

# What in the Hell Was Washington Thinking?

By [David Stockman](#)

Global Research, September 23, 2022

[Antiwar.com](#) 22 September 2022

Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#)

In-depth Report: [UKRAINE REPORT](#)

All Global Research articles can be read in 51 languages by activating the “Translate Website” drop down menu on the top banner of our home page (Desktop version).

To receive Global Research’s Daily Newsletter (selected articles), [click here](#).

Follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and subscribe to our [Telegram Channel](#). Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

\*\*\*

*What in the hell were those bloody-minded Washington/NATO neocons thinking? At any time in the last nine months they could have had a diplomatic settlement with Russia that would have:*

- Avoided/ended the war in Ukraine, thereby saving tens of thousands of Ukrainian lives and hundreds of billion of economic cost and destruction;
- Allowed the Russian speaking population of the Donbas a substantial degree of self-governance and autonomy from the hostile government in Kiev;
- Permitted the historic Russian territory of Crimea to remain under Russian control per the wishes of the overwhelming share of its Russian-speaking population;
- Kept NATO out of Ukraine and its missiles away from Russia’s doorstep;
- Removed NATO missile bases from the the old Warsaw Pact countries, where NATO had expanded in breach of Washington’s solemn promise made at the time of the German reunification to not extend NATO “one inch to the east” .

Would this have furthered the national security of the US and Europe, permitted Europe’s then flourishing peaceful commerce with Russia to continue and avoided the current global plague of soaring energy and food prices caused by the Sanctions War?

Yes, it would have. In spades!

So the question recurs. What alternative path did Washington/NATO envision and how could the likely consequences have improved upon either the above summarized settlement, which has been possible all along or, far worse still, the disastrous end game which is now unfolding?

The fact is, after Putin’s speech of yesterday the phrase “disastrous end game” is barely adequate to describe the scenario ahead. That’s because it signaled that the relative restraint of Russia’s “Special Military Operation” (SMO) is now over, and what lies ahead is

full scale political and military warfare that can only end in calamity for Ukraine, NATO and indeed the world:

The heart of the matter is that Putin is now :

- Mobilizing Russia's entire GDP, which is at least 15X greater than what's left of Ukraine's;
- Mustering 300,000 fresh reserves or double the number of Russian forces now deployed in the SMO;
- Abandoning the policy of not attacking Ukraine's civilian electric power grid and railroad system, which has been crucial to Ukraine's survival to date and the West's massive supply of weapons across the western border and through the interior rail network;
- Preparing to annex the two breakaway Donbas republics in the east and the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions in the south after hurriedly called referendums, which will transform the war into an explicit NATO-enabled attack on Russia proper.

To be sure, Kiev and Washington are screaming loudly that these referendums are "shams", and it's probably the case that the ballot counting will be no better than what occurred in the state of Georgia in 2020.

But the fact is, these regions are populated by Russian-speakers who have no love for or loyalty to the anti-Russian government in Kiev; who have already lined-up for Russian citizenship in large numbers; and who, in any case, fear the retribution of the Ukrainian military and secret service far more than they fear the Russians.

Stated differently, the populations of the Donetsk (DPR) and the Luhansk People's Republics (LPR) and those of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions are not begging to be "liberated" by Ukrainian armies, which are every bit as brutal and vindictive as the Russian military has been alleged to be, and surely don't give a whit about Washington/NATO's hypocritical malarkey about the rule of law and the sanctity of borders.

In fact, the **overwhelming share** of the populations (75-90%) of these regions have voted for the pro-Russian candidate in every presidential election held in the Ukraine since the Soviet Union's mailed fist was lifted from their governance in 1991.

That is to say, they have implicitly voted for **partition** of a country that never existed until it was nailed together by the tyrannical rule of Lenin, Stalin and Khrushchev after 1922. So doing, they effected an arbitrary rearrangement of borders that plopped what had been "New Russia" for upwards of 200 years into the commie designed Soviet Socialist Republic of Ukraine for no better reason than it suited their whims and convenience of rule.

