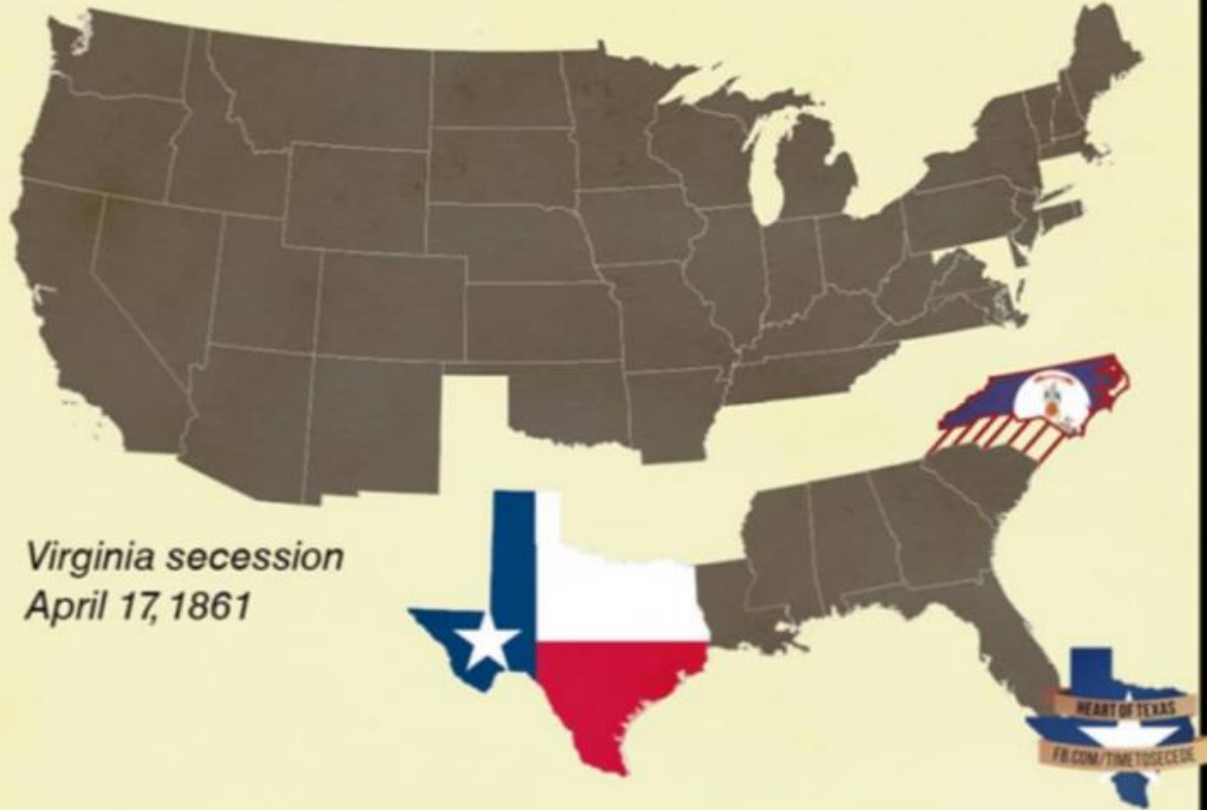


# Interlude - The Trump – Russia conundrum



# WE DID IT ONCE



Virginia secession  
April 17, 1861

# LET'S MAKE IT TWICE

**Heart of Texas**  
Page Liked · 12 hrs · 🌐

155th anniversary of Virginia secession from the U.S.

The Virginia Convention of 1861, also known later as the Secession Convention, convened on February 13, 1861, on the eve of the American Civil War (1861–1865), to consider whether Virginia should secede from the United States.

Its 152 delegates, a majority of whom were Unionist, had been elected at the behest of the Virginia General Assembly. Eventually the momentum turned toward secession, and the convention voted on April 17 to leave the Union. Virginians expressed their agreement at the polls on May 23. The state had joined the Confederacy.

The secession initiative, first and foremost, was perfectly legal and Constitutional. Technically, Virginia had no other choice as the state couldn't put up with the lawlessness of the federal authorities. Both back then and today many southern states have enough reasons for secession. Feds don't protect states from illegal immigrants, they try to rob Americans of their Constitutional right to bear arms, don't hesitate to stick to land grabbing (Red River issue), impose gay marriages and...well, the list goes on.

What we all are facing are 4 years of Hillary's presidency. I guess it's about time Texans did realize secession is the only option left. We should leave the Union of lies and show the way for the other Southern states. Let's do that until it's still legal to say "secession" and "Confederacy" and fly the Texas flag. Come and take it, Washington.

