

U.S. Still Buying Russian Uranium in Spite of War on Ukraine

By Bob Mayberry

It's ironic to contemplate, devastating to realize, that while the U.S. has banned Russian oil, coal, and gas imports, we continue to buy uranium for our nuclear reactors from Moscow. How much are we spending on reactor fuel? Estimates differ wildly. Senator John Barrasso, R-Wyo., claims the U.S. is "underwriting Putin's war machine" to the tune of \$100 million a month. But Sen. Barrasso has reason to exaggerate since uranium mining revenues in his state might increase following a ban on Russian imports.

The *Washington Post* reported that International Trade Commission figures for 2016 show the U.S. spending just over \$1 billion on Russian uranium, but that figure shrank to \$568 million in 2020. However, even those figures aren't certain. *Post* reporter Glenn Kessler located a Senate Energy Committee webpage showing sales to the U.S. from Rosatom,

Russia's state-owned nuclear power company, totaled \$784 million in 2020.

Clearly the U.S. is spending between five hundred million and a billion dollars annually on Russian uranium. Interestingly, Rosatom was founded by Vladimir Putin in 2007. And, according to *The Verge*, it now produces 20% of the world's reactor fuel.

According to Reuters, the U.S. relies on Russia, and its allies Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, for roughly half of the uranium used to fuel our 93 reactors. Those units are responsible for nearly 20% of U.S. electricity. The Biden administration exempted uranium from the bans on Russian imports in part to keep electricity prices low.

Meanwhile, Sen. Barrasso and others are lobbying to add uranium to the Russian import ban, while simultaneously trying to kick-start uranium mining in states like Wyoming, Utah, Texas and Arizona,

where large reserves are found. Uranium mining was largely abandoned in the U.S. due to the dangers of radioactive pollution. Thousands of abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona have led to high levels of radioactive metals in the bodies of the women living on the reservation, according to a recent report from the University of New Mexico's Navajo Birth Cohort Study.

While Sen. Barrasso and others call for renewed uranium mining, Native Americans demand long-overdue cleanup of abandoned mines, mills, and mountains of tailings scattered across the western U.S. that continue to emit dangerous radiation and contaminate water on Indigenous lands.

Transitioning to renewable energy would avoid uranium imports and cut toxic and radioactive pollution.

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We Need an International Antiwar Movement, and Not Cheerleaders for the Weapons Industry

By Ron Jacobs

A ceasefire between the warring parties, a Russian withdrawal, a halt to arms shipments, a negotiated peace, and an end to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. This is what the international left should be organizing around in regard to the Russia-Ukraine war. It shouldn't be calling for stepped up arms shipments to Ukraine's military or defending Moscow's invasion. When this war is stopped, the most likely situation for the vast majority of Ukrainian working people will be one where their greatest enemy could well be the Ukrainian government. Likewise, if the war goes on long enough, the greatest enemy of the vast majority of Russian working people could well be their government. The oligarchs in both nations will still be oligarchs, while the Russian and Ukrainian people will bear the human, financial and other costs of the war.

If the reader thinks the current conflict will somehow end with a different outcome, they need to revisit the history of war, especially war of the modern kind. You know, where civilian populations are bombed, conscripts are forced to kill and die in the thousands; where international bankers make loans to all sides until the battle begins. All the while generals and politicians talk nonsense about the principles being defended as if most of them had any principles that couldn't be purchased.

It's becoming clearer to more and more people that this war is truly a proxy war and that Ukrainians are being sacrificed by Washington and its clients (including the government in Kyiv) while Russians are being sacrificed by their government. Neither position — Ukrainian or Russian — is one to be envied. As an acquaintance and Vietnam Veteran Against the War member pointed out on Facebook, this is the perfect war for the U.S.-dominated military-industrial complex. There are no body bags coming home, no anti-war demonstrations, and virtually no pressure to negotiate. Indeed, a substantial part of what usually constitutes the U.S. antiwar movement is actually cheering on the Ukrainian military in this conflict. In short, this is a dream situation and Washington and its minions will fight to the last Ukrainian to keep the war industry's profits rolling in.

The fears that the war will continue to escalate are genuine. Once again, the rulers of the capitalist world

prove that the only thing they can really do effectively is make war. By effectively, I mean these rulers are masters at wreaking havoc, destruction and death. Furthermore, they are once again proving they can convince the bulk of their populations that this is not

will be Nina Jankowicz, who (I quote the DHS press release) "advised the Ukrainian government on strategic communications." (<https://www.hstoday.us/federal-pages/dhs/dhs-standing-up-disinformation-governance-board-led-by-information-warfare-expert/>)

In other words, Jankowicz advised them on how to write and spread propaganda. She is now taking her scriptwriting to the U.S. public. One assumes she will be working with various manipulators of public opinion in the broadcast, print and social media fields. One can be certain that she will maintain and intensify the stories about Kyiv, Moscow, Washington and NATO already saturating the U.S. and much of Europe. In recent days, I have been accused (along with what one so-called socialist writer dismisses as the "peace and justice" crowd) of supporting war because I am against the escalation of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and think the political Left should be organizing a non-aligned international antiwar movement, not joining the cheerleading squad for NATO and its arms shipments.

My response to the charge is simple. To claim that escalating the war will prevent a longer war is just nonsense. It can already be argued that the escalation has already extended it.

Very few actual wars end

when a war escalates. In fact, escalation usually extends the conflict and the horror that involves. It seems to me that the people who really care about the people under fire are those calling for a ceasefire and negotiations, not those cheering the arms shipments. By rejecting the call that begins this piece, one is rejecting the only internationalist response to this conflict. In rejecting this response, they are accepting a binary choice that means more war, no matter which side one chooses. That choice is one defined by the militaries doing the fighting and the rulers pulling their strings. Making that choice is not making a choice for peace or even the consideration of peace. Plain and simple, it is choosing more war.

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only a good thing, but also moral and honorable. In this narrative, it is those of us who refuse to accept their wars and their rationales for those wars who are accused of being wrong. Since my first piece published after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, emails have arrived in my mailbox stating that my antiwar stance is criminal. My response is simple — it is not criminal to oppose the crime of war. This isn't the first war where such accusations have been hurled at those opposed to wars. I consider myself fortunate that this isn't World War One or Two. Many U.S. opponents of those wars were locked up. Of course, given the censorship of antiwar views by public and private entities across the west and in Russia, who's to say that won't occur in the future? Indeed, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (an Orwellian presence already) recently announced that it was creating a new division called the Disinformation Governance Board. The head of this board