

This is the second letter we received.

From Kyiv:

Starting this at 5:20 p.m. of a looong Saturday.

First things first: we're doing okay. Everybody's healthy, and now, after a pot of my world famous ranch beans, well fed. Even the boys dug in; something must be up.

And, it is. Kyiv's Mayor, Vitaliy Klitschko, has ordered a curfew from 5 p.m. tonight through 8 a.m. Monday. Starting about 2 o'clock this afternoon we had cops everywhere, heavily armed cops.

With good reason. Reliable intelligence informs us that Russia is about to go into a new phase of attack. They're frustrated by the resistance they've faced. Ukrainians have met them head-on, inflicting serious losses on the invaders in 2.5 days of fighting:

3500 Russian killed or wounded, 102 tanks destroyed, 536 armored vehicles torched, 15 artillery pieces destroyed, 14 fighter jets downed, 8 attack helicopters down, and 1 "BUK" rocket system destroyed, countless numbers of rockets brought down and at least two IL-76's brought down--each with at least 140 paratroopers on board.

Someone back in Moscow must have convinced the Russian troops that they'd just walk into Kyiv with the Ukrainians welcoming them with flowers. Didn't happen.

So, now they have begun the part of the fight that every international convention prohibits, and everyone fears - war crime tactics. Chemical weapons, civilian infrastructure sabotage, civilian residential bombing, torture, marauding "irregulars" (thugs).

This sounds like paranoia, I know. But Putin has used all of these tactics before--in Syria, in Chechnya, in Russia itself. These are the means the Russian-led "rebels" have been using in eastern Ukraine since Russia first opened that can of worms.

This isn't meant to be a history lesson, which typically offers a consideration of past events. This history is being made today. This is what Russia has done, does today, will do tomorrow.

And it has begun here - thus, all the cops, thus the curfew. Today, with information shared publicly by Ukraine's Security Service, the folks in my building went out and scraped freshly spraypainted odd markings off our home. These markings have appeared all over the city - on power stations, heating plants, subterranean access points, and the like.

The objective is to take out the civilian infrastructure, using flourescent spray paint markings that saboteurs can spot at night.

Lenin wrote: the objective of terrorism is to terrorize.

We're not terrified, just strangely calm. Strange, because we know what Putin, that student of Lenin, is capable of.

Not terrified because this is not new to us. Life in eastern Europe means, in part, coming to grips with how tied in the criminal syndicate is to everyday life.

And in this place, when your Mayor, the 3-time WBO, WBC World Heavyweight Boxing Champion, tells you to lock your doors, tape your windows, get your gas masks and don't come out until Monday morning because the criminals are on the move, well, you do it.

The explosions started just as I sat down to write. It's long dark, overcast, and we've been told a major offensive is coming tonight. Anyone, me included, who tells you what that might mean is just guessing.

In blunt language: tonight could mean rockets, gas, heavy artillery, paratroopers, and sabotage--or any combination of these.

We spent the day scraping paint, making borscht, making beans, filling bottles and containers with water, and getting sleeping bags laid out in the bathroom--the safest room in the house. Midwesterners who've seen a tornado or two know what I'm talking about.

And once I get done typing here, we'll spend this evening playing CLUE and clicking through counting the hundreds of times you good folks have sent encouragement our way and prayer heavenward. And I am reassured in this: if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father.

Knowing that, there is no fear.

There is nothing else we can know--how, or when, this will end--and yet we are confident that evil cannot endure.

Pray for Ukraine, inform yourself about the enemy it faces, and think kindly on these, my people.

From our home to yours.

Peace