

# The Washington Times

## Afghanistan Is a Debacle - But You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet

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If one scans this week's headlines they are all gloom and doom, running from despair and humiliation to disaster and debacle. But rarely do you see calls for a fundamental reset of the failed U.S. foreign policy of perpetual wars and a rethink the global leadership paradigm.

This is not surprising, since the mainstream media are, with rare exceptions, an essential part of the powerful lobby MICIMATT (the term coined by the former CIA analyst Raymond McGovern, who was responsible for Ronald Reagan's morning briefs) that is actually in charge of this policy.

MICIMATT means "Military-Industrial-Congress-Intelligence-Media-Academia-Think-Tank" complex. Here are some results of its activity for the last 20 years.

According to the Watson Institute for International & Public Affairs of Brown University: over 801,000 people have died in the post-9/11 wars due to direct war violence, and several times as many due to the reverberating effects of war; over 335,000 civilians have been killed as a result of the fighting; 38 million — the number of war refugees and displaced persons. These horrific numbers do not include wounded but they are usually several times higher than those who are killed. According to Newsweek, "in 20 years of fighting, there have been almost 11,000 American deaths (including contractors) and more than 53,000 have been physically broken, while countless others suffer from traumatic brain injuries and other post-traumatic disorders."

These numbers account only for American victims. Imagine their magnitude on the world scale. The author of this story, William Arkin, concludes that "after two decades of fighting, in fact, not one country in the Middle East—not one country in the world—can argue that it is safer than it was before 9/11. Every country that is now a part of the expanding battlefield of perpetual war is an even greater disaster zone than it was two decades ago."

When I repeat Ronald Reagan's famous "you ain't seen nothing yet" I have in mind today's visit of the Ukrainian delegation to Washington, where they will beg for more money and arms as well as doubling their efforts to drag America into yet another war, this time with nuclear Russia.

Needless to say, the MICIMATT will do everything possible to accommodate the visitors. The Ukrainian project was theirs in the first place. The same political technology that was used in Afghanistan to create, arm, and finance the Taliban against the Soviets is being now used to turn Ukraine against Russia. It started from the first day after collapse of the USSR 30 years ago. This time it is even more cynical than in Afghanistan, since we are talking about attempts to turn into enemies two Christian countries closely linked by centuries-long family,

religious, economic, and cultural ties. I placed “family” in the first place, since it has always been my belief that it is one of the most precious western values, but it looks like it is not so for MICIMATT.

Russia is accused of annexing the Crimean peninsula and fomenting rebellion in the Donbas area, but besides being historically Russian territories with an ethnic Russian majority population it was a Western-backed coup in February 2014 that provoked Moscow into these actions. There are endless analyses from people in the know who present a clear picture of what happened at that time.

Just a few examples: “It’s not Russia that’s pushed Ukraine to the brink of war”, - says Seumas Milne in the Guardian, - “The reality is that, after two decades of eastward NATO expansion, this crisis was triggered by the west’s attempt to pull Ukraine decisively into its orbit and defense structure, via an explicitly anti-Moscow EU association agreement. No Russian government could have acquiesced in such a threat from the territory that was at the heart of both Russia and the Soviet Union. Putin’s absorption of Crimea and support for the rebellion in eastern Ukraine is clearly defensive, and the red line is now drawn: the east of Ukraine, at least, is not going to be swallowed up by NATO or the EU.”

This is from Ted Carpenter of the CATO Institute: “The extent of the Obama administration’s meddling in Ukraine’s politics was breathtaking... it was startling to have diplomatic representatives of a foreign country—and a country that routinely touts the need to respect democratic processes and the sovereignty of other nations—to be scheming about removing an elected government and replacing it with officials meriting U.S. approval... It was a grotesque distortion to portray the events in Ukraine as a purely indigenous, popular uprising. The Nuland-Pyatt telephone conversation and other actions confirm that the United States was considerably more than a passive observer to the turbulence. Instead, U.S. officials were blatantly meddling in Ukraine. Such conduct was utterly improper. The United States had no right to try to orchestrate political outcomes in another country—especially one on the border of another great power.”

As Peter Kuznick from American University noted: “The U.S.-backed Ukrainian coup was the product of decades of U.S. maneuvering in its ill-fated quest for unipolarity. Zbigniew Brzezinski had written in his 1997 book Grand Chessboard that “Without Ukraine, Russia ceases to be a Eurasian empire.” Other neocons like Wolfowitz, Libby, and Hadley shared this view. So when Bush called for NATO expansion to Ukraine and Georgia in 2008, the game was over so far as Putin was concerned. U.S. Ambassador to Russia William Burns, the current CIA director, sent Washington a confidential cable with the subject line “Nyet mean nyet: Russia’s NATO enlargement redlines.”

John Mearsheimer from the University of Chicago wrote this in the Foreign Affairs:

“The United States and its European allies share most of the responsibility for the Ukrainian crisis. The taproot of the trouble is NATO enlargement, the central element of a larger strategy to move Ukraine out of Russia’s orbit... For Putin, the illegal overthrow of Ukraine’s democratically elected and pro-Russian president—which he rightly labeled a ‘coup’—was the final straw. He responded by taking Crimea, a peninsula he feared would host a NATO naval base.”

Finally, here is the opinion of the former U.S. Ambassador to USSR Jack Matlock in Time magazine titled: “Let Russia Take Crimea.”

“The fact is, like it or not, Ukraine is almost certainly better off without Crimea than with it. Nothing weakens a nation more than holding territory whose residents prefer to belong to another country. Though they may be difficult for all relevant parties to accept, the premises of a solution to the Ukrainian mess are clear: 1) The new constitution should provide for a federal structure of government giving at least as many rights to its provinces as American states have; 2) The Russian language must be given equal status with Ukrainian; and 3) There must be guarantees that Ukraine will not become a member of NATO, or any other military alliance that excludes Russia.”

Apparently, none of the participants of the pathetic “Crimean Platform” that met on August 23 in Kyiv to discuss how to return Crimea to Ukraine paid any attention to the opinion of the wise American diplomat. Instead of talking to ordinary folks in Crimea they preferred to engage in a fruitless discussion organized by the comic actor-turned President Zelensky – who is desperately trying to appease radical nationalists and the neo-Nazis who strikingly resemble their Afghan Taliban prototypes. Not a single Crimean Platform participant, or for that matter any Washington official, has criticized Zelensky for his water blockade to Crimea to the people that he claims belong to Ukraine. Depriving people from drinking water is an international crime but it looks like they preferred to ignore it. No one raised alarm when the head of the “Servant of the People” pro-presidential faction David Arahamiya and Ukraine’s ambassador to Germany Andriy Melnyk warned Kyiv may be forced to acquire nuclear weapons to safeguard the country’s security if NATO does not accede to its membership demand.

Biden has a choice: build on the strategic stability talks with Putin that would be beneficial for both nations and mankind or listen to MICIMATT, and jump from Afghan to Ukrainian debacle, this time threatening Armageddon.