



Exclusive – Lt. Col. Daniel Davis Warns of Nuclear War: U.S. Has ‘No Plan’ in Ukraine, This Is Not a ‘Video Game’

Description

Providing new tanks to Ukraine won't change the reality on the ground of the current conflict with Russia, according to retired Army Lt. Col. Daniel L. Davis, who claimed the United States has “no plan” or strategy and warned of the real-world danger of invoking NATO's “mutual defense” clause, which would trigger a nuclear war.

In an exclusive interview with Breitbart News on Thursday, Davis discussed the situation on the ground in Ukraine.

Davis, a Defense Priorities senior [fellow](#) and military expert, spent over two decades in active service, which included combat deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan, and was awarded two Bronze Star medals.

“It just doesn't work that way in reality”

Calling the recent decision by the U.S., Germany, and other European nations to send tanks to Ukraine a “huge information operation ‘game changer,’” Davis cautioned that “information operations and claims don't translate into reality on the battlefield.”

“From someone who has done combat operations in tank-on-tank fights; in operations patrolling the East-West border during the Cold War and its potential Soviet invasions; and was the second-in-command of an armored cavalry squadron for the First Armored Division in the mid 2000s in Germany; I can tell you that just having NATO tanks does not equal battlefield success,” he explained.

Davis cast doubt on the perception many have on how effective the new tanks will prove on the battlefield.

“The problem is that what works on video games and on paper — you have to make it work on the ground,” he said. “And very few people anywhere in the western media or anywhere in the other media, for that matter, understand how combat power is made.

“And it's not just the platform, though that is very important, but roughly 90 percent of the success is

the people who operate the equipment,” he added.

In order to achieve that, he explained, a “trained individual at each of the positions within a tank” is needed, in addition to “a trained crew that knows how to fight well together.”

“And then you have to have a trained platoon, platoons in a company; and a company in the battalion; and if you’re talking about the inner-level operations, battalions within brigades etc,” he said.

“So all of those are necessary and they all take time,” he added.

Recalling his unit’s “intense training” in Europe and Saudi Arabia prior to battle in order to “replicate” how war would play out, Davis noted that it had all taken place with military officials in key positions with many years of experience — something he asserted could not be “manufactured.”

“You can’t send 500 [Ukrainian] dudes to Germany and conduct six weeks of maneuver training and think you’re going to get the same output, because those guys don’t have the experience,” he said. “They don’t even have the baseline understanding that we had a whole career and our whole training before we even arrived at that one year preparation.”

Davis suggests imagining the chances that someone who has “never even seen this equipment” will “have to just fall in on it while they’re in [combat] potentially a few months from now — which is what they’re saying they’re trying to do — and it’s somehow those things are going to be effective in combat.”

“I mean just on the surface of it, that’s ridiculous,” he said. “I mean it’s people who just don’t have any idea of how actual combat power is generated that would believe that.”

“Because maybe it works for movies and in video games — just getting this capacity on your video game and poof, you’ve got the full capacity as though you were fully trained, but it just doesn’t work that way in reality,” he added.

“What makes somebody think that just the presence of a different kind of tank is suddenly going to change all that?”

Another problem Davis pointed to is that Ukraine has already possessed strategic weapons on the ground throughout the conflict.

“It’s not as though Ukraine has no tanks and so they need tanks to operate because suddenly [Ukrainian President Volodymyr] Zelensky said he needed 300 new tanks,” he said.

“Well, the fact is they’ve got — depending on who you want to believe — somewhere around 1,000 tanks already and, according to Bloomberg, something along the neighborhood of 410 Soviet-era tanks have been given to them since the war started in addition to whatever survives from when they first started,” he continued.

“So they have tanks; they have artillery pieces,” he added. “We’ve given a bunch of those. They [also] have rocket launchers.”

As a result, Davis questioned “just what an Abrams or Leopard tank is going to do differently than the T72s, the T80s or the T64s that they have right now?”

“And that’s the part that no one’s even talking about,” he said. “It’s like, look, you have tanks already; you can say that our Abrams is more capable but what is that going to do in the field?”

“I’ve been scouring the internet and any report I could find for months, and there’s hardly any tank-on-tank engagements,” he noted.

