Part ONE: Inside Putin's Mind

To understand him, you must enter the "heart of darkness" which is both unpleasant and alien territory.



Here are the Questions that appeared on Quora that I answered:

1. **Does Vladimir Putin have something mentally wrong with him?**
Vladimir Putin is now being referred to as the "Führer." Is the obvious comparison to Hitler accurate?

Everyone is asking:

- >>Who is this man?
- >>What is he thinking?
- >>How could he order mass destruction?

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The world is aghast at Putin's actions invading a peaceful country like Ukraine.

What is abhorrent to us is perfectly normal for this cold-blooded killer.

The reference to Putin and the Führer is dead-on accurate. Both Putin and Hitler have multiple personality disorders encompassing very Predatory qualities known as the "DARK TRIAD" – it's a bona-fide field of psychiatric study – referring to:

1) Machiavellians – master manipulators interested only in their aggrandizement.

- We have known for years that Putin was a Master Machiavellian – cold, calculating, willing to exert power for any reason that would give him an advantage. He is a master of deceit, using cunning and guile to conceal his real motives. You could never trust his words, using language such as "peace-keeping" to disguise his evil motives.

2) Narcissists – self-centered egomaniacs who act only in their self interest

- His recent declaration of a rationale for overtaking Ukraine revealed two more dimensions of bestial darkness. When he said he wanted to take back all the land of the former Soviet Empire, he showed his formerly hidden Narcissistic side, megalomaniacal, ego-centric, self-aggrandizing legacy for himself.

3) Psychopaths – cold blooded beasts without conscience who only recognize Power.

- When he risked the well-being of all Russian and Ukrainian citizens, both soldiers and civilians, he revealed his Psychopathic side – willing to engage in cold-blooded mass killings to achieve his evil intentions. Putin has no conscience, no soul, no moral center. The only "morality" he embraces is: Might Makes Right.

When a leader has all three of these qualities, they are super-dangerous Predators — Evil incarnate. You are looking at the DEVIL before your eyes.

Dictators like Hitler, Idi Amin, Mao Tse Tung, Pol Pot, and numerous others were DARK TRIAD. During the 20th century they triggered wars and genocides resulting in over 165 million deaths globally.

To learn more about these dark monsters and what to do about them, please see my Strategic Alert: Beware the Authoritarian Dark

Triad http://www.iclinstitute.com/Beware_the_Beast_--_Authoritarian_Dark_Triad_V1.11.pdf

2. **When did Putin go crazy?**

To answer your question, it's best to understand Putin's Personality Disorder, which has gotten progressively worse the more power he gains — Same thing happened with Trump. Both have the traits of the "Dark Triad:"

- Machiavellian
- Narcissist
- Psychopath

To understand the linkage between Trump and Putin's personality, and understand the Dark Triad, please see: *Beware the Authoritarian Dark Triad*

http://www.iclinstitute.com/Beware_the_Beast_-_Authoritarian_Dark_Triad_V1.11.pdf

3. **What does Russian President Vladimir Putin really want? Will he get it?**

Putin, psychologically, is a Psychopath, Narcissist, and Machiavellian (all three combined)

Thus Putin wants three things:

1. Power
2. Control
3. Glory

Anything Putin says to the contrary is a deceit to cover his three motives

He has no conscience. People are just pawns on his chessboard. The lives of Ukrainian people or Russian soldiers are just numbers, and no more. Sacrifice of lives is the cost of winning at all costs. These are the same qualities as Hitler. Putin will fight to the end, just like Hitler.

4. **Is Putin dying?**

If you are referring to his political, strategic, and functional well-being, he is dying a death of a thousand cuts.

Putin is losing, and is out of touch with reality. In this respect he is dying.

Putin is not fully functional — he is making decisions that get him deeper into a self-destructive mode — destroying both the Ukrainian and Russian people, culture, and economies.

Yes, Putin has a death wish — like Hitler in the final years of WWII — taking everything down with him.

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5. How can Putin save face?

This is an important but thorny question.

First, because Putin is a Narcissist, and because he must keep the pride of the Russian people to stay in power, Putin has to save face.

Second, the longer Putin prolongs the war, the more difficult the extrication becomes. He is a bulldozer. As the war crimes mount, the less amenable the Western World will be to a solution where Putin wins.

What's going to be left on the table is small: Keep Donbas and Crimea, withdraw from the rest of the Ukraine, and accept that Moldova and Ukraine will end up as NATO Protectorates.

The only way this will happen is if a third party, namely China intercedes to broker the "deal." Then Putin can make a big deal over how Russia and China ended the war.

Lousy solution, but that's "Realpolitik"

6. Is Putin's personality, as with that of Trump, the result of an abusive childhood?

While an abused childhood can contribute to this personality disorder, not all abused children become members of the "Dark Triad:"

7. Has Putin and Russia crossed a point of no return?

At this point, the answer is No he hasn't passed the point of no return, but that could change any moment either way.

Here's the difficulty: Putin, in addition to being a Psychopath, is also a Narcissist and Machiavellian. He believes he's smarter than anyone, no one can be trusted (therefore he must lie and deceive) and his plan is bound to succeed. If it fails, he will opt to use more brute force, and the tide will turn in his favor.

Because he lacks a soul/conscience, he has no understanding of the courage and spirit of the Ukrainians — he believes his own lies and thinks more propaganda will change people's minds.

He carefully studied Hitler's Propaganda Machine and thinks that the scientific application of FUDD — Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt, and Distrust — will wear down the resistance of the Ukrainians and they will bend to his will.

He underestimated the Ukrainians, NATO, and all of the free world. Can he accept the fact that he miscalculated? Improbable. Just try harder to overpower the enemy, and they will back off instead of risking a nuclear war.

Getting him to turn back and withdraw from Ukraine requires a combined effort of NATO force (carefully applied as to not provoke a harsh response), persuasion (applied from within his inner circle — Politburo and Oligarchs), and a way out where he can still declare victory.

At this stage, the path to return to a world order probably means declaring a DeConflictive Zone in Western Ukraine as a humanitarian safe haven, supplying the Ukrainian Freedom Fighters, and withdrawal of Russian Forces back to their positions before the Invasion (with Russian retaining the Donbass and Crimea) in exchange for a loosening of the financial sanctions.

Is this possible? Yes!

Is it probable? Only if Putin believes he will be hurt more if he continues, and if the Russian Power Elite twists his arm very hard. This is the only way to deal with a sick bully.

8. Does Vladimir Putin have characteristic borderline personality disorder?

No, not at all. My ex-wife had Borderline Personality Disorder, so I have personal experience.

According to the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM) of Mental Disorders, there must be "long-standing evidence of 'a pervasive pattern of instability of interpersonal relationships, self-image, and affects, and marked impulsivity' as evidenced by symptoms (5 or more) such as frantic efforts to avoid abandonment, identity disturbance, difficulties with anger, and intense and unstable interpersonal relationships. In the DSM-5, BPD will be diagnosed if there is evidence of self and interpersonal dysfunction as well as elevated scores on the following traits: rapid, often exaggerated changes in mood, where strong emotions or feelings (uncontrollable laughing or crying, or heightened irritability or temper) occur, anxiousness, separation insecurity, depressivity, impulsivity, risk taking, and hostility."

No one with Borderline Personality Disorder could ever rise to a position of power and hold their grip on reality.

Borderlines are often suicidal, suffering from hallucinations, and so volatile as to be impossible to live with. No one would ever follow them, so they can't lead. They are destructive and often suffer from dysphoria — a gloom far darker than ordinary depression.

While he may suffer from paranoia, it didn't come from BPD. His paranoia is likely attached to his inability to trust anyone because of his Psychopathy — a fear of anything that looks like a powerful threat to his existence. What is Vladimir Putin's biggest regret?

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His biggest regret is unfolding before his eyes — the decision to invade the Ukraine.

Finally, the Law of Unintended Consequences caught him stark naked.

Putin wanted a legacy that equaled Peter or Catherine the Great.

Instead, he's going down as a total knucklehead making one of the worst miscalculations in history, comparable to Hitler's decision to invade Russia in 1941. He will be tattooed as a war criminal, a loser, and the one who singlehandedly destroyed every increment of progress built in the Russian economy in the last two decades.

Unfortunately, he doesn't realize this yet, so he will bludgeon onward for another couple of weeks, sowing destruction and evil, while Russians lose faith in him.

Ultimately, he is the worst of losers — everyone loses in his game. But his Narcissism, like Trump's, will keep him hanging on for a long time after he gets his wings clipped. He will create a hallucinogenic image of reality and blame everyone but himself for the mess he created. Some key military officers might get the firing squad before Putin's power is removed.

9. Will Xi Jinping ever feel compelled to betray Vladimir Putin?

Because Putin trusts no one due to his Personality disorder (Machiavellian, Narcissist, Psychopath), he and Xi will only operate on a basis of POWER, not TRUST.

This means each will make decisions based on self-interest, not mutual interest.

Thus betrayal will be in the nature of the relationship as soon as their interests become misaligned.

10. What're your thoughts about this madness of Putin, do you think can maybe lead to World War III?

Everyone is wondering about this.

First, what looks like madness is the face of evil. Putin, in many ways, operates like Hitler. Putin's generals are not like ours — they are yes men with little moral backbone. They won't buck Putin and give him sound advice.



Second, at this stage it is not evident if the Russian Duma is countering his aggressiveness — yet.

Putin not only has underestimated his opposition, but he also still believes he can bulldoze his way to success. This is dangerous.

The Cease-Fire scheduled for Wednesday March 9 is just a delaying tactic. A cold front is advancing, the ground temperatures will freeze, eliminating the mud that has caused Russian vehicles to stick to the roads.

The Ukrainians must become aggressive in the next 24–36 hours, deploying the 20,000 missiles quickly because this is going to get ugly fast.

What concerns everyone is that Putin could deploy tactical nuclear weapons as a deterrent against our escalation. Hopefully we have cybersecurity that could prevent this type of response.

At this stage, the only player that could be a harness is China. Hopefully they are in Putin's face telling him not to trigger the tactical nuclear weapons.

In five days you will know the results. In the meantime, this is a time of great uncertainty.

We all can feel somewhat comforted by the calm adroitness of President Biden, who has shown stability and prudence at the helm in a crisis.

Time for a few prayers.

No in the short run; Yes in the long run.

The impact of the sanctions will have little impact on Putin's decisions in the next 30 days. He is obsessive compulsive about winning the war.

However, if Putin fails to win the war (which is highly likely), a month from now the situation will be very different. The Politburo and the people will create a force that will severely limit his powers and phase him out just like his predecessors over the last 60 years.

11. **Does Vladimir Putin believe in his own propaganda?**

To a large extent, yes.

Remember Putin is a Machiavellian, a Narcissist, and Psychopath.

Thus, he has delusions of grandeur, and creates a playbook where he is almighty. That's why he just committed 100% of his forces into the Ukraine — he believes he will win because he

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must win. Might makes Right. And he thinks he's smarter than all his opponents combined. His ego will be his Achilles Heel.

He and those around him — the sycophants — will tell him what he wants to hear. Then they will promulgate propaganda that reinforces this hallucinatory narrative.

Hitler, with his propaganda machine run by Goebbels, did the same thing up until the end.

One of the reasons Authoritarians are bad leaders is because they believe their own lies.

12. Does President Vladimir Putin remind you of Jim Jones of Jonestown?

There are some similarities and some differences.

Jim Jones was more like Rasputin than Putin.

Jones lacked the superior organizational talents of Putin.

Putin and Jones are/were Narcissistic. Both have/had delusions of grandeur.

Both are/were master manipulators (Machiavellian).

Both are/were demagogues.

Putin is psychopathic (without a conscience), Jones had a perverted conscience.

13. Can you ever trust Putin for his word?

No, never.

Putin is psychopathic, which means he is also paranoid of all people who oppose him. Putin trusts NO ONE. Therefore, he believes he must lie, cheat, steal, and deceive to establish POWER to stay in a position of authority,

But here's the problem. As a Master Machiavellian, he will mix half-truths with half-lies to convince his presumed allies of his rationale. Thus, you will never really know what is the real truth and what is a distortion unless you do your independent research.

Trustworthy people have good character as their foundation. We must all learn to discern good character before deciding to trust anyone.

14. Does Putin care about the consequences he has wrought upon the Russian people by his obsession with taking Ukraine?

To answer this question, you must do a “mind flip,” throw out everything you believe is right and just, and enter Putin’s “heart of darkness.”

He cares a lot about the consequences, but not in a magnanimous, wholesome way.

He cares that the Russian people view him in a God-like way, a great icon like Peter or Catherine the Great.

He cares that he has exerted POWER over this world, including the Russian people and the West where there is any opposition to his yearning for domination.

He cares that he is revered for his brilliant intelligence that guided his country to successful conquests.

He DOES NOT care that people have died nor does he care about economic consequences in Russia.

Why? Because, as a card-carrying PSYCHOPATH: he has no conscience, hence no compassion, no empathy, no soul. To this type of person, death and poverty are just the “cost of doing business” in the game of life itself.

Is this fair, reasonable, or ethical. No.

This is why we must educate people about how to recognize these leaders in politics, business, and community. Putin, like Trump, should have been weeded out and excommunicated before they could wield power and do horrible damage.

Part Two: Putin’s Strategy

15. Does Russia now want to 'rule' the world?

No, not quite.

Remember the difference between the old Soviet Union (that wanted all of Europe and beyond,) compared to today’s Russia, where Putin wants to reclaim all the territory lost after 1989.

Putin is also quite different from his predecessors, He is truly evil — a Machiavellian, Narcissist, and Psychopath. He has no conscience.

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When we make verbal appeals and condemnations, these are no more than feel-good mental masturbations.

Putin understands only one thing — be clear about this — POWER.

Words are meaningless to him. The only way to stop him is to create a threat to his very existence.

As a former military officer, I offer this strategic advice:

Immediately, we must establish an **Alliance of Peaceful Nations** that takes concrete, hardnosed ACTION to establish a **DeConfliction Safety Zone** In Western Ukraine, The purpose is to prevent the expansion of the human crisis and prevent further war crimes. We must take control of the Western Ukraine NOW. We must establish this Zone as a Defensive Region, where we will only shoot when fired upon. From this Zone we can resupply the Ukrainian forces.

Putin will recognize will-power and fire power when concentrated, aligned, and clear that it is an *existential threat*.

I'm a strong advocate of Negotiations, but this will only work when we hold an olive branch in one hand and arrows in the other, wielded by an eagle.

16. Does Putin see the West as weak?

Certainly this was the case before the war started.

- NATO was divided
- The EU was not United
- The US was horribly divided
- Biden's massive gaff in Afghanistan displayed incompetence.

All this has changed, primarily as a reaction to Putin's invasion.

Now Putin is the incompetent leader who has made one of the biggest blunders in modern military history, with no way out.

17. What is Vladimir Putin hoping to achieve, gain, etc. by ordering his Russian Armed Forces to invade Ukraine in 2022?

He doesn't seem to have been very rational in his objectives, but

1. He wanted to restore the glory of old Soviet Russia creating a Grand Russia.
2. He wanted to install a puppet government in Kyiv like the one in Belarus, or the ones that Stalin set up throughout Central Europe after WWII.



3. He wanted to prevent the development of a democratic and reformist government in Ukraine that would set a bad example for Russia.
4. He wanted to have Russian occupation of Crimea and eastern Ukraine legitimized.

Putin is a Narcissistic, Machiavellian Psychopath who knows only one thing: POWER. Add to this he now has delusions of grandeur, is paranoid, and deeply fearful, covering his insecurity with macho-megalomaniacal behavior.

