

Preliminary Thoughts about the Russian Attack

The Russian attack upon Ukraine is a criminal violation of international law and world peace. It must be firmly and unambiguously condemned.

However, media and official discussions of the Russian attack describe it as a gratuitous, arbitrary, and unmotivated assault. These discussions systematically ignore (1) the expansion of NATO to the borders of Russia and the threat of Ukraine membership in NATO, (2) the venerable U.S. strategy of weakening Russia by numerous means including turning its actual and potential allies against Russia, (3) Washington's understanding of Ukraine as the "greatest prize" in the campaign to weaken Russia, and (4) disregard of Putin's numerous efforts to forge a better relationship with the United States including assisting the U.S. military attack upon Afghanistan. It is important that progressives acknowledge these things when analyzing (but not excusing) the Russian attack upon Ukraine.

If there are to be sanctions against Russia, these sanctions must be accompanied by a peace making offer. This offer should include (a) a promise to keep Ukraine out of NATO in exchange for immediate withdrawal of Russian military forces, (b) Russian compensation to Ukraine for the damage inflicted by the invasion, and (c) a firm agreement by the Kremlin not to attack the Ukraine again.