👍 Like   🗨 Comment   ➦ Share

👍 🗨 🇺🇸 861   Top Comments

315 shares   48 comments

**Stephen W Peel** The Civil War wasn't about slavery it was about States rights. Slavery was already on

## Heart of Texas Facebook page

produced by Russian hackers, had 200,000+ followers, pushed secession and organized an armed anti-Muslim demonstration

# Army of Jesus facebook page



Hit that Like button if you love Jesus and hate Hillary

ДАВАЙТЕ ВМЕСТЕ СНОВА  
СДЕЛАЕМ МИР ВЕЛИКИМ!



ИН4С портал [www.in4s.net](http://www.in4s.net)

LET'S MAKE THE WORLD  
GREAT AGAIN - TOGETHER!

Moscow billboard after  
Trump's election

Putin Made Russia  
Great Again

Role model?



The Russian Army store across from the US Embassy had a 10% off sale in honor of Trump's inauguration.

Lower right: "To the workers of the Embassy and to the citizens of the USA."



Stronger  
together!

A (white, blonde)  
Russian journalist  
holds aloft a  
poster  
celebrating  
(white, blond)  
Putin, Trump, and  
Marine Le Pen.

# Trump vs the Europeans. Is the West over?



Confrontation at the 2017 G-7 summit. Trump and Merkel glower.

Putin's dream fulfilled?

# Trump and Putin in Helsinki, July 2018



The US Department of Justice had just indicted officers of the GRU, Russian military intelligence, for hacking the Democratic National Committee to help Trump in the 2016 election.

Trump said he accepted Putin's word that this did not happen.

"He said he didn't meddle, he said he didn't meddle. I asked him again. You can only ask so many times," "Every time he sees me he says I didn't do that, and I really believe that when he tells me that, he means it."

Politicians of both parties and the media were outraged.





At a July 2018 Ohio rally

“I’d rather be a Russian than a Democrat”

# Rudy Giuliani with Andriy Derkach, 2019



Derkash, a pro-Russian Ukrainian politician, claimed to have documents proving that former Ukrainian prosecutor Lutsenko was fired because he tried to investigate Hunter Biden, who was on the Board of a gas company, Burisma.

Lutsenko was apparently fired because he was himself corrupt.

Fired by Trump for refusing to withhold Ukraine aid.



A wide-angle photograph of a vast, golden wheat field stretching to the horizon. The sky is filled with heavy, dark, and dramatic clouds, suggesting an overcast or stormy day. The foreground shows the intricate details of the wheat stalks, while the background is a flat line of trees and distant structures under the heavy sky.

# Invasion and war

Downeast Colloquy  
The Blue Hill Library  
September 30, 2024

# Ukraine

- Population 45 million.
- GDP \$182 billion
- Per capita income \$8,651
- Corruption perceptions index rank #142

- Population 143 million
- GDP \$2,097 billion
- Per capita income \$24,298
- Corruption perceptions index #136

# Russia

NATO forces in the Baltic States, deployed in 2015-17. Britain, Canada, Germany, and the US lead them. These are small trip-wire deterrent forces of about 1,000 soldiers each. They ensure that the NATO countries would fight.

### 4 Multinational Battlegroups

**ESTONIA:**  
United Kingdom  
France

**LITHUANIA:**  
Germany  
Belgium  
Luxembourg  
The Netherlands  
Norway

**LATVIA:**  
Canada  
Albania  
Italy  
Poland  
Slovenia  
Spain

**POLAND:**  
United States  
Romania  
United Kingdom  
Croatia

Legend:  
[Dark Blue Box] Framework Nation  
[Light Blue Box] Contributing Nation  
Valid as of 30 October 2017