In addition to hard-nosed military warfare, he has engaged in psychological warfare applying Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt, Distrust and Discord.

He is using these strategies to take the Ukraine, yes to confront NATO, but more important he doesn't want its people — he wants the land and the natural and agricultural resources it has.

18. **Would the Russian government start a nuclear war if Putin (leader of Russia) was assassinated and it was determined to be an act of the CIA?**

First, the CIA would not assassinate Putin. If Putin was assassinated, the CIA would never leave a trace of their involvement.

Second, if Putin was assassinated, it would more likely be by someone within his circle, much like the attempts to assassinate Hitler.

Third, and this is the scary part, if Russians then blamed the CIA, regardless of who the perpetrator was, then crazy heads were engaged, and the outcomes could be horrific.

19. **How did Putin become a leader who rules Russia and intrigues the world?**

The Strategy used by Putin to gain power fits the pattern used all over world history.

Putin is an Authoritarian, just like Hitler, Mao, Napoleon, Castro, and numerous others.

They seldom have a real, coherent ideology that propel them to lead, but instead insert themselves as the saviors when there are high levels of fear, uncertainty, doubt, distrust, and discord — the conditions that were inside Russia.

This brings forth the fundamental question:

- How do we prevent Authoritarian Leaders from power?

There are two ways to enable preventative measures:

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1. Make everyone aware of what Authoritarians look like, and the damage they create to erect barriers to their gaining power.
2. To Strengthen Democracies so the people elect those who can represent them with honor and honesty. We need to make this much stronger, judging them on the basis of their good character, not the party to which they belong.

20. How did Putin take Europe to the brink of war again?

Let's address the question of WHY then HOW.

Putin has delusions of grandeur. He believes his legacy will be to reform the boundaries of the Russian Empire.

This drove his obsession with POWER and the acquisition of TERRITORY.

Further, he thinks he is smarter and bolder than any of his adversaries. This drives him to believe he can get away with taking over countries, with the threat of pushing the button without consequences.

Now, HOW:

This arrogance became his downfall, because, like all tyrants, he starts drinking his own bathwater fed to him by sycophants with whom he fills his tub.

Putin is also a victim of his own experience as a spy who can trust no one. His KGB background plus his psychopathic personality means he can trust no one, even those closest to him.

Add to this the failure to understand 21st century military strategy. In all his other conflicts — Chechnya, Syria, etc - he could bludgeon his way to victory with superior force against an inferior power. Never had he faced a highly spirited opponent supported by a superior force with great intelligence.

Further, Putin, like so many old military leaders who are ensconced in the past, invaded Ukraine with a WWII mentality. He learned how Stalin defeated Hitler, but then flipped the roles and played Hitler, mimicking the Anschluss and then extended his lines of logistics too far, just like Hitler's mistake getting sucked into Russia in WWII.

We are now seeing how a man's megalomania has cost the world a horrific price.

If anyone ever believed authoritarian leaders are superior to a democracy, this should prove why democracies work better — they don't start crazy wars.

21. Would Putin actually use Nukes against the U.S., knowing his countries existence would be gone, along with his families? Even he would have to understand that the US and allies would hit him from everywhere!

This is the "Elephant in the Room" question that has no clear answer.

We all know Putin has the control of the "button."

We know he has two levels of nuclear capability: tactical battlefield weapons and strategic nuclear holocaust. Tactical usage could trigger strategic devastation.

Russia, like the US, has protocols for when and how to use each of their weapons systems.

The biggest unknown is Putin himself. Is he sane? Or is he faking insanity to throw us off his gambits? My guess is he is perfectly sane, otherwise those who are around him would take away or limit his sole authority.

No one knows if his generals that would execute Putin's orders would blindly follow his orders or refrain from nuclear holocaust. Remember, when Hitler gave his general in charge of Paris to blow up the city, the general rejected the order.

Bear in mind, Putin is cold-blooded, without conscience — a classic psychopath. No one wants to take the chance he will be angry, irrational, and do anything to win the game according to his hideous rules.

That's why we must employ a containment strategy, which I've outlined in detail in the first question.

22. Is Putin in a no-win scenario? Sure, he can make things ugly in Ukraine for awhile, but at this point it seems like it's a choice between a collapsed economy, backing down like a loser, or global thermonuclear war which destroys the planet.

23. Why is Putin putting the nuclear forces on alert? Is it just to pressure others? Has he just completely lost it?

Putin is not crazy, He just wants us to think he's crazy, unpredictable, and reckless. –

Clarification: He is predictable, we must counter him from his frame of reference, not ours.

Chess player Gary Kasparov said that Putin doesn't play the situation on the chess board, he plays the opponent.

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Making NATO think he's crazy limits the range of options Putin's opponents can exercise.

24. Putin threatens to use nukes even if we just get in his way. Many politicians & voters then say we'd better not "poke the Bear". But what happens later on if we give in to nuclear blackmail now?

Your question has kept strategists up at night, wrestling for the right answer.

History will tell us a lot about the answer, as this dilemma goes back to Greek and Roman times.

But the best example is Hitler, and what we should have done to stop him. Without going into a long dissertation, what we now know about human behavior gives us a clear pathway forward.

First, we must understand that Putin's personality is VERY EVIL — see

http://www.iclinstitute.com/Beware_the_Beast_--_Authoritarian_Dark_Triad_V1.11.pdf

Second, Evil will not go away and will only respond to POWER. This power must be consistent, clear, and unrelenting. There must be NO SIGN of WEAKENESS. And it must be jointly applied from all sides. We are doing this now. I'm impressed how NATO, Biden, the EU and others are walking this tightrope. That's why we don't want a No-Fly Zone — it would provoke the bear into an attack, versus surrounding the bear. The ancient Chinese stratagem of "death by a thousand cuts" is more effective.



Because Putin trusts no one due to his Personality disorder (Machiavellian, Narcissist, Psychopath), he and Xi will only operate on a basis of POWER, not TRUST.

This means each will make decisions based on self-interest, not mutual interest.

Thus betrayal will be in the nature of the relationship as soon as their interests become misaligned.

25. **Can Putin be stopped by the use of a sanction?**
26. **Is Putin crazy enough to attempt to “win” this war at any cost just to save face?**

This is an important but thorny question.

- First, because Putin is a Narcissist, and because he must keep the pride of the Russian people to stay in power, Putin has to save face.
- Second, the longer Putin prolongs the war, the more difficult the extrication becomes. He is a bulldozer. As the war crimes mount, the less amenable the Western World will be to a solution where Putin wins.

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What's going to be left on the table is small: Keep Donbas and Crimea, withdraw from the rest of the Ukraine, and accept that Moldova and Ukraine will end up as NATO Protectorates.

The only way this will happen is if a third party, namely China intercedes to broker the "deal." Then Putin can make a big deal over how Russia and China ended the war.

Putin is in a no-win scenario. He has limited choices:

- he can make things grotesque in Ukraine, but the world will turn against him, and collapse his economy
- admit defeat, backing down, which makes him a big loser,
- global thermonuclear war which destroys the planet.
- accept a bartered agreement that gives him the Donbas and Crimea and declare he "won" to save face with the Russian people.

Of these four, only the last has any chance of materializing.

No, the Ukrainians will not like this Lousy solution, but that's "Realpolitik" — neither party gets what they want, both have to give in a bit to save "lives" in Ukraine and "face" in Russia. (believe me I don't like trading "lives" for "face," but there may not be many other options.)



27. **Why might Vladimir Putin be seriously considering using chemical weapons in Ukraine? Is it because the invasion into that country isn't going as quickly as he had intended, or are there other reasons?**

Yes, Putin is getting desperate. He's thrashing out because the war is going badly.

His strategy of spreading FUDDD (Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt, Distrust, & Dischord) is now in high gear. That's why this question gets asked.

Putin needs to build internal Russian support. Hence, he tells another lie to his people that the Ukrainians are using chemical weapons. That gets Russians angry.



Putin is using the threat of “asymmetric warfare” — fighting economic sanctions with chemical threats.

Just like the threat of using nukes, this gambit is designed to unsettle his opponents, who are now perplexed about his mental stability.

If he goes beyond threats and uses chemical weapons, it will be to lay siege to a city. If the city doesn't give up, just bypass the city, drop in chemical weapons, and return later after all are dead, but the city is intact. (Hideous to think about, but nothing is beyond a man with no conscience.)

28. **Isn't Putin's Scheme Falling him already?**

Putin believes he is better, smarter, more powerful, and a better schemer than anything the opposition can throw at him.

He believes, with the proper application of psychological warfare and military might, plus a better scheme, he will win the game.

There has been nothing the west had done to make him think he is failing.

Until we carve out Western Ukraine as a De-Confliction Zone as a “Protectorate” to prevent human carnage and more war crimes, Putin will continue what we consider “recklessness” war crimes, but he considers “strategic application of power.”

29. **Where will Vladimir Putin stop?**

As a Predator, Putin will try to get away with everything he can devour. Thus, he will try to take all of the Ukraine.

- If it is too costly because the Ukrainians fight back ferociously, he will try a smaller chunk — maybe the Eastern half of the Ukraine.
- If the shark gets bitten very badly, taking too many losses in early fighting he will withdraw to a place where he is sure to win. This means he will be satisfied with the Donbas region, then declare victory, stating he was only covering his flanks to ensure he conquered the “Russian Provinces” on Ukraine’s Eastern Border.

We have known for years that Putin was a Master Machiavellian – cold, calculating, willing to exert power for any reason that would give him an advantage. He is a master of deceit, using cunning and guile to conceal his real motives. You could never trust his words, using language such as “peace-keeping” to disguise his evil motives.

However, his recent declaration of a rationale for overtaking Ukraine revealed two more dimensions of bestial darkness. When he said he wanted to take back all the land of the former

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Soviet Empire, he showed his formerly hidden Narcissistic side, trying to build an ego-centric, self-aggrandizing legacy for himself.

And when he risked the well-being of all Russian and Ukrainian citizens, both soldiers and civilians, he revealed his Psychopathic side – willing to engage in cold-blooded mass killings to achieve his evil intentions.

Together, we must all stand strong, be courageous, call out predatory leaders for what they are, and use every ethical means in our power to remove them from positions of authority. This is what the Collaborative Shift is all about.

It would be very difficult to institute the form of Communism advocated by Marx and Lenin for several reasons:

1. Russians have had 30 years of owning property. They don't want to give up their property, whether it be a house, car, farm, or small business to be chained to communal ownership. Communism failed because it forced people to do something that deprived them of self-initiative.
2. However, neither would they power elites want to give up control. They make too much money as oligarchs.

This leaves the Russians with the third option: a Fascist Socialism, where some large entities are controlled by the state, and smaller businesses controlled locally. It will remain a police state.

The question of Putin's longevity as dictator is coming under deep scrutiny with the Ukraine fiasco. The people don't trust him, and neither do the oligarchs.

As the Russian economy is dragged into a deep Depression as a result of being isolated by sanctions, the power elite will either remove him, or force him to be constrained by the Russian Politburo, which is the highest policy making authority in the Communist Party (they really aren't Communists in the strict sense of the term)

The Politburo cannot possibly see that the attempted acquisition of Ukraine as a smart move. My guess is that within a month they will rein in Putin, and he could be gone by the end of the year. But the Donbas region will stay under Russian control.

His replacement will be cold, calculating, and cunning, but not a megalomaniac like Putin. His replacement will be charming, duplicitous, and superficially more empathetic to the Russian people.

Keep a careful eye on the NATO Special Response team, which will go into action about Feb 28 or Mar 1. That will determine much of the immediate future. Putin may threaten Nukes, but the saner minds in the Politburo will know this bluff has limited value. Putin wants us to think he's gone crazy — maybe he has, but I don't think he's in total control of the decision-making apparatus.

30. Why does Putin dislike NATO?

Putin has one overarching goal: reclaim Eastern Europe for his vision of a Russian Empire.

NATO is his biggest obstacle, and democracy undermines his need to control. He sees democracies as too fickle to run an empire; only authoritarian régimes can be stable.

While we may not like his perspective, it is his reality. As a Predator, anything that blocks his desire for unbridled acquisition can only be an enemy.

31. Does Putin actually want a direct confrontation with NATO or the U.S.?

No, Putin doesn't want an outright cataclysm with NATO.

We must first recognize that Putin thought, and still thinks, that NATO will not engage in Ukraine for fear of starting WWII.

Also realize that Putin's #1 tactic is to spread FUDDD — Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt, Distrust & Discord.

Oh, how he's reveling in the FUDDD that has hamstrung NATO, that can't show its strength because we can't fathom Putin's presumably irrational mind.

Putin understands only one thing — POWER. Human Rights and all those niceties of "good" people are laughable to him.

In his mind, he will take over all Ukraine with impunity, without NATO intervening. Human suffering and military setbacks are meaningless as long as he wins the territory.

So far he's been right. I still cannot fathom why the NATO countries have not set up a Protective Peace Zone in Western Ukraine to provide a safe harbor for refugees. Nor a Demilitarized Zone in central Ukraine manned by a UN style peace keeping force. The fact that we have not taken concrete action to prevent Putin's expansion is proof to Putin NATO is a toothless tiger with claws and a big tongue.

Sure, we will talk a lot with eloquent tongues spouting condemnations, and claw about with economic sanctions and weapons, but we won't get our fur in the fight.

32. Why is Vladimir Putin blaming NATO for five assassination attempts on his life since he became President of Russia? Where is his proof? Does Oliver Stone know who was behind it?

Putin is a calculating Machiavellian. This means he uses every opportunity to turn a situation to his personal advantage.

Remember, Gary Kasparov, the great chess player, said Putin plays the opponent, not the situation on the board.

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Whether Putin has been the target of five assassination attempts might not even be true, because you cannot believe Putin's words. He lies because he trusts no one. Remember, Putin cannot trust because he is also a cold-blooded Psychopath.

Thus, he will blame someone else to gain advantage over his opponent. Anyone who is not under his control is his opponent. Because NATO and democracy is his opponent, then it is appropriate to blame NATO, even if there was no assassination attempt.

By blaming NATO, he mobilizes the Russian people to think they are under attack and will unify against NATO to save Mother Russia. This is an age-old Authoritarian Trick. Recall Hitler blamed the Jews for all of Germany's problems. Same game; different target.

33. Why will NATO fall apart and make many mistakes after Putin takes Kiev?

You begin with presumptions that have no credence or veracity.

Why do you believe NATO will fall apart? Based on evidence, NATO is more united, more committed, more dedicated, more resolved, more aligned than ever in its history. Putin's strategy to attack Ukraine was also based on false presumptions - specifically that Ukraine would crumble and NATO was weak.

Who said Putin will take Kyiv? Do you have a crystal ball? While Kyiv is nearly surrounded as I write this response, they haven't lost yet. I've fought in a war — it is filled with many twists and turns. The Russians have the might, but not the right. The Russians have the power, but not the energy of the Ukrainians.

Many times armies have marched arrogantly into traps where, in just moments they became surrounded and soundly defeated. The Russians have already lost over 6,000 men, which, if historical patterns prevail with one death to every three wounded, means 18,000 wounded, for a total of nearly 25,000 casualties.

The Russians have, as of midnight entering March 12th, lost close to 30 bombers and fighter jets, 50 helicopters, 125 tanks and armoured vehicles, and perhaps 100 tanker trucks. With morale low, the Russians are taking a whupping. They have now thrown nearly 100% of their force into the Ukraine, which is taking heavy losses too.

But remember, people who defend their own land have twice the motivation to fight — they have grit, courage, ethical righteousness, and unlimited passion. Add to this 35,000 Javelin and Stinger missiles and Rocket Propelled grenades.