But now, within a matter of weeks, Ukraine's borders will be restored to the pre-WWI status quo ante. Whether fair and square or not, the vote will be overwhelmingly in favor of separation and upon the request of the peoples of "Novorussiya", Putin has indicated that these regions will once again become formal Russian territories.

What that means, in turn, of course, is that NATO's war in support of the Kiev regime will become an explicit war on the territory of Russia. And that surely portends a bloody and

disastrous end game because the only way it does not end up in an armistice after untold more deaths and destruction, followed by secession of the new “Russian” territories , anyway, is if Ukraine wins the war.

That’s not going to happen. Not in a blue moon.

Once Moscow takes the gloves off and savages Ukraine’s electric power grid and railway system it will be all over except the shouting. The massive flow of western armaments, which has kept Kiev in the game to date, will be drastically curtailed; and the civilian population in the Kiev-controlled areas will be left high and dry, preparing to shiver in the dark as the severe Ukrainian winter approaches.

Nor does the alleged surprise victory of Ukrainian forces in the Kharkiv area in recent weeks change the scenario. What that actually accomplished was the sacrifice of thousands of Ukrainian troops in the apparent faint attack on Kherson in the south in order to regain a few thousand square miles of lightly populated open steppe around Kharkiv.

Even then, the alleged hastily retreating Russian army was not that at all. The area had been mostly occupied and defended by the lightly trained volunteers of the Republic of Luhansk, not the trained professionals of the Russian armed forces.

Now that the Ukrainian army has driven out the Luhansk volunteers and occupied the open steppe lands, it remains for Russian dominance of the air and artillery war to encircle the alleged victors and pulverize them from the air and via long-range artillery that is even now being brought into position.

That is to say, in a few weeks the Ukrainian “victory “will disappear from the MSM, just as have so many other alleged setbacks to the Russian cause.

Instead, the news will be about the brutality of the Russian attacks on Ukraine’s energy and transport infrastructure; the roadblocks it will put in front of what has been the demolition derby of US/NATO supplied weaponry to the battle front; and the fact that without massive new aid from Washington beyond the \$50 billion already authorized, civilian life in the Kiev-controlled portions of the country will be on the verge of collapse and the regime in Kiev will be on virtual life-support from Washington.

In short, the end game in lieu of the diplomatic settlement which could have been had long ago will be either a more unfavorable partition of Ukraine, leaving Kiev and the western regions as a bankrupt landlocked rump state and ward of the west, or an escalation that involves direct military engagement by NATO and leaves the world teetering on the edge of nuclear war.

So much for using Ukraine as cannon fodder to drastically “weaken Russia” and to force the demonized Vlad Putin from power. To the contrary, by the time Europe’s cold and dark winter is underway, it will be European governments, which slavishly did Washington’s bidding, that will be falling like dominoes.

More importantly, it will also be the new Republican majority on Capitol Hill asking our opening question of Biden’s infinitely foolish national security team: Indeed, what in the hell were you thinking?!

\*

Note to readers: Please click the share buttons above or below. Follow us on Instagram and Twitter and subscribe to our Telegram Channel. Feel free to repost and share widely Global Research articles.

*David Stockman was a two-term Congressman from Michigan. He was also the Director of the Office of Management and Budget under President Ronald Reagan. After leaving the White House, Stockman had a 20-year career on Wall Street. He's the author of three books, [The Triumph of Politics: Why the Reagan Revolution Failed](#), [The Great Deformation: The Corruption of Capitalism in America](#) and [TRUMPED! A Nation on the Brink of Ruin... And How to Bring It Back](#). He also is founder of [David Stockman's Contra Corner](#) and [David Stockman's Bubble Finance Trader](#).*

The original source of this article is [Antiwar.com](#)  
Copyright © [David Stockman](#), [Antiwar.com](#), 2022

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [David Stockman](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)