



## Who is Winning the War in Ukraine?

### Description

**UKRAINE: War is a constant feature among the fictional superstates of Oceania, Eurasia, and Eastasia in George Orwell's *1984*. The government in the dystopian novel uses its near-perfect control of the media to rewrite history whenever an old ally becomes the new enemy, making it seem like "Oceania had always been at war with Eastasia."**

Something similar is happening in Ukraine, where it has become impossible to know who is advancing and who is retreating. The American media has become so entangled with the doublespeak of war that readers get the impression that Ukraine has defeated Russia several times over.

Start with that nuclear plant at Zaporizhzhya. We were told the Russians hold the plant. We were also warned by the Ukrainians of a mass nuclear incident if the shelling of the plant did not cease. U.N. inspectors are on the ground tsk-tsking over the consequences should more bombs hit the plant and the cooling systems fail.

But if the Russians hold the plant and the Ukrainians want it back, exactly which side is doing the dangerous shelling? Even as Ukraine attacks the plant, Western media buy into the narrative that Russia is responsible. It makes no sense, but neither does "Oceania had always been at war with Eastasia" when you can remember that last month the war was with Eurasia.

Many of the hand-wringing articles openly mock our common sense. One begins by saying Russia's "capture of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant...immediately sparked fears that the world could face another nuclear disaster on the scale of the Chernobyl explosion almost 40 years ago," adding that the American embassy in Kiev called the "shelling" a "war crime." President Zelensky said Ukraine had "survived a night that could have stopped the story, the history of Ukraine, [and] the history of Europe," adding that an explosion at the plant would have been the equivalent of "six Chernobyls," upping the odds by a factor of six with words alone.

We are told the Ukrainians, when not shelling the nuclear plant, are engaged in a titanic offensive to recapture areas to the east previously taken by the Russians. None of the details matter—the tiny towns being fought over are "strategic points" when Ukraine captures them or "unimportant hamlets" when still held by Russia. The sources of this information similarly insult our intelligence, like the made-

for-the-internet organization Kyiv Independent (“Bodies Exhumed from Mass Grave Show Signs of Violence”), The New [Voice](#) of Ukraine (“World must be ready for Russia’s disintegration”), Institute for the Study of War (“Russia’s ‘strategic defeat’ could threaten his regime”), and Ukrayinska Pravda (“Ukrainian forces destroy Russian Mi-8 helicopter and kill over 120 Russian soldiers”).

These sources have all the credibility of a late night infomercial: ‘order within the next ten minutes and we’ll double the claimed number of Russians killed!’ There are also some curious patterns if you watch closely; when Zelensky stopped showcasing photos of [kids](#) with guns and old women making Molotovs, the Russians stopped actively targeting “civilians” in apartment complexes.

As for the hamlets, the video reminds one of the earliest days of the conflict when bodies in the streets were labeled freedom fighters willing to stand up to Russian tanks while bodies buried were the results of atrocities. It all lacks context. Here’s eight seconds of a tank blowing up. Where was it shot? When? Was the explosion caused by a mine, a missile, or something internal to the tank? Is the tank Russian or Ukrainian? In most cases the media outlet had no idea of the answers to those questions, never mind who shot the video and for what end.

Even if the media stumbled onto the basic who-what-where, the exploding-tank video is devoid of context. Was that the lead tank hit, stopping the Russian advance toward a village? Or was it a Russian tank that lingered in an open field and got picked off by a lucky shot, without much strategic consequence? One assumes clever hands can change a mini-Ukrainian flag to a spray-painted Z as necessary, because most of the hardware used by both sides is the same. Some of the video might as well be doctored Ohio State-Michigan footage.

Ask Baghdad Bob how it works. As one commenter put it, he’d likely mimic Western press reports about Ukraine’s “lightning offensive.” Nearly all of the mainstream media use the word “humiliating” to describe Russia’s losses. Russian defenses “collapsed” and they “fled in panic.” This was widely attributed to the supposed “exhaustion” and “low morale” of Russian troops. As a result, the battle lines have been “redrawn,” and the war’s contours “reshaped.” Putin is said to be “livid and isolated.” The “Ukrainian victory shattered Russia’s reputation as a military superpower.”

At one point Ukraine boasted that it destroyed [509](#) Russian tanks using shoulder-fired missiles. Maybe; one of the techniques of modern propaganda is to throw out some outrageous number, challenge people to disprove it, and then proclaim, ‘you can’t disprove it, so I’m right.’ So, no proof. But history suggests 509 man-on-tank kills is a ridiculous figure. During Gulf War 1.0, one of the largest tank battles of modern times at [73 Easting](#) saw Coalition forces destroy *only* 160 Iraqi tanks, and that was using the M-1 tank with its sophisticated aiming tech and night vision. Even at the famed Battle of the Bulge, only 700 tanks from both sides were destroyed.

American media has mostly pulled its correspondents out of the fighting; all the network stars got themselves in shots with shells whizzing by for their show reels. Every refugee seemingly was interviewed at least twice. The refugees proved marvelously articulate, speaking in talking points and wrapping up with slogans to “never see defeat” or something equally polished. Apparently audiences in America lapped it all up; tickets to this show run in the billions.

The rest of the victory over Eastasia has long been forgotten. But remember Snake Island’s defense? Remember all the times Russia was going to just run out of bombs or missiles? Remember the stalled Russian convoy, the columns that supposedly had run out of gas, the mighty drones that killed a hundred times their weight in Russians (Wolverines!) and all the other bloodthirsty tidbits? But it was all

coincidence, as Ukrainian victories seem to coincide with U.S. announcements that another couple of billion dollars in aid are needed.

by Peter Van Buren

**Category**

1. Army-Wars-Conflict Zones-Military Tech.
2. Main

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