Don't count out the underdog,

And even if Putin wins this battle, he has lost the world around him. His legacy is now carved into his gravestone in history's cemetery as a fool, loser, tyrant, barbarian, and war criminal. The epitaph on his gravestone should be:

What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?

- Mathew 16:26

34. **Who does Vladimir Putin respect and would take advice from?**

This is a very problematic question.

First, he will NOT listen to anyone who is an opponent. He'd believe they were trying to trick him.

Second, he has surrounded himself with sycophants who will not challenge him with real information and sound advice.

Third, until a combination of Generals, Oligarchs, and Politburo members TOGETHER confront him with reality, he will blunder along into perdition.

Fourth, this leaves only one person of great power who can influence him: Xi Jen Ping in China. Xi will play the card carefully, making sure that China comes out of any bargain in a position of power.

Count on China maneuvering the global chessboard to be far more powerful as Xi dictates terms to Russia that gives Chinese finance and business interests a much bigger stake in the Russian economy.

Putin is a loser that doesn't realize he has already lost the game. He should have read Sun Tzu.

Of all the strategic blunders of the last 150 years, Putin's attack on Ukraine ranks #4, behind the entanglements that launched WWI, Germany's invasion of Russia, and Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor.

One of the laws of strategic warfare is never to engage in a strategy you can't win.

Another law is to cut your losses when it's clear you can't win.

Putin is the worst of losers because he will create horrific lose-lose situations before ultimate defeat. Hitler did the same thing.

The only way out for Putin is if China's Xi Jen Ping intercedes as a peace broker.

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Guess who wins in that scenario? Right: China

35. Why is Putin not deterred by sanctions threats?

Putin cares little about the sanctions unless they prohibit him from his key objective: the exercise of POWER. This is his primary personality trait. To him, Power means an empire and the acquisition of territory. He is obsessed with his legacy. He believes reclaiming the lands lost in the collapse of the Soviet Union would make him famous in Russian history.

In the case of Ukraine, since he already deployed his armies, he would look foolish to withdraw the troops without a victory, which would destroy his Narcissistic Self Image.

Putin is a Machiavellian who consumed with plots and schemes. He believes he has out-schemed his opponents (he thinks he is smarter than everyone).

Putin is also psychopathic with no conscience and thus no real regard for human suffering. Dead bodies and refugees mean nothing to him,

For these reasons, sanctions have little effect.

In the end, the forces in Ukraine will take back their country, however painful. Also, the Russian people are smart enough to know that Putin has lied to them about Ukraine. This could be his undoing.

Prediction: Putin will be out of power by year's end.

36. What is the difference between a "Russian Czarist policy" and "Russia as a superpower policy" narratives? Do you agree with some analysts that Putin is driven by the Czarist narrative?

While there are certainly similarities between the Czarist control of Russian serfs that triggered the Bolshevik Revolution, this would not be a model for Putin's Russia.

Putin relies on the people being behind him. He needs the economy to be strong. The Czars did not hold these values.

On the other side of the coin, Putin resembles the Czars in the concentration of power in the hands of a few and the abhorrence of a democracy.

The problem in comparing Putin to an era that ended over 100 years ago is that we tend to pigeon-hole our understanding of Putin, and not see him for what he really is.

Some have also compared Putin to Rasputin. That's a more fascinating comparison.

It's more likely that Putin, when he used a role model, selected Stalin.

37. Has Vladimir Putin just plain "Lost it" with his threats against Sweden, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania & Estonia which would put NATO on a Third World War 3 footing?

These kinds of threats are not unusual for Putin. Remember, he has a KGB mindset, Psychological Warfare is part of his portfolio of stratagems.

This looks toward the application of FUDDD — Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt, Distrust, and Divisiveness.

This technique BEFUDDLES the brain with unclear messages, outcomes, and alternatives. That's his intent.

Should we take him seriously? Yes, because part of the FUDDD strategy is to inter-mix Truth with Deceit. However, one can never really separate the truth from deceit in his messages. Perhaps he doesn't know either. That's why he can lie with impunity.

So, no he hasn't "lost it." He's just doing what he believes will unsettle his opponent. And the sad thing is: it works. Just look at our collective reactions.

38. Why does Putin seem to be starting to distance himself from his generals and advisers?

Putin's Personality Disorder (Machiavellian, Psychopath, Narcissist), combined with his KGB background means he trusts NO ONE.

All his Generals are "yes men" who are Putin's puppets. They take his orders; he threatens them with Court Martial if they don't achieve his directives.

Anyone who bucks Putin is eliminated.

Putin is delusional, believing his own distortions.

Thus Putin has grown far more distant from reality, his generals, his political base, his oligarchs, and his people.

This won't last for too much longer — Putin beware.

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39. How long shall the world stand and watch Mr. Putin's atrocities in Ukraine? Can't he be taken out by the West?

While taking out Putin seems like a simple thing to do, there are many reasons for not doing so.

1. How do you get to him? He is guarded by layers of security.
2. If we start taking out leaders, they will do the same to us. This is the unwritten rule and probably written into international law.
3. We know it's better for the internal forces within Russia to take this action, so we don't trigger the Law of Unintended Adverse Consequences.

40. When was the moment Putin achieved absolute power in Russia?

There was no "moment" when this occurred.

Putin did not take over via a "coup d'état" so he took power over 20 years "a bite at a time."

Putin will soon understand he does not hold "absolute" power. The Communist Party is realizing he is a damaging Russia with this awful war.

Russia has had a history of taking out rulers or competition they don't like.

Putin is proving to the Russian Power Elite that absolute power corrupts absolutely.

41. What could other nations do to force Russians into removing Putin from his position?

I have studied regime changes over the last 300 years.

There are several ways this occurs:

- Assassination — Often the Assassins are worse than the ruler they take out.
- Coup d'état — Usually this is done by the military, which means more authoritarian rule
- Referendum — the People vote him out
- Erosion of Power Bases — the forces that support the tyrant withdraw their support or create a unity of power against him

Of these options, the last two are always better than the first two. The peaceful options create more sustainable and stable results.



42. **Why don't they assassinate Putin?**

Who is "they?"

First, the CIA would not assassinate Putin. This would trigger retaliation, with attempts on major figures in the West..

Second, if Putin was assassinated, it would more likely be by someone within his circle, much like the attempts to assassinate Hitler. His security force would either have to be penetrated, or one of the security force members would have to become executioner.

In assassinations, often the new person coming into power is worse than the victim.

The best approach is for the Duma (the Russian version of Congress) to force him out of office, leaving the Prime Minister as his legitimate successor.

43. **How is Putin right in what he's doing?**

To answer this question, one must put themselves inside Putin's Brain.

Putin is a Psychopath, which, by definition, means he is a man "without a conscience." Thus, Putin has no moral compass, no way to gauge what is right or wrong. This is **EVIL**, pure and simple. Historically humanity has referred to this behavior as "the **Devil**."

Without morality, ethics have no value in is computation of reality and options to take action with righteousness and reasonableness to guide him.

In his concept of what is "right" he filters out all the data about deaths and accepts only the data that gives him Power.

For Putin, ***Might Makes Right!***

I know this is unpalatable to normal humans, which is the reason we have to eliminate the reincarnation of Hitler.

44. **What happens when Ukrainian President Zelensky obtains a limited nuclear weapon and covertly sneaks it into Moscow and assassinates Putin with it? Where would the weapon have come from?**

First, it's doubtful Zelensky would obtain such a weapon unless it was on Ukrainian soil and brought there by the Russian Forces. NATO would not provide such a weapon.

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Second, it's doubtful Zelensky would use such a weapon. Ukraine has prided itself on being a nuclear weapon free country. Remember they gave up their nuclear weapons in 1991 in exchange for a security agreement.

Third, the West is counting on existing powers in Russia to clip Putin's wings or remove him from power. How that happens is an open question.

45. Is Vladimir Putin equivalent to the warlord Hannibal that strives to destroy a rotted empire?

The idea of a Warlord is a feudal concept from the Middle Ages

A Warlord controls a region of a country, not an entire country — that's a dictator.

Warlords have regional armies, orchestrate regional economies, and ensure political control over their territory.

Warlords exist where there is a weak central government.

In Medieval Europe, there were many feudal principalities before the concept of nation-states emerged.

Machiavelli's book "The Prince" became the handbook used to this day by those who choose to control their people.

In a sense you could think of Putin as a Warlord over an entire country because he uses many of the strategies of Warlords, but at the National Level he becomes an Authoritarian Dictator.

46. Will Putin really press the nuclear button over Ukraine?

Your question has kept strategists up at night wrestling for the right answer.

History will tell us a lot about the answer, as this dilemma goes back to Greek and Roman times.

But the best example is Hitler, and what we should have done to stop him. Without going into a long dissertation, what we now know about human behavior gives us a clear pathway forward.

First, we must understand that Putin's personality is VERY EVIL — see

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Second, Evil will not go away and will only respond to POWER. This power must be consistent, clear, and unrelenting. There must be NO SIGN of WEAKENESS. And it must be jointly applied from all sides. We are doing this now. I'm impressed how NATO, Biden, the EU and others are walking this tightrope. That's why we don't want a No-Fly Zone — it would provoke the bear into an attack, versus surrounding the bear. The ancient Chinese stratagem of "death by a thousand cuts" is more effective.

47. **Is it true that Putin will double down before he backs down?**

Putin is cold-blooded (psychopathic) so loss of life means nothing to him.

Putin is a master manipulator (Machiavellian), so he thinks he can win this war, by using his own ego-centric brilliance plus massive firepower.

Putin is trying to make himself as revered as Peter the Great (narcissism) which cannot tolerate the possibility of losing this war.

Putin is obsessive-compulsive, thus he will bulldoze his way forward, no matter what the costs.

This is what is unfolding before your eyes.

48. **What are the Russian oligarchs doing to hang on to their wealth and possessions?**

The strategy to hide assets is the same as used by any Mafia organization:

1. Turn the assets into cash and bury it in accounts in places like the Cayman Islands or China.
2. Put the assets into layers of holding/hiding companies run by third parties. The typical assets for this approach include land and stocks. Often these are corporations where several oligarchs hold major investments, and collude to keep their investments hidden from government authorities.
3. Often there is a private bank involved which is chartered in an unregulated country.
4. Other money is parked in the black market, or even more ugly trades such as child trafficking and human slavery.
5. The darkest corner of finance is Crypto Currency. Oligarchs are moving money into this device. The US Congress has introduced legislation to ban transfers into Crypto. Watch this carefully, because it could impact the value of Crypto. (If you are a Crypto investor, I wouldn't want to hold stock in this unreliable form of barter — there is nothing to guarantee its value — be forewarned)

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49. Why is the Russian government and Putin lying to their own people?

All dictators like Hitler and Putin use a huge propaganda machine to manipulate the minds of their people.

The strategy of mind manipulation is essential to keep control of an internal revolt by their own people when they know the truth.

This is all a part of the FUDDD Strategy against the external enemy: Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt, Distrust, & Discord. Hitler used the Jews as his external target, Putin is using the lie about Ukrainian "nazis."

This is perverse, grotesque, and evil to the core.

50. Has Putin said the US sanctions are akin to a declaration of war?

Yes, Putin has made this claim. Yes, economic sanctions are what's considered "soft warfare."

Putin, the Master Manipulator, will say anything to gain advantage over his opponent. He will spread FUDDD (Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt, Distrust & Discord) in any place where he thinks it will stick.

We have to take Putin seriously, but recognize that 50% of everything he says is pure bluff. The problem is, you don't know what is a bluff, and what is serious.

That's his strategy.

51. What is Putin's Propaganda Strategy?

The purpose of Propaganda is to BEFUDDLE the mind. (this is an acronym)

- **B**lame — Enemies have been around since the dawn of humanity. Tribalism runs deep into the roots of human civilization since the days of the caveman.
- **E**nemies — Historically the branding of a group as an "enemy" has been a sign that some person or group was a threat to the tribe's survival. Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, and the Kim clan have been regarded as enemies – outsiders with intentions to do harm. We see Putin and Al Qaeda this way. Polarization, casting those who act or think differently as evil-intentioned, conspiring adversaries.
- **F**ear — Triggering extreme anxiety that others pose a dangerous threat to my existence and my beliefs.
- **U**ncertainty — Causing the perception that nothing is stable, nothing is real, what I dislike must be "fake news."



- **Doubt** — Undermining reality by asking questions designed to shake beliefs about the motives of others.
- **Distrust** — Spreading misgivings and casting aspersions for the purpose of creating cynicism and suspicion.
- **Lies** — Purposefully spreading disinformation, usually connecting a half-truth with a falsehood.
- **Extremism** — Radicalization, multiplication, and amplification of all of the above by inflaming emotions.
- **Discord** — Using these tactics in a manipulative way to benefit one person or group who alone can fix it.

This strategy was developed by Hitler's chief propagandist, Josef Goebbels. Here's how it works in America today: (the Russians do the same thing, but on steroids.)

52. **Could Putin rebuild Russia to the glory of the former Union of Soviet and Socialist Republics?**

This is Putin's Delusional Dream.

His chance of achieving this is ***less than Zero***
(in other words, his has moved his dream into reverse.)

- He is too old
- He has lost the trust of the investment world, and this will eventually extend to his people.
- His country is bankrupt
- He will never gain the territory
- He is incompetent as a builder-architect of a nation
- No other country will help him, except for China, which will extract a pound of flesh in the bargain.

53. **Did Putin commit a blunder by giving too much build up before attacking Ukraine? Should it have been a lightning attack instead?**

Yes, it was a multi-dimensional blunder of epic proportions.

Putin's ego-maniacal delusions of grandeur, his arrogant belief he is smarter than anyone else, his cold-blooded lack of conscience, and his overblown image of himself as a master manipulator blinded himself — caused the Law of Unintended consequences to bury him.

Even after things were clearly imploding, he believed he could bludgeon and bulldoze his way to success.

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Any Oriental Martial Arts master (Putin presumably has a black belt) knows you leverage the opponents force to your advantage. He certainly flunked.

What Putin could not fathom is that all those maneuvers north of Ukraine two weeks before the attack created intel that the US knew he was going to attack a week before it happened, eliminating the element of surprise. Pure arrogance from Putin.

Even if he had tried to do a lightning blitzkrieg attack, his Army was incapable of executing such a maneuver. He places so many sycophants around himself that no one could give his accurate information for fear of being sent to Siberia.

In the annals of modern military history, the Ukrainian Fiasco will be studied for a century or more. This will be Putin's legacy.

54. Did Putin start the war with Ukraine as a special operation? After all, all that is reported about in Russia is the special operation with all its consequences, while the war seems to be irrelevant.

Every master manipulator, when designing their propaganda campaign, chooses words that distort reality in one way or another. Here are some examples:

- Hammer = manual impact device
- Janitor = sanitation engineer
- Lies = point of view
- Conflict = difference of opinion
- Tyrant = autocrat
- War = Special Operation of Liberation

If you say the word "war" in Russia, you will be sentenced to prison without a trial.

You know when a dark, evil authoritarian is in action when they try to manipulate your mind and make you believe something that takes you far away from reality.

Recall when Trump tried to fudge major Russian cyber attacks by attributing it to some 400 lbs hacker in Hoboken. That's another example of using words and images to distort the truth.

55. What are the motivations and incentives for Syrian volunteers to fight for Putin?

The Syrians are Mercenaries. Killers for Hire. Money, big money, motivates them.

They probably don't know the ruble has lost 50% of its value. It's only worth 1/2 cent.

Wait until the day they get paid and find they too have been defrauded by the master manipulator.

56. Has Putin told so many lies that he is now unable to distinguish facts from his fiction?

Liars are quickly identified because the same story is always retold with some new embellishment, or something has changed, or the succession of telling the story has some logical continuation that makes not sense.

