

Ukraine woke this morning to some promising news: the US and Israel are discussing transferring to Ukraine as many as eight soon-to-be decommissioned Patriot missile batteries. If this miracle actually happens, several regions will finally be able to properly protect themselves from the endless barrages of Russian cruise missiles, attacks which have damaged or destroyed large swaths of Ukraine's energy infrastructure.

It's of course possible to live without electricity; I did it as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Africa with a kerosine lamp, a coal pot, and a stack of old paperbacks. But it's certainly not possible for modern towns and cities to survive without it. Cellphone networks, internet routers, hospital wards, water and sewage pumping stations, air conditioning and heating, food refrigeration, walkie-talkies, drones, and pretty much everything else depends upon a steady flow of electrons.



Ukrainians have adapted fast to this new reality, where in places like Odesa and Kyiv half of every day is without power (and much worse in some of the smaller towns). Countless generators have been purchased, loudly belching out greasy black fumes, and a walk down most city streets has



become an assault on the senses. Everyone who can afford them has power banks of various sizes to charge up their devices.

How will folks fare when the days grow dark and frigid? Having spent the past two winters reading by candlelight and bathing with cold water, I think I know the answer. We will gripe, groan and grumble, but we'll soldier on.

As President Zelensky put it in a speech directed at the Russians nearly two years ago: "Read my lips. Without gas or without you? Without you. Without electricity or without you? Without you. Without water or without you? Without you. Without food or without you? Without you. Cold, hunger, darkness, thirst...none of that is as scary and lethal to us as your 'friendship and brotherhood'..."

Absolutely, but bring over the Patriots quickly please.

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