Highlighting how Ukraine “in a year of fighting, has never pushed Russia back [from the Donbas area],” Davis questioned, “What makes somebody think that just the presence of a different kind of tank is suddenly going to change all that?”

He also noted that Ukraine “has no experience in maneuver warfare.”

“They have lots of experience in trench-warfare, in static warfare, and in defensive warfare — they’ve actually gotten very good at it and that’s why it’s so hard and taking Russia so long to push Studenok, because they’re actually very good at defending,” he said.

“But that doesn’t help you at offense, it’s a completely different skill set and I haven’t seen any evidence that they have that,” he added. “And that’s just something you can’t manufacture in a couple of months. You just can’t do it. It takes a lot longer than that.”

Davis, who fought in the largest tank battle of Desert Storm, the Battle of 73 Easting, concluded that “the expectation that so many in the West, and certainly those in Kyiv, have been professing: that they think the possession of these Bradleys, Abrams, Leopards, AMX-10, M109 Paladins, etc. combined, is going to allow them to go on a NATO-type offensive maneuver is just not going to happen because it’s way more than the platforms required to enable that kind of offensive operation.”

“You’re... making Russia want to go to war”

The former Lt. Col. admitted that “if providing all this equipment we have in the last eight days combined with what’s apparently coming from these other dozen European nations, had a legitimate shot at ending the war and winning it for Ukraine without sparking a nuclear retaliation from Russia, then I’d be willing to say it is worthy.”

However, he explained, “there’s none of that.”

“All you’re doing is making Russia want to go to war,” he warned. “Far from wanting to deter Russia or making them hesitate and count the costs – it’s having the exact opposite effect across the board in Russia.”

“If anything, it makes them want to be more aggressive,” he added. “It makes them absolutely think we cannot lose this and double down on their efforts.”

According to Davis, “even the general Russian population — you don’t see any protests anymore and you barely see any kind of negative social media comments, and that’s usually people who aren’t even in Russia.”

“In Russia you don’t see any of that, because people are for the most part convinced that this is what has to be done because [they feel] it’s a very valid position to say all of NATO is against them,” he said.

Davis insisted that reality was “not some fantasy,” but “it’s graphically produced on the ground, you see it.”

“We’re doing everything except physically pulling the trigger,” he asserted.

“We’re providing intelligence. We’re providing ammunition. We’re providing weapons systems [and] repair facilities, literally everything but the pull of the trigger,” he added.

He then suggested considering another country doing the same to the United States:

“Imagine during the war with Afghanistan that Russia or China had just completely got behind the Taliban, gave them everything they had, including all their modern gear to kill American soldiers,” he said.

“Do you think we would have accepted that? Would we have been OK with that?” he asked. “We’d go crazy. We’d have potentially gone to war with them.”

And yet, Davis noted, “We think that, like Biden said hiding behind a fig leaf today, when he announced this change, that ‘we are not going to war with Russia’ and ‘we’re not a direct participant,’ as though just saying those words means anything to Russia.”

“They’re looking at your actions, and the actions speak louder than the word,” he said.

Though, according to his analysis he did not see “any possibility that this can accomplish an objective and outcome that we want,” Davis did see it as having “a real chance at making sure that Russia does whatever it takes to win.”

“And I think that there’s not enough recognition of just how much risk and gamble we’re taking right now,” he warned.

“We have no plan”

Davis described the “unambiguous” conclusion of all the aforementioned as the fact that the U.S. has “no plan.”

“We have no strategy,” he said. “Nobody is asking what comes next.”

Having “just talked ad nauseam on the failings of the United States in Operation Iraqi Freedom — when we went in in 2003, nobody talked about what comes next and then — after we had this easy military victory — we didn’t know what to do next and we’ve been paying for it ever since.”

“All the stuff that happened after is because we didn’t have a plan,” he added.

According to Davis, “we’re now doing the same thing — we have no plan.”

“We’re just giving all this stuff, nobody’s talking about, not even ethereal kinds of overarching statements. What is this supposed to accomplish? What is the outcome you see by giving [these tanks]? What are you trying to produce on the ground? How is this going to benefit the United States of America as opposed to not doing it? What are the pros and cons?” he asked.