Putin tells lies, half-truths, distortions, reconfigurations, concoctions, and unsubstantiated allegations so often that nothing he says is believable unless verified. He is obviously either delusional or thinks we aren't smart enough to figure out he's a master deceiver. Every once in a while he'll throw in a real truth just to make us think he speaks with a straight tongue.

Of course, this entangled web of lies no one can ever remember.

'Oh what a tangled web we weave, When first we practice to deceive'
Sir Walter Scott

Biden has been consistent and straight forward with his messages, and so have his staff.

57. One thing you can say about Putin. He keeps his cards close to his chest. Is Biden stupid? Why does he telegraph every thought and move to Putin and Russia before he makes them? Example- Stating that U.S. WILL NOT intervene in Ukraine?

What you are seeing unfold before your eyes is an elegant display of wisdom over conceit, democracy over totalitarianism, openness over deceit.

Biden and his team have exposed Putin's gambit before he could play his hand. A gambit exposed loses its power.

Putin, the master manipulator has consistently been outmaneuvered by an agile team of alliance members.

As a professional in the field of Strategic Alliances, I give Biden an A+ for his adroitness in aligning and unifying NATO and the EU that had zero trust in the US when Biden took office.

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Walking the tightrope between being too strong and igniting a Nuclear War, and showing sufficient strength to confront a bully is very difficult. JFK did it in the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 when he stared down Khrushchev. Biden has united over a hundred nations in opposing Putin. Let's acknowledge this achievement which was considered impossible a mere year ago.

58. **Is Putin's call for soldiers from the Syrian regime a sign of desperation?**

Mercenaries are hired killers — hit men. The Mafia uses them. They are cold-blooded sub-humans who fight not for a cause (like the Ukrainians) but for the thrill of killing. To a mercenary, killing is better than sex — orgasmic and elating.

Bringing in Syrian hit squads enables Putin to spare Russians returning home in body bags, fomenting internal strife. Syrians culturally have no affinity to Ukrainians — they look alien to a Syrian, making killing easier.

As the fighting turns into urban guerilla warfare, why not use Syrians as cannon fodder, instead of asking Russian troops with poor morale to risk their lives?

59. **What are the chances that an accidental incident/occurrence could spark Russian President Putin to start a global war or WW3 with the use of nuclear weapons?**

The threat of nuclear warfare has been with me all my life. I remember in 1953, when I was in the first grade, doing air raid drills, ducking under our desks and marching rank and file into the school basement where there were nuclear attack symbols in yellow and black.

In the 1960s we had movies like *On the Beach*, *Dr. Strangelove*, *Fail Safe*, and *Alas Babylon* scared me to the core.

Just yesterday we heard that India accidentally launched a missile into Pakistan. Fortunately no one was killed and there was no retaliation. But these countries were not at war.

We all need to be worried that someone will make a mistake.

The more the fighting continues, the greater the chance of a screw-up.

In 1964, two American Destroyers (*USS Turner Joy* & *USS Maddox*) patrolling in the Gulf of Tonkin in the South China Sea accidentally fired on each other. Each thought it was the Vietnamese were doing the shooting. It took a while to sort out what really happened.

Lyndon Johnson jumped the gun, and went to Congress to get a resolution to start the Vietnam War.

This is what everyone is worried about. Tense situations cause split-second decisions that can be devastating.

Part Three: Putin's Political Vulnerability

60. Can Putin still save Russia's economy after the sanctions?

No, Putin has killed the Russian economy as his people have known it for the last two decades.

That said, the Russians will not starve — the land is filled with farms and many other resources.

Russia has a back-door to keep its economy marginally functional. We can count on the Chinese to make lots of money buying things globally and funneling them into Russia.

Russia will not be well positioned to pay China, so Chinese Banks will loan the money to Russia. That's a whole other issue that has lots of complexity attached. China will get a lot of bargain basement prices when it turns loans into acquisitions. China may own a lot more of Russia than Putin bargained for.

61. Can the protests in Russia turn its citizens against Putin?

The answer to this question has significantly changed in the last two weeks;

There are 4 basic ways regimes are overturned:

- Assassination — Putin is too well protected for this
- Internal Powerbases (Oligarchs & Parliament) force the ruler out — this is the most likely possibility, but not yet.
- Coupe d'état by the military — Putin's internal security force would have to be complicit for this to happen
- Revolution by the people — this is very difficult because Putin's propaganda machine has driven out all delivery of the truth and all dissent suppressed, meaning Revolution is unlikely.

62. Is it likely that Putin's banning of Facebook and Twitter is likely to have the opposite effect of actually creating more unrest, and why or why not?

Think like Putin to understand this answer.

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Probably less than 5% of the Russian population is on Social Media. Not enough to make a difference.

In the urban centers, perhaps this is 15–20%, again not enough to start a revolution.

Putin will tell the Russian people that Facebook & Twitter are just voices of evil and he had to shut them down for promulgating “Fake News.”

Putin controls the state propaganda machine — all other opposing cable news outlets are shut down. People can only hear what he wants them to hear.

He is ready to impose martial which will squash any dissent.

Putin knows you must control the mind, the spirit, and the wallets to keep control of a country. He will control the mind, quell the spirit, but the economic depression descending on the Russian people he cannot control.

63. **What is the general consensus or perception of Russian President Putin by the citizens of Russia? Is it true that he has a cult-like following by quite a few?**

The majority of Russian people support the war because they don't see the other side of the story.

The Russian Propaganda Machine is modelled after the Hitler machine, suppressing all information not favorable to their interests.

Only the Millennials and a few other groups in the urban centers really got a chance to protest the Ukrainian conflict. Thousands were thrown in jail. The free press has been shut down. Western reporters have been ordered out of the country.

There are always cults of Authoritarian Followers. Just as here in America where 15% are cult followers of Trump, so too in Russia. But the average Russian cannot learn how to see Putin in any other light than his own self-aggrandizing glory.

64. **With anti-war protesters and journalists being detained in Russia, is Putin losing his popularity among his people?**

Machiavelli, in his classic book *The Prince*, advised: *it is better to be Feared than Loved*.

Better advice would be *It is better to be Trusted than Loved or Feared*.

Putin is not loved, he is feared and some trust him.

In Russia, most of the people are in the dark, fed lies in the press. Few know the protesters and journalists are in jail or have fled.

The trust will collapse when people learn the truth. When that happens, there will be an implosion as people realize they have been betrayed. Betrayal evokes high degrees of animosity and vindictiveness.

That's the beginning of the end of Putin

65. Is getting along with Vladimir Putin right now a good thing or a bad thing?

If you think Putin is a "good guy" then be loyal to him and you will be rewarded.

If you think he's a bad guy, you have two choices: resist from the outside or undermine from the inside. In the latter case, be careful with the plan, the execution, and don't get caught.

If you look at this from a time perspective, you are better getting along with him in the short run, but in the long run he is a very poor bet.

Xi Jinping in China is playing the timing game, playing both ends against the middle. Xi, to Putin, looks like his only ally. Xi has a different plan: Sidle up to Putin to gain his confidence, then Xi can act as the mediator/power-broker of the deal to bring peace back in Ukraine. Xi will be hailed as a "good man" for exerting his influence, but will end up "owning Russia" without pissing off the world or firing a shot.

66. What is the most likely outcome for Vladimir Zelensky, if Putin takes over Ukraine and captures the Ukrainian President?

Death would make him a Martyr. Putin's Narcissism would rule this out.

More likely, Zelensky will be convicted of War Crimes in a Russian Court, with a life sentence in a Siberian prison, where he will die, but we won't learn of his demise for decades.

67. Has your opinion of Vladimir Putin changed as a result of the Russia-Ukraine war of 2022?

Definitely YES.

Prior to the Ukrainian Fiasco, I thought Putin was far more intelligent and cunning. I believed Putin was a dark soul, a highly competent Master Machiavellian who was a cold-

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hearted strategist and clear-headed tactician. I thought he understood how to take calculated risks where he had extremely high chances of winning.

Now that assessment is quite different. Putin has shown that he is also a Narcissist and Psychopath. His propensity to try to outmaneuver his opponent has degraded to an underestimation of his opponents. He has lost his ability to engage in risks he has a high likelihood of winning. He has gone over the edge of being a great leader into the dregs of being one of the greatest bumbler and vandals of all time.

Since the invasion of the Ukraine, Putin has shown himself as an **overblown megalomaniac**, a **reptilian barbarian**, a **psychopathic murderer**, a **paranoid monster**, an **obsessive-compulsive blunderer**, a **delusional demagogue**, and an **incompetent strategist**.

His leadership skills are horrid; the only reason he is in power is by force.

And the magnitude of the Ukrainian Fiasco will carve his legacy onto the gravestone of history as having committed one of the worst wars in the annals of modern military history. The idea of a Pyrrhic Victory might be renamed a "Putinnic" Victory.

Shame on Putin. I saw the signals of this possibility years ago, but never imagined this cold-hearted man would go into a cold-blooded reptilian tail-spin.

68. **Vladimir Putin should be stripped of his powers (allowed to live) but his family should be killed; for all those innocent people and children that he slaughtered?**

Yes, Putin should be stripped of his powers to save humanity from his genocide.

No, we must not cast the sins of the father upon the children. The children of Stalin and Khrushchev did not turn out to be bad people.

Killing innocent people only compounds the horror. The French and Russians did this when they deposed the Kings and Czars during their Revolutions, and the world recorded this event as a dismal act of inhumanity.

Revenge is not man's role, Justice is. That's why we held the Nuremberg Trials after WWII.

69. What are Putin's laid out demands to end the war in Ukraine?

First, understand that as a negotiator, Putin always starts with a BIG, OUTRAGEOUS set of demands. If he demands a lot, he will likely get a bigger piece of the pie than if he starts with something smaller and more reasonable.

Second, what he demands is clearly unacceptable to Ukraine and the West. These change each day. Some demands include giving the Ukraine to Russia,; an agreement that Ukraine and Moldova will not join NATO, or a pledge to give the Donbas and Crimea to Russia.

Don't worry about his demands, even if they seem contradictory or inconsistent. That's the way Putin plays the negotiations game, so his opponent can never stand on solid ground. Remember, Putin doesn't play fair.

That's why a big player, like China, has to broker the deal, laying down a compromise that will make neither side happy, but it will end the war.

70. What period had greater freedom of speech/press for Russia, 2022 under Putin or the last years of the Soviet Union under Gorbachev?

Gorbachev introduced the ideals of Glasnost and Perestroika.

Glasnost meant "Openness" to new ideas and more transparency in decision-making.

"Perestroika" meant working together to reform the political and economic policies that had caused stagnation.

While difficult to implement in a corrupt country, these were revolutionary concepts in the late 1980s.

Putin's oppression is contradictory to these ideals.

All this could have been predicted. See *Beware the Authoritarian Dark Triad*

[http://www.iclinstitute.com/Beware the Beast -- Authoritarian Dark Triad V1.11.pdf](http://www.iclinstitute.com/Beware_the_Beast_--_Authoritarian_Dark_Triad_V1.11.pdf)

71. Why did Putin, after almost always trying to be pragmatic in political matters, attack Ukraine knowing that the Western world would have a lot to say about it?

When you hear the proverb: "*Absolute Power Corrupts Absolutely*" it refers to a bundle of negative consequences.

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One of those consequences is the Tyrant starts to believe, over the course of time, they are omnipotent, self-absorbed in their own ego-maniacal delusions.

They build a safe team around them: sycophants at best, and henchmen at worst.

This is what happened to Putin.

Thus, Putin failed to assess the situation in the Ukraine, which was significantly different from other places Putin had subdued, such as Chechnya or Syria:

- The Ukraine is in Europe, not Asia, thus Europeans relate to Ukrainians
- The People of the Ukraine, 'tho many speak Russian, are not aligned with Putin's desires. He thought Ukrainians would welcome him.
- Putin misjudged the NATO response and the world response.
- He misjudged the fact that so many Ukrainians speak English, and could communicate their message to the world
- He miscalculated the enormous size of the Ukraine.
- He did not factor the Leadership Qualities of Zelensky or Biden

72. Will Putin's minions eventually turn against him?

The more isolated Putin becomes, the more he loses the support of his power base that keeps him office. That base includes:

- His own United Russian Party and the Communist Party
- Oligarchs
- Russian People
- Allies like China

Putin is vulnerable if he loses in Ukraine, as the economic sanctions become an avalanche in the economy. Should he lose the war, his days are numbered.

Russians have had a generation of experiencing the taste of Western Opportunity. Taking that away is not going to endear Russian Millennials to Putin. This is how Revolutions happen. The American Revolution is a good example — When King George took away our liberties starting in the 1760s, we rose up to overthrow the Tyrant.

73. Why do 60% of Russians support Putin's war? I've seen a lot of them on social media. Why is China and Belaruse supporting him, too? I live in USA and wondering if our mainstream news biased and using propaganda. So what am I missing?

The majority of Russian people support the war because they don't see the other side of the story. The Russian Propaganda Machine is modelled after the Hitler machine, suppressing all information not favorable to their interests.

Belarus is supporting Putin because Putin installed a puppet government to ensure support.

Don't assume China is supporting Putin. China has its own strategy, and will play both ends against each other to support its own interests..

In the USA, each media channel has its own perspective, but none are controlled by the government. That's called Freedom of the Press, which is guaranteed by the 1st Amendment to the Constitution.

What you've missed is explained in detail in my piece: America BEFUDDLED

<https://iclinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Strategic-Alert-7-America-BEFUDDLED-ABRIDGED.pdf>

Don't feel bad, this is the strategy Putin has been using on Americans for years.

74. Are any of the known Russian oligarchs not corrupt?

First, what is an oligarch in Russia?

- These individuals were given sweet-heart deals under the regime of Boris Yeltsin where state owned industries were privatized, and given to "businessmen" who took over banks, oil & gas, airlines, mines, etc.

Second, what was the "deal" that got them these lucrative assets?

- The evidence points to them paying off members of the parties and paying "royalties" to keep them from being unregulated. This created a corrupt system of business with black market payments that concentrated 35% of the wealth of Russia in 110 individuals.

Regarding Putin, it is speculated that he is the richest man in the world, raking off a "protection" fee from the oligarchs.

In other words, he's the Mafia boss. And all the oligarchs are, by their nature, corrupt "kleptocrats" who don't enable the Russian people to share in the wealth they help create.

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The Russian people hate this abuse of power. Maybe the Ukrainian Fiasco will crack the whole mess wide open.

75. Only God can decide who has to die or to live. Why do you all want Putin to get killed?

Put yourself back 80 years into Hitler's Germany.

Do you think God wanted:

- the Extermination of 6 million Jews?
- the Extermination of 3 million Catholics and other races?
- the Annihilation of 27 million Russians?
- the Death of 200,000 Americans?
- the Horrific Destruction of beautiful cities in Europe?
- the Displacement of millions of refugees who lost their homes?

Obviously not. God did not decide who could live or die. Hitler was evil and needed to be removed from power by whatever force could be invoked.

Was Hitler's life more valuable than that of Anne Frank?

The moral question of Hitler is directly applicable to Putin.

Personally, I don't care if Putin lives or dies. He is as evil and dark as Hitler.

Putin needs to be removed from power now. Any of the deaths of the Ukrainians (or Chechnya's children or Aleppo's mothers) are caused by Putin.

Anyone with a conscience can see Putin has none.

China doesn't need a war to own Russia's gas and oil fields. China is likely to either buy-out the vacated stock by Western Oil Companies exiting their Joint Ventures, or will provide financing for the Russian Oil companies, or will simply buy the Russian companies at bargain prices based on the deflated ruble.

