

Russia's Invasion of Ukraine: Outing the Iraq War White Washers

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Today, the dangers of military escalation are beyond description.

What is now happening in Ukraine has serious geopolitical implications. It could lead us into a World War III scenario.

It is important that a peace process be initiated with a view to preventing escalation.

Global Research condemns Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

A Bilateral Peace Agreement is required.

The guilty can be devious in concealing their crimes, and their role in them. The greater the crime, the more devious the strategy of deception. The breaking of international law, and the breaching of convention, is a field replete with such figures.

Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine has presented a particularly odious grouping, a good number of them neoconservatives, a chance to hand wash and dry before the idol of international law. Law breakers become defenders of oracular force, arguing for the territorial integrity of States and the sanctity of borders, and the importance of the UN Charter.

Reference can be made to Hitler's invasions during the Second World War with a revoltingly casual disposition, a comparison that seeks to eclipse the role played by other gangster powers indifferent to the rule and letter of international comity.

Speculation can be had that the man in the Kremlin has gone mad, if he was ever sane to begin with. As Jonathan Cook [writes](#) with customary accuracy, western leaders tend to find it convenient “that every time another country defies the West’s projection of power, the western media can agree on one thing: that the foreign government in question is led by a madman, a psychopath or a megalomaniac.”

It might well be said that the US-led Iraq invasion in 2003 was a product of its own mental disease, the product of ideological and evangelical madness, accompanied by a conviction that states could be forcibly pacified into a state of democracy. Where there was no evidence of links between Baghdad and al-Qaeda operatives responsible for the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, it was simply made up.

The most brazen fiction in this regard was the claim that Iraq had the means to fire weapons of mass destruction at Europe within 45 minutes. Showing that farce sometimes precedes tragedy, that assessment was cobbled from a doctoral dissertation.

When the invasion, and subsequent occupation of Iraq, led to sectarian murderousness and regional destabilisation, invigorating a new form of Islamicist zeal, the neocons were ready with their ragbag excuses. In 2016, David Frum could offer the idiotic [assessment](#) that the “US-UK intervention offered Iraq a better future. Whatever [the] West’s mistakes: sectarian war was a choice Iraqis made for themselves.” Such ungrateful savages.

On *Fox News Sunday*, this nonsense was far away in the mind of former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. She could [merely nod](#) at the assertion by host Harris Faulkner that “when you invade a sovereign nation, that is a war crime... I mean, I think we’re at just a real, basic, basic point there.”

Jaw-droppingly to those familiar with Rice’s war drumming in 2003, she agreed that the attack on Ukraine was “certainly against every principle of international law and international order.” That explained why Washington was “throwing the book at [the Russians] now in terms of economic sanctions and punishments is also part of it.” She also felt some comfort that Putin had “managed to unite NATO in ways that I didn’t think I would ever see again after the end of the Cold War.”

As Bush’s National Security Advisor, Rice was distinctly untroubled that her advice created a situation where international law would be grossly breached. She was dismissive of the role played by UN weapons inspectors and their failed efforts in finding those elusive weapons of mass destruction and evidence of an Iraqi nuclear program. “The problem here is that there will always be some uncertainty about how quickly he can acquire nuclear weapons,” [she warned](#) in 2002. “But we don’t want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.”

As the seedy conspiracy to undermine security in the Middle East and shred the UN Charter gathered place in 2002, those against any Iraq invasion were also denouncing opponents as traitors, or at the very least wobbly, on the issue of war. Frum, [writing](#) in March 2003, was particularly bothered by conservatives against the war – the likes of Patrick Buchanan, Robert Novak, Thomas Fleming, and Llewellyn Rockwell. Thankfully, they were “relatively few in number, but their ambitions are large.” They favoured “a fearful policy of ignoring threats and appeasing enemies.”

In the Ukraine conflict, the trend has reasserted itself. Neoconservatives are out to find those appeasing types on the Right – and everywhere else. “Today,” [rues](#) Rod Dreher,

“they’re denouncing us on the Right who oppose war with Russia as Neville Chamberlains.” Conservatives [are mocked](#) for daring to understand why Russia might have an issue with NATO expansion, or suggest that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine is not, in the end, of vital interest to Washington. “It’s Chamberlain’s folly,” comes the [improbable claim](#) from Matt Lewis of *The Daily Beast*, “delivered with a confident Churchillian swagger.”

A more revealing insight into neoconservative violence, the lust for force, and an almost admiring take on the way Putin has behaved, can be gathered in John Bolton’s recent assessment of the invasion. Bolton, it should be remembered, detests the United Nations and was, just to show that President George W. Bush had a sense of humour, [made US ambassador](#) to it. For him, international law is less a reality than a guide ignored when power considerations are at play – an almost Putinesque view.

Almost approvingly, [he writes](#) in *The Economist* of the need to “pay attention to what adversaries say.” He recalls Putin’s remark about the Soviet Union’s disintegration as being the 20th century’s greatest catastrophe. He notes those efforts to reverse the trend: the use of invasions, annexations and the creation of independent states, and the adoption of “less kinetic means to bring states like Belarus, Armenia and Kazakhstan into closer Russian orbits.”

With a touch of delight, Bolton sees that “the aggressive use of military force is back in style. The ‘rule-based international order’ just took a direct hit, not that it was ever as sturdy as imagined in elite salons and academic cloisters.” And with that, the war trumpet sounds. “World peace is not at hand. Rhetoric and virtue-signalling are no substitute for new strategic thinking and higher defence budgets.” In this equation, the UN Charter is truly doomed.

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Featured image: At the start of the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, President George W. Bush ordered the U.S. military to conduct a devastating aerial assault on Baghdad, known as “shock and awe.” (Source: Consortiumnews)

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