“That conversation hasn’t even taken place,” he added.

“We don’t even know what we want to do”

Davis noted that without a clear plan, it would be impossible to achieve a successful outcome.

“Imagine if you’re throwing all of this military equipment out there and you don’t even know what you want to accomplish — how are you going to know if this is successful?” he asked. “How can President Biden or anybody in the Pentagon tell the American people whether it’s worth it to send this equipment or whether it’s not? Whether it’s making a difference or not?”

“There’s no criteria!” he exclaimed. “We don’t even know what we want to do.”

Even if you claim to want to “win,” Davis insists the term be clearly defined.

“Define ‘win,’” he said. “Because you had the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff one week ago repeat what he’s been saying a lot, and one of the few things I agree with him on, [that] he sees no military path for Ukraine to win this war in the foreseeable future, meaning throughout the entire 2023.”

“And he’s right,” he added. “Even with all this stuff, of course, he knew what we were going to offer before he made that comment. And he’s right, but no one pays any attention to that, they just pretend it didn’t happen, [as if] he didn’t say it.”

Asking what the objectives are, Davis questioned exactly what the “American national security interest here we’re trying to protect is?”

“And what does President Biden hope to accomplish by giving Ukraine all of this stuff [tanks, sophisticated military equipment]?” he continued.

He insisted that the American people “deserve an answer” to such questions.

“Not a general statement, but an actual physical, detailed answer: ‘Here’s what we want to accomplish; here’s what we consider success; here’s the objectives we want to accomplish.’ That should be a bare minimum, and it’s not even on the table,” he said.

“And that is a major major problem,” he added. “Because then you can stumble into all kinds of stuff, if you haven’t given thought to those.”

“Russia has the biggest nuclear stockpile in the world”

Davis also highlighted the uniqueness of the situation.

“One of the things that’s been from the outset that it just has not come to grips within the West [is that] this is not Syria; this is not Iraq; this is not Libya; this is not Yemen; this is not even Iran,” he said.

“We have basically done whatever we wanted to do in all these places and didn’t even care about what they might do because we know they don’t have the ability,” he added.

According to Davis, “we’re having that same mentality in Russia,” which possesses “the biggest nuclear stockpile in the world.”

“They can do something. The rules are different. You cannot behave and act in the interest of Russia or opposed to it, like you can against Syria,” he explained.

“You just can’t just launch a strike into Russia — especially on their territory — like you could against Syria, or like we did in Libya or all these other places and not worry about what would happen,” he added. “We have to worry about it now.”

Though the “rules are different” in the current scenario, “we’re not acting like it.”

“And I fear that one day, Russia’s going to say, ‘OK, you finally did cross a red line this time and we’re going to take action,’” he said.

“For example,” he added, “[Russian Foreign Minister Sergey] Lavrov recently said that based on all this stuff about the tanks, they reserve the right to attack any provider of NATO gear, NATO tanks, NATO vehicles, their ammunition – no matter where they are, meaning Poland or in some other NATO country.”

“So they’re now saying that they may attack those things that are directly for war, that are there against their forces wherever they are,” he added.

Davis also warned that Article 5 of NATO’s founding treaty, which dictates that member states consent that “an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all,” could lead to an explosion.

“There is zero chance – and I mean zero – not point anything, that Russia could ever militarily defeat NATO in a conventional sense,” he said. “It’s a physical impossibility. They’re just struggling even now to defeat Ukrainians in part of the Donbas, their next-door neighbor, so they certainly couldn’t take on a 30 member NATO military alliance; they know that.”

“So the only way they can defend against NATO, is through nuclear weapons, of course,” he explained. “So if we try to think we’re going to trigger Article 5 and not trigger nuclear war. I mean, we’re just insane and fooling ourselves.”

And while, he claimed, the information he relayed is “just common sense and logic, if you just played stuff through,” Davis argued that “we don’t like to play with reality.”

“We like to play with words,” he said. “In fact, we just create our own reality, whatever we prefer.”

The matter comes as Western countries agreed to supply tanks for use against the Russian invasion this past week, prompting the Ukrainian government to push the envelope further, with discussions

about more major military equipment advancing.

by Joshua Klein

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