My hunch is Russia is artificially trying to boost the ruble by selling off gold reserves to China.

76. Is the failure for European Countries to agree on Oil Sanctions the first big crack in Western unity against Putin?

The Western Nations are trying to modulate the impact of oil and gas prices on their economies and on public opinion.

In Europe, countries like Netherlands and Germany are high importers of Russian Oil. They must wean themselves away, which they are dedicated to do. But this takes time.

In the meantime, the US is ramping up production (we are one of the largest producers in the world, and so is Canada).

If Biden is alert, he would approve the Keystone Pipeline to open up Canada's oil fields to the refineries in Texas. This would expand the supply of oil on the world markets, keeping prices moderated, and ensure our European partners were adequately supplied so their economies stayed stable.

77. How likely is it that Putin will be dethroned? If that happens, what are the chances that he'll be substituted by a better president?

Putin has already lost enormous power on the world stage. Globally he is a pariah.

He's handed over enormous power to China without realizing it. China has not backed the sanctions, nor did it condemn Russian in the UN last week. The presumed alliance between China and Russia in early February is caput in reality, but China will play both ends against the middle on this one.

Putin's support internally, from his power base, is being eroded, and will eventually force him to change policies.

When this happens, my hunch is he will be gently escorted out of power. Who will take his place? I venture not to guess. Will they be an improvement over Putin? Most likely. But don't expect some enlightened leader who will guide Russia to the Promised Land.

78. Why did Putin attack Europe's largest nuclear power plant?

Probably for two reasons:

First, by holding the reactor, they can turn off the electricity to a large part of central Ukraine, thus throwing the nation into a crisis. People with no electricity, in theory, will be likely to give up, especially in the dead of winter.

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Second, and this is really ugly, by controlling nuclear energy, the Russians could play the “crazy card” threatening to invoke a nuclear meltdown if Ukraine doesn’t succumb. This would really be stupid, because prevailing winds would send most of the radiation right into Russia. The Ukrainian Intelligence reported that by holding the nuclear power plants, then setting up missile launchers around the plants, it becomes too risky for the locations to be attacked.

79. Were the Russian troops misled concerning the war? Were they told it was a practice exercise? What will happen when Putin’s people don’t support him?

Reports by captured soldiers and officers indicate that no one was told they were invading Ukraine until the night before. Some of the Conscripts were told they were fighting Nazis in Russia.

Morale is very bad. Those captured Russians who have made anti-Putin statements can never go back to Russia without being sent to a concentration camp in Siberia.

When the pressure from the Communist Party and the people gets too strong he will be eased out of power.

The strategy to hide assets is the same as used by any Mafia organization:

1. Turn the assets into cash and bury it in accounts in places like the Cayman Islands or China.
2. Put the assets into layers of holding/hiding companies run by third parties. The typical assets for this approach include land and stocks. Often these are corporations where several oligarchs hold major investments, and collude to keep their investments hidden from government authorities.
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NATO will not be going to war with Russia.

Saving Ukraine will be difficult, but sane minds will not risk a Nuclear War, which will be WWII.



This presumption (and it is a presumption) will be tested within the next few days. Putin is angry and frustrated. He has threatened his Generals in the Ukraine with Court-Martial if they don't succeed.

It would be appropriate to assume, with all the Russian forces deployed in the Ukraine, that Putin will escalate the war in the next few days. He knows time is against him with 20,000 missiles being deployed by the NATO powers.

Things will get very ugly, and then we will know if Putin decides to trigger Tactical Nuclear Weapons. Russian military strategy calls for TNWs to be used to gain compliance of the opposition. This is when things get really hairy. Many of us will not sleep well while this battle is waging.

Then expect China to intervene as a deal broker to come to engage in creating a negotiated settlement in about 2 weeks.

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- He misjudged the fact that so many Ukrainians speak English, and could communicate their message to the world

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- He miscalculated the enormous size of the Ukraine.
- He did not factor the Leadership Qualities of Zelensky or Biden
- He failed to recognize that the European Community would rapidly see Putin's actions in light of their history of being at war with Hitler — Putin is the 21st century Hitler.
- He did not understand the human spirit (since he has none) that would display the ideals of democracy, unity, and courage
- There's an old saying: *"It's not the Size of the Dog in the Fight, but the Size of the Fight in the Dog."* Putin missed this completely.

Now he has painted himself into an untenable corner. Had Putin created a more challenging group around him to examine the realities, and flaws in his strategy, he would never have gotten into this mess.

When you hear the proverb: *"Absolute Power Corrupts Absolutely"* it refers to a bundle of negative consequences.

One of those consequences is the Tyrant starts to believe, over the course of time, they are omnipotent, self-absorbed in their own ego-maniacal delusions.

They build a safe team around them: sycophants at best, and henchmen at worst.

This is what happened to Putin.

Thus, Putin failed to assess the situation in the Ukraine, which was significantly different from other places Putin had subdued, such as Chechnya or Syria:

- The Ukraine is in Europe, not Asia, thus Europeans relate to Ukrainians
- The People of the Ukraine, 'tho many speak Russian, are not aligned with Putin's desires. He thought Ukrainians would welcome him.
- Putin misjudged the NATO response and the world response.
- He misjudged the fact that so many Ukrainians speak English, and could communicate their message to the world
- He miscalculated the enormous size of the Ukraine.
- He did not factor the Leadership Qualities of Zelensky or Biden
- He failed to recognize that the European Community would rapidly see Putin's actions in light of their history of being at war with Hitler — Putin is the 21st century Hitler.
- He did not understand the human spirit (since he has none) that would display the ideals of democracy, unity, and courage
- There's an old saying: *"It's not the Size of the Dog in the Fight, but the Size of the Fight in the Dog."* Putin missed this completely.



Now he has painted himself into an untenable corner. Had Putin created a more challenging group around him to examine the flaws in his strategy, he would never have gotten into this mess.

All this could have been predicted. See *Beware the Authoritarian Dark Triad*

[http://www.iclinstitute.com/Beware the Beast -- Authoritarian Dark Triad V1.11.pdf](http://www.iclinstitute.com/Beware_the_Beast_--_Authoritarian_Dark_Triad_V1.11.pdf)

80. **What are the chances that there are active assassination plots against Vladimir right now?**

There are three aspects to this question:

1. Are there active assassination plots?
2. What are their motives?
3. What's the chance of success?

While it is pure speculation on my part, when there is a high level of dissatisfaction in a country, some people are actively plotting to remove the leader. As this dissatisfaction grows as the economic sanctions take hold and the losses on the battlefield mount, the pressure for removal will increase, and assassination will be one option for removal. This is what happened to Czar Nicholas in 1917, who was killed by Revolutionaries.

However assassination is not the only, nor best way to remove a leader.

The motives for removal can be high-minded or come from the dark soul of another scoundrel who sees an opportunity to seize power. Either could happen in Russia in the next several months.

As to the chances for success: it's not as easy as it might seem. Most plots fail, and the more people involved, the greater the chance of a leak. Operation Valkyrie in WWII, which was orchestrated by members of Hitler's command failed, and the plotters and their families got the firing squad.

81. **If Vladimir Putin was assassinated, what would the response be from his military and the Russian people?**

While we like to think of assassination as a great solution, it can backfire in rapid fire succession.

The Law of Unintended Consequences tells us that there is a high likelihood the Russians will blame NATO for the war, regardless of who actually did the killing.

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If that happens, the war gets worse, as things spin out of control.

If the assassination is attempted but is unsuccessful, again, things get worse. Think about the failed assassination of Hitler.

However, if the assassination is like that of Julius Caesar, by 60 members of the Roman Senate, then the outcome will be far more positive.

82. To what extent is President Putin at risk of being removed from power by the Russian oligarchy because of the sanctions imposed on them by the West?

Excellent Question, and a bit tricky to answer.

Removing a dictator and the backlash of sanctions can be more than convoluted.

If you look back at past Soviet leaders and how they were removed from office, there are some clues.

Stalin died. Others were replaced because they no longer had the trust and faith of the power-elites — those who could say “enough is enough.”

In Putin’s case, up until two weeks ago, he was trusted and revered in Russia. The opposition was from outside the inner circle of power.

However, Putin misplayed his hand in the Ukraine. The moral and economic pressures of global condemnation and economic sanctions, coupled with massive losses on the battlefield will bring a lot of practical “realpolitik” force on Putin. Now his inner source of power is eroding.

These will come from within Russia from his generals, the Politburo, some oligarchs, and the people whose real economic well-being is shattered.

The wild card in the game is China’s Xi Jinping. The Russian economic meltdown is playing directly into China’s hands. It can supply goods and financial backing to Russia, in exchange for China getting the best end of the bargain.

However, as the game of global chess plays out, China realizes its real value is keeping its bread buttered on both sides — being seen as the savior of Russia’s economy and continuing to trade with the West, which keeps its economy vibrant.

Therefore, watch for China to apply pressure. Xi Jinping will position himself to the rescuer of the civilized world by brokering a peace between the West and Russia. Part of the deal

may be that Putin has his wings clipped first, and then the power-elite may replace him for being ineffective, a bad risk taker, and imploding the economy. This could happen by the end of this year.

Watch for the signals — much happens behind the scenes.

In the end, China will be the big winner.

83. **How strong is communism in Russia nowadays?**

There is very little pure “communism” left in Russia from an economic perspective. The Marx-Lenin economic configuration was flawed from the outset. It is very difficult to maintain as it creates no real growth in the economic sector.

What is the residue of “Communism” is the flawed political system that concentrates power in the “power-elite.” This is the Communist Party, that was supposed to represent the people, and be democratically elected.

But just like all who suppress freedom and dissent, the old adage “Absolute Power Corrupts Absolutely” engages its control over the people, and they become oppressed.

Marx had a shallow understanding of real economic interplay, and an even worse construct for Human Behavior. Specifically, he failed to understand that normal people balance their own self-interest with the greater good of their community. Instead, Marx believed people would sacrifice everything for the community, and let the government determine how to share the benefits. When power-elites realized they could satisfy their own self-interest by taking from the poor and feeding their greed, the Communist system collapsed.

This is why most communistic experiments have failed. Only when small groups can control the resources and labor inputs, such as the Israeli kibbutz, does Communism work. Communism does not scale up well to the national level, whereas National Socialism does scale up, but it too has its flaws.

The major flaw in both systems is that they don’t consider the human spirit and the innovative power of the mind to be calculated into the economic equation. This spirit can flourish in Capitalistic economics, as long as national policy supports and enforces free markets.

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84. If the Russian Ukrainian war was to end and Putin stepped down as leader, what would he do afterward as far as a job? Or would he just take up retirement?

He'd go into seclusion and quasi exile in Russia because he would be convicted of war crimes, and could never leave the country.

Here in the west we don't realize that Putin is still a hero in Russia, and the propaganda machine will hail him for all the "good" he did.

85. Will Putin eventually be arrested for war crimes?

Unlikely.

The International Court may convict him in absentia.

But he will hide away within the boundaries of Mother Russia, avoiding extradition.

86. Are Russians aware of the world's outrage at Putin and his invasion?

Russians outside of Russia are very aware, but inside Russia it's probably less than 5% of the entire population, and perhaps 20% in the urban centers.

Remember, because Putin controls the media, his propaganda machine is pumping the Russian people full of outrageous lies, distortions, and suppression of truth. The West is being portrayed as evil Nazis.

Anyone disputing this false narrative is thrown in jail.

BTW, if anyone ever doubted the value of Democracies versus Authoritarian government, you are seeing the fallacy of the Authoritarian argument unfold before your eyes with Putin.

87. What is the basis for the Western leaders to believe that harsh economic sanctions will not lead to a nuclear war with Russia eventually?

We are entering very new territory with the global sanctions on Russia.

No one has ever done this before to this magnitude.

However, use of sanctions and embargoes do have a history of creating socio-economic and political change by causing internal opposition to tyrants.



In the Russian case today, we are counting on two internal forces to exert pressure that will remove Putin.

1. The Communist Party will feel the pinch, see the internal suffering, and reign him in. Without the backing of the Party, which controls the purse strings, Putin is in trouble. As the Russian economy tanks, these forces will eventually force Putin out. (My hunch is he'll be gone by the end of the year.
2. The People of Russia will suffer, become angry, and create opposition in the streets. Remember, this is what happened in 1917 when the Czar got Russians entangled in WWI. The Czar was overthrown by the Bolsheviks. This can happen again.

The Russians know that a nuclear war is the BIGGEST LOSE-LOSE Proposition in the history of the world.

Hopefully, the Communist Party, after it is clear that the Ukrainian Escapade is a failure, will start clipping Putin's wings.

88. **What are the best arguments to convince Putin-admirers about his absolute insanity in ongoing conflict? There are some people in my country Slovakia who still believe Putin is innocent!**

Your question is important, but difficult to answer. It is the same problem we have in the US trying to convince Trump supporters that he is a bad guy.

Recognize the art of persuasion. Asking questions is more valuable than bludgeoning people with your insights and intelligence.

Ask people questions that will reveal things that don't make sense, that surface "cognitive dissonance" — data, facts, information, criteria, values, etc. that seem to be in contradiction.

People are influenced greatly by their peers and friends who don't threaten them. For example, often I will say: "You are a dear friend, and I have always admired your, but I'm perplexed by your views on Putin. Please tell me not just why you like him, but how do you perceive goodness in him?"

Two days ago my cousin Jack started spouting off how Trump would do a better job handling the Ukraine Crisis than Biden.

Finally I said "Dammit, Jack, we've got a war on our hands. We need to be united and imaginative about how to protect our friends in the Ukraine (Jack and I are half Polish). Here's what our cousins are doing in Poland to help the refugees. We need to be talking about how to help them, not arguing about US politics."

Suddenly the conversation changed to a higher order of thinking.

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89. How would Russia replace Putin when he becomes too old to rule or passes away?

Technically, according to the Constitution of 1993, the Prime Minister is supposed to succeed the President.

Currently that is Mikhail Vladimirovich Mishustin, Then the next President should be elected by the people. Now, we all know this will not be a normal line of succession and that any voting will not allow an opposition candidate.

It's bound to be one big ugly game of "king of the mountain," the winner of the nomination being the result of a power struggle.

90. If Putin was assassinated, would this end this insane invasion?

First, don't get your hopes too high that someone will take him out. He has layers of protection around him.

If he did die in office, his successor (technically the Prime Minister) would likely call a cease fire, negotiate a withdrawal to the Donbas and Crimea (plus some more territory) and stop the war.

Then his successor must figure out how to rebuild Russia, clean out Putin's henchmen, and deal with the aftermath of the war, address reparations, and keep from getting overthrown. Not a job destined for glory.

91. Should Putin be executed for war crimes?

If the Nuremburg trials are a guide, in all, 199 defendants were tried, 161 were convicted, and 37 were sentenced to death.

In WWII, Britain, US, and USSR met in 1943 to sign the **Declaration of Atrocities** stating:

"The United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union have received from many quarters evidence of atrocities, massacres and cold-blooded mass executions which are being perpetrated by Hitlerite forces in many of the countries they have overrun . . . those German officers and men and members of the Nazi party who have been responsible for or have taken a consenting part in the above atrocities, massacres and executions will be sent back to the countries in which their abominable deeds were done in order that they may be judged and punished according to the laws of these liberated countries and of free governments which will be erected therein..."

Now the tables are turned.

The problem with Putin is we'd have to capture him, extradite him, then execute him. It's doubtful we'd lay our hands on him.

92. Was Russia ever truly democratic? What went wrong since 1993?

The Russian Reforms of 1993 at first were theoretically designed to make the country democratic.

