



Azov Battalion members, photo by Gianluca Agostini

Victoria's Secrets

A bad peace is worse than war.

Tacitus (56-120 AD)

AS THE WAR IN UKRAINE ENTERED into overtime, Americans could be forgiven for not knowing the name Victoria Nuland, as her name was still remarkably absent from virtually all of the 'official' mainstream news about the ongoing conflict.

So who is Victoria Nuland, anyway?...

For starters, she is married to notorious neocon Robert Kagan, co-founder of the *Project for the New American Century*, the infamous 1997 think tank which outlined virtually the entire post-9/11 imperialist project begun by president George W. Bush and continued under Biden and Trump.

As a deputy foreign policy adviser to vice president (some would say de facto acting president) Dick Cheney, Nuland played a major role in planning the Gulf War in 1990.

As George Bush's U.S. ambassador to NATO from 2005-2008, Nuland's primary mission was mobilizing European support for the U.S.'s illegal occupation and two-decade long war in Afghanistan.

With this impeccable warmongering resume in hand, Nuland was subsequently appointed Assistant Secretary of State by Barack Obama in 2013, and went on to act as the lead U.S. agent in fomenting the Maidan Revolution in Ukraine in 2014.

More accurately described as a coup, the CIA-backed Maidan operation ended with the ousting of President Viktor Yanukovich and the overthrow of the democratically-elected government in Ukraine.

During the Biden administration, Nuland continued to promote an aggressively anti-Russian policy in Ukraine, a stance that could very well have ended up in World War III.

In a leaked phone call from January 2014, Nuland and U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine, Geoffrey Pyatt, discussed the relative merits of prominent opposition leaders in Ukraine's transition to an interim government, seeking to install the candidate most favorable to the United States and most hostile to Russia.

Nuland: "I don't think Klitsch (Klitschko) should go into the government...I think Yats (Yatsenyuk) is the guy who's got the economic [and] governing experience."

The phone call ended with Nuland complaining that the EU was taking too long to get the coup started—literally commenting "Fuck the EU!...We want to try to get somebody with an international personality to come out here and help midwife this thing." (The "international personality" she referred to was then-vice president Joe Biden, who appeared to have played a key role in engineering the resulting unconstitutional vote.)

Barely a month later, despite having significant populist support, Klitschko announced he would be withdrawing from the race and running for Mayor of Kiev. Nuland favorite Yatsenyuk was installed as Prime Minister, and promptly signed the long sought-after EU trade agreement that started the country down the road to war.

Far more than being just another 'regime change' in a country most Americans couldn't find on a map, these interventions—masterminded by Victoria Nuland—may have forever damaged the state of Russia-Ukraine and Russia-U.S. relations.

Russian president Vladimir Putin watched as NATO added 14 new members between 1999 and 2020—half of them former Soviet-bloc countries—despite reassurances from the the U.S. and Europe that NATO would not expand its borders "one inch to the east."

He tolerated Obama installing nuclear bombs and nuclear-capable missile launchers in seven European countries—including Poland and Romania, countries directly adjacent to Russia's border—and observed NATO's complete lack of interest in negotiating a diplomatic solution to the crisis, apparently determined to provoke a Russian invasion to protect ethnic Russians in the newly-declared Eastern Republics.

The last straw, however, was president (and former comedian) Volodymyr Zelenskyy's public statement that Ukraine might invite nuclear weapons on its soil, regardless of its status within NATO.

From the very start, praising far right Ukrainian militias—including the openly Nazi Azov Battalion—as 'freedom fighters,' Nuland exploited the extreme right, first by enlisting it to execute the 2014 coup, and then directing it to fight Russian separatists in Eastern Ukraine in an eight-year long civil war which left at least 14,000 dead.

These efforts had considerable backing from the Pentagon, multiple U.S. presidents, and the CIA. The U.S. invested \$5 billion in its efforts to 'turn' Ukraine, a futile project that did little more than turn the perennially corrupt country into a financial—as well as arguably, a literal—black hole.

According to one Pentagon insider, war simulations by the military, which had eerily predicted the course of events to date, had indicated that NATO and Russia would continue to escalate until over a billion civilians on both sides were dead.

During the leaked call with Nuland, Ambassador Pyatt quipped, "We could land jelly-side up on this one if we move fast!"

It's probably safe to say that by 'jelly', he wasn't referring to the aftermath of a nuclear confrontation with Russia. ■