However, the reality was that the "United Russia Party" has always won, defeating the Communist Party and other splinter parties.

Since '93, there have only been three Presidents: [Boris Yeltsin](#) elected in 1991 and 1996, [Vladimir Putin](#) in 2000, 2004, 2012 and 2018 and [Dmitry Medvedev](#) in 2008.

Since Putin first came into office, elections have been increasingly coercive. A number of independent agencies have concluded that since 2008 Russia has been basically a one party system, which mean democracy is dead.

93. Will Vladimir Putin be alive in five years?

I'm not qualified to answer this question, only God is.

However, if the question was "Will Putin be in power in 5 years" my educated guess is "NO."

Why would the power-elite in Russia every want such an incompetent man as Putin at the helm. The devastation he has wrought on his own people is overwhelming.

94. Is Putin digging his own grave by invading Ukraine?

Putin has already dug his own grave.

His legacy is shattered. He is the biggest loser in Russian history.

The mess in Ukraine, even if he wins the battle, he will have lost the war and the wills of people.

The Ukraine FIASCO will go down in the annals of modern military history as the fourth biggest blunder, only superseded by the entanglements that got us into WWI, Hitler's decision to invade Russia in WWII, and the Japanese decision to attack Pearl Harbor.

The concept of a Pyrrhic Victory (a victory that cost more than was gained) may be replaced by a new term — a Putinnic Victory,

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Putin has dug his grave in Russia, but doesn't realize it. In today's electronic world, the Russian people, who have been fed a truck load of lies via the propaganda machine, will eventually learn the truth about the Ukraine. When they do, the boomerang effect will make them very angry, and want Putin's blood.

Putin has to institute martial law to prevent this anger from boiling over into a REVOLUTION. Czar Nicholas was eliminated in 1917 because he attempted such things. Will Putin suffer the same fate soon????

95. Will the Russian oligarchs be able to hang on to some of their toys and assets now located in the West?

To a very limited extent.

Many of their "toys" are buried in shell companies owned by phantom shareholders.

Other assets have been transferred into CryptoCurrency accounts.

Both will be hard to find.

96. Are any of the known Russian oligarchs not corrupt?

First, what is an oligarch in Russia?

- These individuals were given sweet-heart deals under the regime of Boris Yeltsin where state owned industries were privatized, and given to "businessmen" who took over banks, oil & gas, airlines, mines, etc.

Second, what was the "deal" that got them these lucrative assets?

- The evidence points to them paying off members of the parties and paying "royalties" to keep them from being unregulated. This created a corrupt system of business with black market payments that concentrated 35% of the wealth of Russia in 110 individuals.

Regarding Putin, it is speculated that he is the richest man in the world, raking off a "protection" fee from the oligarchs.

In other words, he's the Mafia boss. And all the oligarchs are, by their nature, corrupt "kleptocrats" who don't enable the Russian people to share in the wealth they help create.

The Russian people hate this abuse of power. Maybe the Ukrainian Fiasco will crack the whole mess wide open.

97. Is true knowledge the real problem with Russians? Trump thinks Putin is a genius but is he? Suppose Russians woke up realizing rich grifters were manipulating them? Would the Ukrainian invasion end sooner?

First, a large portion of the Russian people are quite intelligent, well educated, and sophisticated in their understanding of the world. Up until the Ukraine Fiasco, there was a moderate level of freedom of the press. This has been closed down in the last three weeks, and now Russians are in the dark regarding “true knowledge.” Anyone who speaks the truth gets 15 years in jail — a violation of basic human rights. Our 1st Amendment to the Constitution protects freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

Second, Trump is a fool (maybe an idiot savant) for thinking or saying that Putin is a genius in the context of a compliment. Further, Putin may actually be very smart, but so was Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and all the other Dark Triad evil characters of history. The real point is that Putin has no conscience, no soul, no moral center. Trump could not see these qualities of character were missing because Trump suffers from the same maladies.

Third, Grifting is one of the characteristics of a corrupt government. Russia has beheld this greed among the power-elites for centuries. Most Russians have learned to tolerate it, but not like it. Exposing the depth and severity of the egregious violation of fairness in economic distribution can infuriate communist and capitalist alike. Will they revolt? Yes, if the internal police force becomes disillusioned too.

Fourth, will knowledge end the Ukrainian Fiasco sooner? Knowledge seldom is the sole force for social change. Intellectual facts seldom create massive social transformation. If we look toward the American Revolution for some lessons, it was not until three powerful forces came into alignment and unity:

1. there was a long list of grievances and a powerful rational imperative to trigger action and congruence of thinking across the colonies.
2. there was a powerful moral imperative that clearly defined King George’s actions as in violation of “Natural (Divine) Law.”
3. the people got angry — propelling things like the Burning of the Gaspee in 1772, the Boston Tea Party in 1773, and the Battle of Lexington & Concord in 1775 — that culminated in the Continental Congress declaring Independence in 1776; thus, translating anger into action and passionate belief in the words they espoused.

98. Does the Russian communist party support or oppose Putin's actions in Ukraine?

Just before the Russian Invasion of Ukraine, the Russian Duma (Parliament) met and overwhelmingly passed a resolution by the Communist Party of the Russian Federation calling on Putin to recognize the independence of the Donbas separatists as

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independent republics, As Putin represents the All-Russia People's Party, and the Communist Party are the minority, Putin had the imperative to attack a limited section of the Ukraine.

Putin exploited this mandate to attack all the Ukraine.

(BTW, Hitler did the same things, just so his actions of atrocity were "legal.")

Ten days into the war, three members of the Communist party felt they were duped and voiced opposition to the broader war.

We have not heard from them since. Are they in jail???

99. **So if the USA has intelligence about Putin's agendas, why are they not doing anything about it? I believe the US government has full involvement with the Ukrainian war Playing both sides of the fence What are your beliefs**

You are getting spooked by Putin.

Intel is not like we have a direct link to the mind of Putin.

Intel takes multiple inputs from a variety of sources.

From those pieces and fragments we attempt to recognize a pattern or a convergence of data that provides probabilities.

In the case of Putin, we don't know what he's going to do next because he doesn't decide until he thinks he can outsmart NATO and the Ukrainians, which seems to be determined by the daily reports from his field generals.

Also, you will never know what the intel community is doing and thinking. Their ops are clandestine, and must remain so.

Have a little faith in these professionals — they aren't the dark force. We are NOT playing both sides of the fence; China does.

100. **Is it possible that the Russian military will turn on Putin**

Don't hold your breath for this miracle to happen.

Here's why:



Unlike the US Military that understands morality and international law, the Russian High Command are more robotic automatons.

The entire Russian Command is a top-down system where everyone in a lower rank is subservient to the rank above them. Imagination is totally lacking.

In the next week, the Russians will ramp-up their attack, taking advantage of the cold front that will refreeze the mud that has bogged them down.

Nevertheless, the Russians will take horrible losses. Expect by this time next week the total Russian deaths will be 10,000 with 25,000 wounded and the loss of 100 tanks. And they still will not have conquered Eastern Ukraine.

At this point it is conceivable the Generals will finally give Putin the stark realities and put up a fuss. Will his mean they “turn” on Putin? They may try to change his mind, but they will not boot him out of office — too risky. If they failed, it would be the firing squad.

101. **How was Dmitrij Medvedev as a successor after Vladimir Putin?**

Apparently, Medvedev was the hand-selected puppet of Putin. Like any puppet, the grand puppeteer was directing most of his moves.

Yet, there is some evidence that Medvedev didn’t like being a puppet and bucked Putin at times.

Putin’s ego couldn’t stand being behind the scenes like a typical political boss. Putin had to take the reins to be sure everything conformed to Putin’s massive insecurity complex.

102. **Is Vladimir Putin really in charge and calling the shots in Russia in 2022?**

Right now, the answer is yes. He’s calling the shots. Making the decisions, Overseeing the strategy. Directing the propaganda machine. Determining whose advice he will listen to.

This is the problem with an authoritarian tyrant — they don’t use the resources of intelligent people effectively, just as Hitler wouldn’t listen to any contrarians.

It’s called being a “victim of group think.” It creates a delusional world for Putin.

Next week, as the war continues to go badly for the Russians, more of Putin’s internal support will start to erode. Hopefully these saner heads will rope him in.

103. **Why did Putin sack 8 of his generals?**

Let me illustrate this answer with a story:

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Part of my military officer training was as a midshipman in Marine Boot camp.

I was on guard duty marching to protect the entrance of the Marine Base when all the sudden I got a severe attack of some intestinal bug. Intense pain shot through my lower digestive track. I got a massive case of diarrhea. I needed to get to a toilet instantly.

I rushed to the Sargeant of the guard and asked to be taken off duty to prevent filling my pants with Shxt. The Sargeant looked at me sternly, denying my request stating:

"Excuses are like Axxholes. We've all got them and they all stink!"

I went back on guard duty, marching for another three hours with a pile of ShXt in my pants.

Moral of the story: A general has no excuses for lack of success.

In some militaries, you don't get sacked, you get Court Martialed, or worse, the firing squad.

104. Will Russia turn on Putin?

Eventually yes, but this may take some time.

Putin has made a fatal mistake with the Russian people. He has underestimated the intelligence of his people, particularly in the younger generations who are savvy and have tasted the honey of Western luxuries and opportunities.

When people move from the freedoms of the last thirty years in Russia, their expectations are optimistic for their future.

Take those freedoms away with the crackdowns on the press, closing of western businesses, and the arrests of demonstrators, and people will get angry.

Just look at what threw Americans over the brink with our Revolution in 1776. King George began to take away freedoms, putting Massachusetts under martial law in 1774, The same thing will happen in Russia.

In 1917, the oppression of the Czarist regime caused the Russian Revolution. Russians are quite aware of their history, and eventually will rise up. The more Putin invokes oppressive policies, the more he isolates himself from the support of his people.

105. Will Russia's fate be the same as the fate of the Soviet Union after wasting energy fighting in Afghanistan?

In basic terms, yes.



While there are some differences, Soviet Russia made fundamental mistakes in the post WWII era.

Economically, the Soviets used Eastern Europe as a source of labor to artificially boost their economic capacity to support their military build-up. There are many flaws to this strategy — it requires oppression, which requires a high level of resources to sustain it and it stagnates growth because there is no capacity to innovate and adapt and improve.

Wars are extremely costly on any country. In American history, the constant wars between Britain and France caused each king to increase the taxes on their people. Both countries suffered Revolutions as Americans and French Peasants said enough is enough.

With the economic sanctions being imposed, the Russian economy is going into meltdown. Putin has lost on this front and is in denial. This is the backfire that will result in his eventual demise.

106. **What does Putin do with deserters?**

According to the Security Service of Ukraine, who questioned deserting and captured soldiers, they have said that "army leadership has resumed the practice of 'execution squads' - echelons that follow the main forces of the Russian Federation and kill those who want to escape," just like Soviet Union's commissar squads.

As the Russian Federation soldiers moved deeper into Ukraine, they began to realize that they were far from being on a peacekeeping mission as they were first told.

"But they made very clear that we can't desert or try to run, because echelons are coming after us, killing deserters who are trying to return to Russia," the soldier said.

"Now, having become accomplices in crimes, the soldiers regret that they did not have the courage to act like the marines of the Russian Federation... near Odesa, 600 marines rebelled and refused to leave their ship, because they understood what was happening."

"The army of the Russian Federation is demoralized and suppressed. So the victory of Ukraine is not far off!" the SBU said.

Captured Russian soldiers are stating the Russian Army has created a special squad set up for killing deserters who don't want to take part in the invasion.

"Soldiers are threatened with a specialised 'echelon', and that they are kept in the dark until they see the devastation for themselves - at which point the 'only thing we could really do was surrender'."

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107. **Somebody once said, all people deserve their leader. Do Russians deserve their leader? What about Ukraine? Any example is welcome**

This aphorism is similar to the one "A Company President gets the Union he deserves." Having acted as a Labor-Management mediator at one time in my career, I'd say there is a lot of validity to this view.

However, when it comes to leaders of nations, the equation becomes more difficult to compute, especially when tyrants rule with an iron fist.

- Did Germany deserve Hitler? Did they know in 1933 he would create WWII?
- Did Myanmar (Burma) deserve the tyrants that have ruined their country by military coups?
- Did the Serbs deserve Milosevich?
- Did the American Colonists deserve King George III?

No nation "deserves" tyranny. Tyrants enter under false promises, deceit, and cunning. Undoing them is not easy, and often great brutality is the only way reasonable people rise up and overthrow the scoundrels.

One commentator stated:

I have concluded after years of reading about Russian history, that they seem to always be in the hands of one strongman or another. This goes way back to before even Ivan the Terrible.

Once in a while, there is a short three to four years where hope springs eternal and then back they go into the hands of one strong person.

I hate to say it it, but maybe through generations of these happenings, their mental DNA has been altered to accept that type of life and that type of government.

Perhaps the younger generation of Russians will take over for a while after this war is over, but they may collapse into the same old ways later on.

As for Zelinsky, he is the symbol of the new Ukraine which was formed after the Soviet Union in 1991. He is the symbol of a country that wants to think for itself. I would expect that he will continue to lead the Ukraine through the war but sometime thereafter, fade from the scene. He makes for a Great War leader but perhaps may not be a great peace leader. What happened to Churchill may happen to him.

Part Four: Putin's Interaction with Geo-Politics

108. Why is Israel so supportive of Putin?

According to a poll of Israelis published in the Jerusalem Post just a few day ago:

76% of Israelis support Ukraine and only 10% supported Russia.

Within the Arab population in Israel, 41% supported the Ukrainians compared to 35% for the Russians.

Israel has been a neutral country.

The Israeli government signed the UN Condemnation of Russia and expressed support for the Ukrainian people.

Remember, Israel borders Syria, which is aligned with Russia and hostile to Israel. Putin is unlikely to push the button unless he believes his country is being attacked.

109. Why are Russian people being held accountable for Putin's actions?

The fact that many people in the West are holding Russian people accountable is a reality of human behavior — fearing what we don't understand.

Certainly, it is not fair. In my experience, Russians are really great people, especially those who have immigrated to the US.

Last week, my friend Olga was downhearted because of the way people started treating her. I wrote back:

I fear many Americans will wrongly judge Russians because of Putin's actions.

My personal experience with Russian people is highly favorable. The Russian heritage is far deeper that most Americans will never truly appreciate.

Russians are highly cultured and fine-tuned to all the arts. I've been inspired by Russian music, ballet, poetry, and literature.

Russians, like Poles and Ukrainians, are heart-felt people, soulful, and caring. They are fun to be with, quite insightful, and have a very strong work ethic. Their contribution to America is invaluable, coming here to the United States because it offers freedom, liberty and opportunity not available in their native lands.

So many of my friends are deep Christians. Christ tells us to "Love thy Neighbor." Let all Americans follow that blessed wisdom & guidance. Let us embrace Russian-Americans as brothers & sisters.

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110. Was Putin possibly waiting for Trump to vacate NATO if he was elected again in 2020?

To answer this question, it's best to try to put yourself in Putin's mind. (I know this is difficult, because Putin's mind is wired very differently from the normal human. The same goes for Trump.)

I would surmise that during the Trump Presidency, Putin saw NATO and the US being divided and weak because there was no united approach.

Putin probably assumed Trump would not oppose Russia's invasion of the Ukraine, and that Trump would be reelected. NATO's response would be weak.

When Trump lost the Presidency, Putin saw that Trump and his faction of the Republican Party was still strong, thus the United States was terribly divided a year after the election.

When Biden abysmally botched the Afghanistan withdrawal, Putin was convinced that Biden was weak and indecisive.

Given this landscape, Putin surmised an attack on Ukraine would be a cake-walk with no push-back from NATO. Putin figured we would squawk a lot, but words are not bombs, so he would do exactly what he did in Chechnya etc. His opponent in NATO was a paper tiger.

Such a move on Ukraine would be a black eye for Biden, helping the Trump led Republicans would win the 2022 mid-terms, and Trump would be back in the White House in 2024.

Timing was critical, and the window of opportunity was now, from Putin's point of view.

History will record that Putin miscalculated in one of the worst blunders in military history, only surpassed by the entanglements that got us in WWI, Hitler's 1941 attack on Russia, and Japan's 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

Inherently Putin failed to consider how the Law of Unintended consequences would work against him and in favor of the West.

111. How good of friends are former US President Donald Trump and Russian dictator Vladimir Putin, and who is the liaison between the current White House, and former President Trump?

First, neither Trump nor Putin have any friends. They can't because their psyches will not allow them to trust anyone whatsoever, with the possible exception of their own blood family.

With no trust, you can only expect loyalty, which is not voluntary, but the result of some force that holds people in their orbit. This force can be money, sex, power, or incriminating evidence.

Relationships with Trump or Putin are sustainable only when each are gaining some advantage from the interaction. When the deal is no longer beneficial to one of the parties, the other party gets “thrown under the bus.”

You only have to look at Trump’s long history of annihilating his former “friends” to understand this phenomenon. Just ask Jeff Sessions or Bill Barr, or John Kelly, to name a just a few.

I don’t expect there is any liaison between Trump and Biden. There is no trust Biden could have in anything Trump says. Remember Trump tried to steal the election from Biden. That very act was treasonous in Biden’s view. Trump attacked Biden’s son, another breach of honor.

112. What are Putin’s complaints about the West?

Having been a mediator in more than a few disputes in my career, I’ve learned to listen between the lines when people talk about complaints.

The real issue is not about his “complaints” but about his fears.

These are actually simple, but Putin will not say them out loud.

#1: He fears losing power

#2: He fears having an opponent on his border

#3: He fears his dream of being Russia’s great leader in history is in jeopardy.

#4: He fears being assassinated

#5: He fears Democracy

Perhaps this list goes on.

Most of these fears can’t be negotiated.

He sees war as the best way to resolve his fears.

And that is the problem in this putrid game.

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113. Why does Russia and Putin still not see that no country in the world wants to be associated with Russia or live according to brutal backward poor Russian standards?

Because of Putin's multiple disorders in his personality (Dark Triad), he is also paranoid, obsessive-compulsive, and mega-maniacal. This is basically the same mental condition that plagued Hitler.

Basically, when he sees the global response, he gets angry, escalates his broken and ill-conceived strategy, and just goes into Bulldozer mode. Hitler did the same thing.

Putin has no conscience (the definition of a psychopath); he only understands POWER, nothing else.

When POWER opposes him, he might act differently and try to bargain his way out of this thing. Or, worse, he might try to escalate with tactical nukes to gain concessions.

114. Why did Barack Obama say Russia wasn't a threat, then later tell Putin he'd be more "flexible" after the election, two years before Putin annexed Crimea?

In 2012, Medvedev served as president beginning in 2008, the same year Obama was elected. All of Obama's discussions were "president to president."

Putin was not Obama's counterpart at that time. This was prior to the 2012 elections when Putin was reelected president, and Medvedev took the #2 position as prime minister, which is next in line for succession if Putin died or was removed from office. Medvedev held this office until 2020.

Medvedev was far more reasonable and rational than Putin. Obama thought he could reason with Medvedev.

115. What is to keep China from confiscating Russia's oil and gas producing lands near Mongolia? Isn't Putin nearly defenseless in the east? Surely he wouldn't nuke China?

Why invade Russia when you own it?

Yes, it would be easy for China to walk right into eastern Russia, which is virtually defenseless. But then China would prove they would do what the Japanese tried in WWII - take over Mongolia, then go for Taiwan. The Chinese are too smart, and too patient to make such mistakes.

116. Will China's Xi Jinping let Vladimir Putin start a world war before finding a way to stop him? Why, or why not?

Excellent Question, and fundamental to the denouement of the Ukrainian Crisis.

Xi Jinping has a massive stake in this game.

First, as one of Russia's largest trading partners — lots of money is at stake.

Second, China wants to be recognized as a major global power.

China actually has the most to gain from brokering a settlement of the war in Ukraine. It is the largest country that has bought into neither the sanctions of Russia nor the international condemnations. China played the chess board better than Putin, Russia will end up as a debtor and China as a creditor in the deal.

Recall in 1903, Teddy Roosevelt interceded in ending the war between Russia and Japan. He won the Nobel Prize, and it propelled the US into an emerging super-power role.

Xi will try to do the same.

117. Is Putin Xi Jinping's puppet?

No at all. Neither is the Puppet of the other. Both Putin and Xi Jinping are their own leaders connected in an unholy coalition, much like Hitler and Stalin prior to 1941.

Watch what happens in the next two weeks. Xi will move to broker an end to the war, and he will be Russia's only economic outlet. China will end up buying a lot of Russia and be the real winner in this horrible game.

118. Is Putin selling Russia to China under the pretense of giving land for rent indefinitely for exploitation?

As Duncan Curtis said in a response to this question,

If I was China, I would be rubbing my hands in glee, in anticipation of all the cheap Russian investments I will be picking up for next to nothing. Russia is going to be nothing more than a big Chinese mine and factory for the next 50 years.

As the western world abandons Russia, the Chinese will willing fill the void. They will by the vacated portion of the Oil & Gas joint ventures for bargain basement prices. They will sign long-term below market pricing deals for the purchase of Russian Oil and Gas. The Chinese banks will finance Russian expansion at a premium because of Russia's "Junk Bond" status.

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China doesn't want to merge with Russia and inherit all its liabilities. It will just hold the mortgage on nearly everything of real value. If there is a default, China forecloses.

119. **Putin threatens to use nukes even if we just get in his way. Many politicians & voters then say we'd better not "poke the Bear". But what happens later on if we give in to nuclear blackmail now?**

Your question has kept strategists up at night wrestling for the right answer.

History will tell us a lot about the answer, as this dilemma goes back to Greek and Roman times.

But the best example is Hitler, and what we should have done to stop him. Without going into a long dissertation, what we now know about human behavior gives us a clear pathway forward.

First, we must understand that Putin's personality is VERY EVIL — see

http://www.iclinstitute.com/Beware_the_Beast_--_Authoritarian_Dark_Triad_V1.11.pdf

Second, Evil will not go away and will only respond to POWER. This power must be consistent, clear, and unrelenting. There must be NO SIGN of WEAKENESS. And it must be jointly applied from all sides. We are doing this now. I'm impressed how NATO, Biden, the EU and others are walking this tightrope. That's why we don't want a No-Fly Zone — it would provoke the bear into an attack, versus surrounding the bear. The ancient Chinese stratagem of "death by a thousand cuts" is more effective.

120. **Do you think the sanctions will work by driving Putin to the negotiating table? Or will they make him feel cornered and cause him to lash out in a catastrophic way? What do you think?**

Both will happen.

Right now he is in the Lashing Out mode. He's escalating the fight, going into his Bulldozer reaction, trying to use the size of his military and the fear of his nukes as the Irresistible Force. He is encountering the Immovable Object.

This battle is a LOSE-LOSE proposition with an ugly end.

More than likely Putin will win (to a certain extent) in the south of Ukraine, and get badly banged up in the north.

In a week, we will likely be horrified what can happen in a modern war.



Then Putin will have to lick his wounds and go to the negotiating table — probably orchestrated by China — and declare a victory by holding the eastern provinces, including Crimea and Mariupol.

Putin has not won on the battlefield, and he has already lost the war of public opinion. Soon he will lose the support of the Russian people as the truth emerges in among the populous.

This is called a Pyrrhic Victory (coined during the Greek era) — *a success that comes with great losses or unacceptable costs*. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor is a good example. Ukraine will become a classic in military history. Ultimately, a generation from now this will be Putin's legacy — a "*Putinnic Victory*."

121. Why did the West put such weak sanctions on Russia/Putin? Why are the rich oligarchs with stolen dirty money and their families not had their visas cancelled and are still rudely behaving and living in the EU/USA?

If you think the sanctions are weak, let's revisit this issue in 30 to 60 days. The impact of Sanctions is not instantaneous — they take a while to roll through the economy. By May 1st, the Russian economy will be in tatters.

The GDP will fall 25% by the end of the year. The country will suffer massive bankruptcies. The unemployment rate will skyrocket. Social unrest will cause Putin to be removed in disgrace, having unraveled all the economic gains of the last two decades. It will take a generation to rebuild.

Much of the rich oligarchs have buried their money in dark corners, shell corporations, black market, and crypto currency. The US Dept of Justice just launched a Klepto Task Force to unearth and confiscate the scoundrels.

122. How can scared folks be calmed down when the news is indicating a nuclear war with Russia?

Your question is pertinent and important.

First, it is normal to be scared at what is happening. Tell people their fear is totally reasonable.

Second, taking a page out of my time as a combat officer, I told my men they have three options to deal with fear:

1. Let the fear paralyze you, fret and stew, and become totally anxiety ridden.

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2. Bury your head and tune out.
3. Turn your fear into anger and action and understanding the enemy to defeat them.

As you might surmise, my response to the fear and anxiety is to take the third option. That's why you are reading this Quora Answer right now.

123. Since Putin has been declared a war criminal by the Geneva Convention, why doesn't Interpol arrest him?

After WWII, we conducted Military Tribunals at Nuremburg, and convicted 37 Nazi leaders to death. We conquered Germany, and captured the rascals.

Slobodan Milosevic was arrested by his own successor in Serbia, brought to trial, which lasted five years, and eventually convicted him.

How do we capture Putin to put him on Trial? Conquer Russia? Or wait for the Russian people to overthrow the dictatorship then bring him to trial? The last option is the most realistic, but the least probable.

From Jim Himuka: So wha's your answer?

Jim, the answer is that Interpol has neither the *authority* nor *capability* to invade Russia, fight through the army, the police, and Putin's security guards, capture Putin alive, kidnap him, and whisk him out of the country then put him on trial.

At this point, I believe the ICC has initiated an Investigation, but has not convicted Putin. Thus there are no grounds for his arrest

From Jim Himuka: Well, since the INTERPOL is so corrupt(Interpol) and Putin already has a "Wanted" for a million dollars on his head (\$1 million bounties on Vladimir Putin's head offered by Russian businessman | Marca) that if you were the president of the United States wouldn't you order the CIA to work with other EU Secret Service organizations to drag Putin into Dutch court in Hague since United States Congress has passed a resolution (Graham introduces a resolution calling Putin war criminal | wltx.com) to accuse Putin as a war criminal?

Jim, I understand your frustration and desire to see justice wield her powerful and righteous sword. Your intentions are well founded.



However, if I were advising the President, I would never get caught in what's called "myopic obsession" (which is the trap Putin is caught in at the moment) — focusing narrowly on one solution or option, instead of assessing a range of options (which is what the CIA is called upon to do).

Once the range of options are laid out, then scenario analysis is conducted as to the pro's and con's of each option when carried out in detail at the operational level.

Each option is assessed based on what provides the least risk of creating a quagmire when the Law of Unintended Consequences kicks in, and which options are the easiest to execute with the greatest reward.

Right now, unlike Putin, President Biden has surrounded himself with an array of excellent advisers, both internally and with his partners in the EU and NATO.

They have opted with the strategy to let economic sanctions foment a revolution in Russia to take down Putin from within. This might happen in the next six months.

I support this strategy having conducted similar scenario assessments.

124. **Given that Putin is fighting for the *wrong* cause, will the world ever forgive Russia?**

Look back at Post WWII Germany or the American Civil War for the answer:

First, we were quick to forgive the German People, even though they claimed to be oblivious to the extermination of the Jews.

The difficulty is always with the Leadership. Forgiveness is highly linked to TRUST. If there is no dramatic regime change with a statement that such action in the Ukraine was flat-out wrong, then it will take years for the wounds to heal. The trust in Russian Leadership — political, business, and diplomatic — has imploded.

Second, the problem after a war is how well the conquerors treat the vanquished.

In the case of the American Civil War, the Carpet Baggers descended on the South to make their lives miserable. The animosities did not heal — it took more than a century for the South to forgive the North.

In the case of Japan after WWII, General McArthur did a magnificent job as "military governor." Soon Japan was rebuilding, gaining their self-confidence, focusing their energy on the future, not the past. Look at the results three generations later. Kudos to McArthur on this one.

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125. **Former President Trump calls Putin 'genius'. How might the media put a spin on this? Could this be giving him some ideas if he runs and wins in 2024?**

No spin is necessary. A fool may be known by ten things:

- 1) anger, without just cause;
- 2) inquiry, without object;
- 3) change, without progress;
- 4) speaking, without listening;
- 5) voicing opinion, without insight;
- 6) putting trust in a stranger,
- 7) mistaking foes for friends;
- 8) acting, without considering consequences;
- 9) possessing knowledge, without wisdom;
- 10) using force, without heart.

A fool's tongue is long enough to cut his own throat. - Proverb

A fool, if he holds his tongue, may pass for wise. - Proverb, (Spanish)

A fool is exposed by voicing his opinions; a wise man by his depth and breadth of inquiry.

126. **Is the best thing Putin can do is this? Pause, realise that he has made an incredible mistake, withdraw all forces, offer Ukraine £1 trillion in compensation & hand himself over to the UN's ICC in The Hague? People would then respect him far more?**

Andre, you are thinking like a normal, rational, equitable, and honorable person. (applause — I'm not being sarcastic.)

Unfortunately Putin has none of these qualities. He wants POWER. He is not influenced by an acknowledgement he's made a mistakes. He has NO CONSCIENCE, which is the defining characteristic of a Psychopath.

The best we can hope for is for the only other Powerful Person Putin respects is Xi Jinping in China, who is probably the only person capable of brokering a "Peace Deal."

127. What are the chances in 2022 that Putin will use nukes on the US?

This is a central question and on everyone's mind from Presidents to school children.

Unfortunately, it's an imprecise calculus that relies on a whole lot of uncertain and thus somewhat doubtful assumptions. (These are code words for "High Risk Tightrope Walking")

Situations like this needs the same prudence JFK exerted during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Then it was called "brinkmanship" and that term is applicable today.

The only problem today is that Nikita Khrushchev could be talked to and was a rational leader. Putin is not.

Thus, we are trying to do everything to be strong, but not go over the line that will cause Putin to go over the deep end and kick off tactical nukes first.

So, to answer your question, my hunch is less than 15% chance of using nukes, but this chance is way too high to gamble with the future of the planet.

128. How is the "Special Financial Operation" working for Putin?

A special DOJ Task Force has been established to root out the Kleptocrats (Kleptomaniacs) posing as Oligarchs, aimed at "Klepto-Capture."

The TF is targeted at:

- finding "buried treasure" cloaked under shell corporation.
- looking for black money laundering
- freezing accounts of accomplices
- blocking currency transactions
- preventing assets from being transferred into Crypto Currency
- uncovering criminal elements attached to the Oligarchs involved in bank and wire fraud, and banks that look the other way with money laundering

There's probably a lot more that we will learn about, but the Task Force (working internationally) won't let us know about until after the fact.

129. Can Putin really be deposed in one real way? As with the Soviet flag over the Reichstag in May 1945, another flag may need to fly over the Kremlin? Put another way, Ukraine or a coalition may need to go the whole way into Moscow as like with Berlin?

To execute this mission, we would have to invade Russia to capture the monster.

This would trigger WWIII.

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Would you want to risk world-wide annihilation to capture Putin?

130. Is inflation in America largely the fault of Vladimir Putin as Joe Biden claims?

The inflation we are experiencing right now was baked in because of the disruptions in the global supply chains from the Covid Crisis. This was not because of Biden's economic policies, but due to what is known in legal contracts as *Force Majeure* — a *Major Force outside one's control*.

Credit Biden for his handling of the Covid Crisis, or the inflation would have been significantly worse. Biden just warned that inflation will get worse because of the Ukraine war which is messing with global oil and wheat prices.

The choices Washington has are limited.

- It can let the global prices settle out, and ask the American people to tighten their belts, car pool, grow victory gardens, and take fewer trips.
- It can enforce price gouging regulations to go after companies that take advantage of a crisis. This has been announced.
- The Fed can increase interest rates, but the Fed is independent from the White House.
- Congress can impose rationing and price controls to curb price increases. We did this during WWII. We imposed a version of Rationing during the 1974 Arab Oil Embargo, limiting one's ability to get gasoline to alternate days.
- We imposed a version of Rationing during the 1974 Arab Oil Embargo, limiting one's ability to get gasoline to alternate days.

The result after controls were lifted in 1946 was a sharp jump in prices, with food increasing by 14 percent and the cost of overall living rising by 6 percent. Consumers all over the nation turned out in varying numbers to protest these increases, with labor unions forming a major part of the participants. (from Wikipedia)

This is not the time to blame Biden, but to deal with realities for which there are no great solutions. Use less electricity, walk or bike rather than drive, price shop, and keep a little extra to give the Ukrainian refugees — they are far worse off than we in the West,

131. What is the 'catastrophic fallout' Russia promises if the West bans their oil imports?

Putin, who believes he is the Master Manipulator, bases his psychological warfare strategy on the principles of FUDDD: Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt, Distrust, & Discord.



Therefore, he will cast out these vague and undefined threats so our brains become BEFUDDLED (Filled with FUDDD). We must discount such unspecified threats as an attempt to manipulate us.

By spotting FUDDD when it hits us, we can defuse it and shrug it off.

132. Now that Putin has stated he would use nuclear if any nation interfered with his plans to invade, will the West act any differently when Putin wants the Baltics?

Putin is always threatening his opponent by creating uncertainty, procrastination, analysis paralysis, and confusion.

Our best strategy is to articulate the words and display the might that lets Putin know precisely the boundaries and red lines he'd better not cross.

Putin is a bombastic in a controlled manner (unlike Trump). He says a whole lot that contradicts a prior declaration of injustice, screams with understatement, spouts morality without conscience, intimidates with impunity.

To this challenge, we must stay resolute, vigilant, and courageous. Diplomacy is only as strong as the integrity and character behind it.

133. Why didn't the Obama administration of the United States implement more sanctions against Vladimir Putin after Russia's takeover of Crimea and Ukraine in 2014?

I wish this question had a single easy answer, but that's not the case. Here's why:

When an administration makes a decision, because it is tasked with managing politics as well as safety and defense, there's a lot of cumbersome "calculus" involved.

Take the situation where Obama oversaw the attack on Bin Laden's lair in Pakistan. It required violating Pakistan's sovereign air space to send in a hit squad of Navy Seals to take out an evil force.

In Obama's view, he weighed the risks versus the rewards. If he failed, Pakistan would really throw up a fuss. But who in America cared about whether the Pakistanis were happy or not. And if he succeeded, America, Democrats and Republicans would be happy. Bottom Line: go after Bin Laden and take him out.

The calculus was not favorable for concrete action against the Russian invasion of Crimea. The Republicans were committed to being obstructionists on any program or policy Obama

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advocated. No matter what Obama decided to do to subdue Russia, the Republicans were likely to criticize and turn into a political issue. Obama was not adept at building bridges with Republicans, whose party were actually filled with closet racists.

Because there were no strong advocates on the Republican side to champion sanctions on the other side of the aisle, the opportunity to build a coalition slipped away.

It was not clear at that time (2015) that:

- ... The rest of the Republicans would support anything coherent. John McCain and a few other Republicans were outspoken in their opposition to Putin. Had they been joined by a real coalition of Republicans, they would have introduced legislation to invoke sanctions, ensured it was passed in Congress, then put it on Obama's desk forcing him to sign it or veto it.
- ... There was no moral outrage on the part of the European Union, and no threat to NATO. Without international unity, there was no strong moral imperative.
- ... The US should get involved in another conflict. We were mired in Iraq and Afghanistan. Russia was not an enemy. There was still some openness in Russia at the time — Putin was considered an autocrat, not a brutal dictator. Sanctions could push Russia toward China, which we didn't want.
- ... Putin would go for more than Crimea and the Donbas. We believed at the time Putin would stop at the point of taking a little bite at a time. We did not foresee Putin would become a megalomaniac with delusions of grandeur.
- ... Ukraine had not settled down to take clear steps toward the elimination of corruption, etc. There was no leader who showed any unity or resolution at that time.
- ... Putin in 2015 was a cold, calculating, and ruthless leader, but rational and predictable. The atrocities in Aleppo were a year ahead. Most who viewed Putin thought he was smarter and more calculating. The truly evil side did not manifest until later.

It's easy today, in March 2022, to see that we should have been more forceful. But I'm not sure we could have predicted Putin would devolve from a Manipulative Autocrat into an Evil Authoritarian.

134. **Do you agree that Zelensky in Ukraine has done more to change Western responses and attitudes to Putin in 5 days of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and his response, than everyone combined in the past 30 years and this will lead to Putin's demise?**

Comment by **Henry R. Greenfield**, former Senior Consultant Global Digital Twin Technology at Integrated Facility Management (2019-2022)



[Analysis: How Zelensky changed the West's response to Russia](#)

[Five days into Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and his courageous nation have already done more to transform the West's policy toward Russia than 30 years of post-Cold War summits, policy resets and showdowns with Russian President Vladimir Putin.](#)

<https://edition.cnn.com/2022/02/28/politics/zelensky-us-response-to-russia/index.html>

How could a comic who was mocked by just about everyone, whom Trump tried to intimidate and bribe before he would get any arms to protect Ukraine, a guy who just 2 weeks ago was downplaying the Russian armies massed on his border on 3 sides, how could this guy, weak and ineffective change the world's perception of Putin literally overnight.

Did I expect it? No way, did you? After the Pres of Afghanistan ran before a shot was fired and a 300,000 man army disappeared overnight in the face of the Taliban flip flop brigades, I thought as I am sure most of you did, he we go again.

Another US ally collapsing before there is even a fight and when will this end.

Then something happened. Our friends and relatives all over Europe, especially in Hungary and Czechia which endured brutal invasions and occupations by the then USSR, said, these guys will stand up. They will make molotov cocktails, they will fight but only if their President stands up.

And like the stand up comic that he was, Zelensky keeps popping up all over Kyiv and in return the west has said, hallelujah we have someone, finally who is willing to stand up to Putin. They all can't stop themselves to send money, cut off Putin even the Brits are saying no more Russian Oligarchs. Scholz of Germany has grown a spine, Poland is steadfast, the Baltics all have weapons, Sweden and Finland are practically in NATO now.

On and on it goes, even Orban in Hungary, the erstwhile protege of Putin who thought he might get a part of Ukraine if Putin did a quick takeover and government change has done a quick retreat and has condemned him.

Putin has overnight lost all friends, all support all because some comic decided to do what no one had the guts to do, stand up to Vladimir Putin. How pissed off is Putin right now? So angry he is rolling out the nukes threatening nuclear armageddon. His little feral eyeballs are practically popping out of his head in total meltdown mode.

What will happen next we don't know but for now everyone has seen what one guy can do to show Putin is just another punk dictator with a big arsenal and not a lot of sense. Trump called him a genius? How about emperor with no clothes.

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135. What is the case to be made that Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine has helped Donald Trump because people are not paying as much attention to his legal troubles or the Capitol riots?

In the short run, attention has shifted away from the Donald. But the Jan 6th Committee remains focused on gathering evidence that will lead to a number of prosecutions.

In the long run, another factor may come to bear — the similarity and familiarity between Trump and Putin. The tarnish of Putin may rub off on Trump. This will be accentuated as Trump's real motives and financing become more evident.

136. How long will it take until the media and press of the free world will call Vladimir Putin in unison for what he is, namely a DICTATOR? Many (most of them) still keep calling him PRESIDENT Putin.

I too share your concern.

Often I hear Putin referred to as an "autocrat" which is a very vanilla term.

- He is an **authoritarian** and very evil.
- During the American Revolution we referred to King George as a **tyrant**.
- Putin is even worse — he is a **reptilian barbarian**.
- Words are important, they shape the image of reality.

137. If Russia defeats Ukraine, how will the country be rebuilt with Russia having such sanctions against it? What's Putin's plan?

There are two very different ways for me to answer this question:

1. Putin doesn't care about rebuilding Ukraine. He really doesn't want the cities or the urban centers populated with any people. All he wants is the farmlands to produce food, and the territory to expand into other former Soviet countries. Stalin, when he entered Poland at the end of WWII, had virtually the same objectives — destroy the cities, capture the natural resources, and enslave the people.
2. Putin has not given any thought to what he will do to rebuild the Ukraine and who cares? He's destroying cities with no plan to rebuild. With the sanctions there will be no money anyway. If the people are enslaved, Russia will just make the cities into forced labor camps and let the victims rebuild the cities themselves.

idle hands are the devil's workshop tools — someone who is unoccupied and bored will find mischief and get into trouble.

138. Has Putin's big invasion plan backfired now that so many American companies refuse to do business with Russia?

Any company making a foreign investment considers a number of factors in the equation, such as:

1. Is there a market demand for our product?
2. Is the economy sound in the host country?
3. What is the opportunity for growth?
4. How corrupt is the host country (a hidden tax)?
5. Is there a chance our investment could be seized and nationalized?
6. Will we get a good return on investment?
7. Will there be future taxations on our assets that would ruin our profits?
8. Will our current customers and potential investors think of us favorably if we invest there?

When looking at Russia into the near-term future, all these key factors for success come back negative.

Thus, no investment by smart companies in Russia. Call this the "Curse of Putin." It will take years of reform for Russia to reenter the global investment world.

Putin, for all is delusional genius, failed to understand the back-fire effect of the Law of Unintended Consequences. He's destroyed the future of Russia for at least a generation.

139. What if everything backfires on Putin. Does he go down? Do countries become democratic? What would be an outstanding outcome? Will it be a safer world?

There are worst case and best-case scenarios. Each requires a confluence of forces to occur. Without burdening this answer with all the "force fields" that would create the best-case scenario, here is what it would look like:

- Putin is removed from office peacefully by the Duma (Parliament) and replaced by a democratic leaders who is capable of guiding a return to peace and rebuilding the Russian economy
- Zelinsky's Ukraine becomes committed to anti-corruption reforms as the free world contributes to Ukraine's recovery
- The debate about whether Autocracies are superior to Democracies is finally resolved against dictatorships
- Countries begin a major reduction in arms
- Remaining Authoritarian leaders lose power as they are rejected and deposed across the globe

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- The Ukrainian Fiasco is the turning point for civilization to enter a new Age of Enlightenment.

Will this happen? The more we as people and leaders start to see the light, the greater the chance of trekking down this path.

140. **Is it possible that Western intelligence agencies actually tricked Putin into invading Ukraine by feeding him false intel, in order to trap him in a quagmire that drains Russia's resources and damages its standing in the world?**

While I suppose anything is *possible*, this scenario is highly *improbable*.

What's most likely is that Putin made the wrong assessments himself, and these were just flat out wrong. His overblown opinion of his abilities caused him to discount any advice that did not fit his preconceived ideas.

He made a number of critical miscalculations, including (to name a few):

- The Hatred of Russians by Ukrainians (and Poles)
- The Leadership Qualities of Zelensky
- The willingness of the Ukrainians to fight, delaying the Russian advances.
- The ability of Ukrainians to speak English and communicate effectively with the Western world.
- The threat to NATO and the EU that caused them to Unify almost overnight
- The ability of Biden to recover from the mess in Afghanistan and fortify NATO quickly
- Biden's diplomatic skill in building international alliances
- The ability of Republicans and Democrats to heal their rifts and form a coalition against Russian

Putin's Obsessive-Compulsive passion has caused him to Bulldoze his way into battlefield errors instead of adapting to conditions, limiting the battle zone, focusing on achievable objectives, and diminishing the adverse global response. Shame on Putin.

This was no trick, Putin's own multiple disorders in his own personality cause this mess.

141. **Is inflation in America largely the fault of Vladimir Putin as Joe Biden claims?**

The inflation we are experiencing right now was baked in because of the disruptions in the global supply chains from the Covid Crisis. This was not because of Biden's economic policies, but due to what is known in legal contracts as *Force Majeure* — a *Major Force outside one's control*.



Credit Biden for his handling of the Covid Crisis, or the inflation would have been significantly worse.

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The choices Washington has are limited.

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- We imposed a version of Rationing during the 1974 Arab Oil Embargo, limiting one's ability to get gasoline to alternate days.

The result after controls were lifted in 1946 was a sharp jump in prices, with food increasing by 14 percent and the cost of overall living rising by 6 percent. Consumers all over the nation turned out in varying numbers to protest these increases, with labor unions forming a major part of the participants. (from Wikipedia)

This is not the time to blame Biden, but to deal with realities for which there are no great solutions. Use less electricity, walk or bike rather than drive, price shop, and keep a little extra to give the Ukrainian refugees — they are far worse off than we in the West

142. **Was Vladimir Putin formerly in the Russian military?**

Putin went into the KGB, not the military, as an intelligence officer.

Once he entered politics and became the authoritarian ruler of Russia, he believed he was more intelligent than his generals, isolating him from their insights. This in turn has led to the Ukrainian Fiasco.

Further, because Putin believes that corruption is a natural occurrence in human nature, he gave contracts to corrupt manufacturers of military equipment. This resulted in many faulty components in military vehicles, which broke down in the field.

Putin, the intelligence expert, isn't very smart.

Understanding Putin, Russia Today, & the Ukraine Fiasco

143. Are Russian teens and millennials addicted to Instagram and Facebook just like their western counterparts? Could this revocation be the straw that breaks the Putin government? Did the Russian Government know how addictive Instagram is to the youth?

While Russian youth and millennials can be just as addicted to social media as those in the West, they are experiencing withdrawal symptoms now.

Is the revocation enough to create a Revolution? Not likely. Revolutions are fomented because of deep grievances against a governing entity that is brutal (this exists) coupled with a large critical mass of people who can work together around an ideal or vision to replace the old regime.

Right now, there is not enough critical mass and resistive energy for a successful revolution in Russia.

Maybe this configuration will change with the economic sanctions and other freedoms Putin is withholding.

144. Has Putin's big invasion plan backfired now that so many American companies refuse to do business with Russia?

Any company making a foreign investment considers a number of factors in the equation, such as:

1. Is there a market demand for our product?
2. Is the economy sound in the host country?
3. What is the opportunity for growth?
4. How corrupt is the host country (a hidden tax)?
5. Is there a chance our investment could be seized and nationalized?
6. Will we get a good return on investment?
7. Will there be future taxations on our assets that would ruin our profits?
8. Will our current customers and potential investors think of us favorably if we invest there?

When looking at Russia into the near-term future, all these key factors for success come back negative.

Thus, no investment by smart companies in Russia. Call this the "Curse of Putin." It will take years of reform for Russia to reenter the global investment world.



Putin, for all his delusional genius, failed to understand the back-fire effect of the Law of Unintended Consequences. He's destroyed the future of Russia for at least a generation.