# NATO Enhanced Forward Presence

# US soldiers in Poland



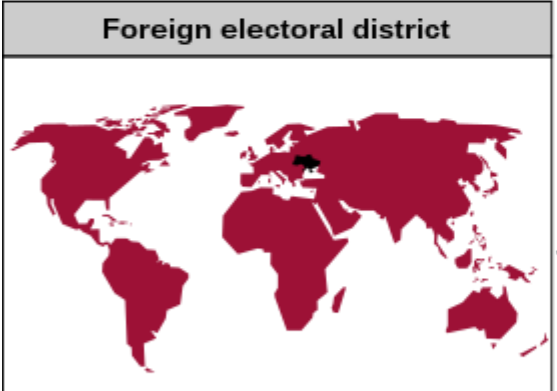
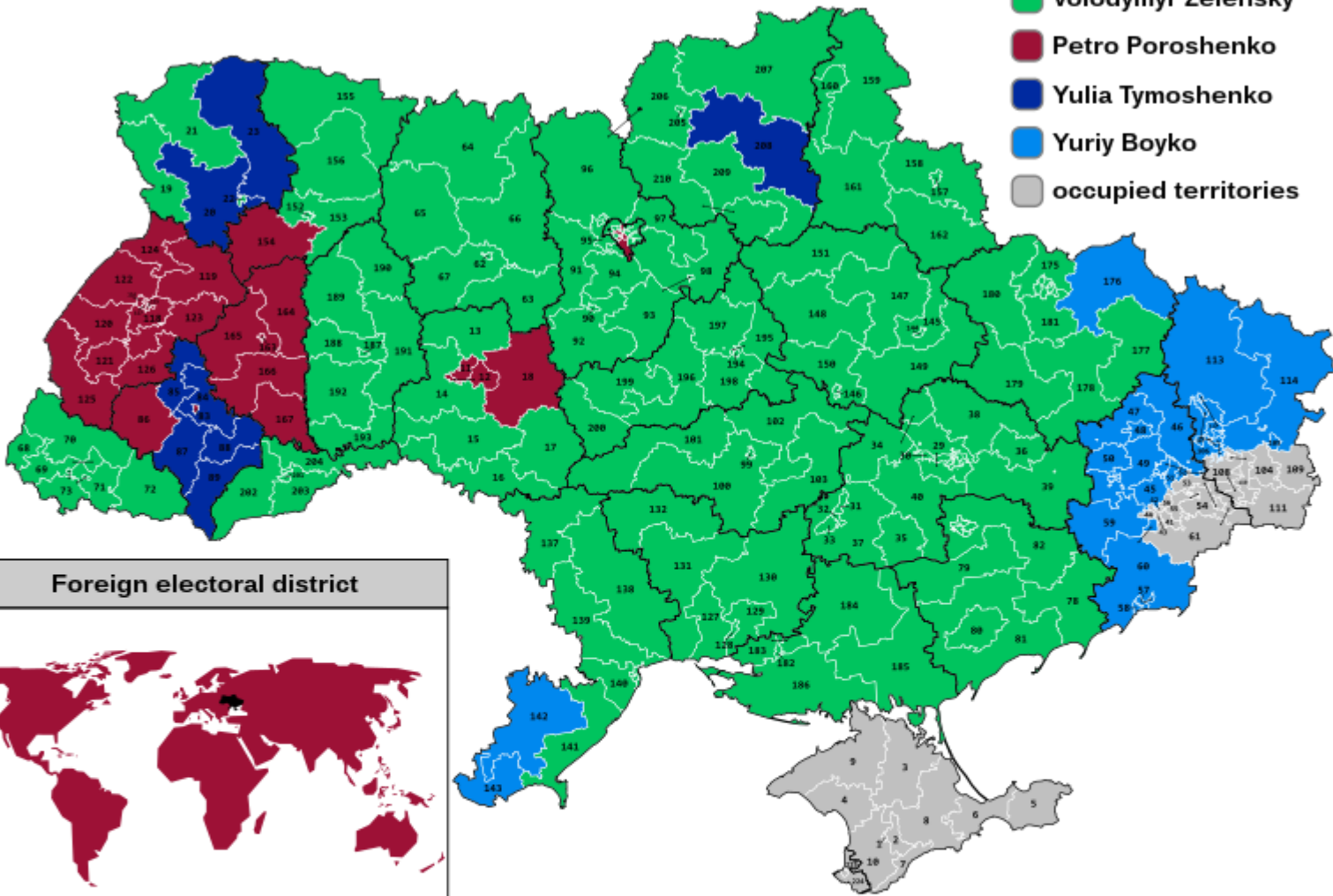


US –  
Ukraine  
training  
exercise,  
2021



- Volodymyr Zelensky
- Petro Poroshenko
- Yulia Tymoshenko
- Yuriy Boyko
- occupied territories

# Zelensky election 2019



Kyiv	Kharkiv	Odesa	Dnipro	Zaporizhia

The Zelensky center includes most of the country. No longer a split of east vs west.



2021

Has Ukraine  
really left  
“the Russian  
world”?

By now, yes.

# Decision to invade

## Underlying worldview

- To be a Great Power, Russia must recover “the Russian world” starting with Ukraine.
- Ukraine is not a real country. Ukrainians in the east and south are “Little Russians” (Maloross).
- US and European interests diverge. Europe wants to be free of US domination.
- US is aggressive and an enemy (the Pentagon says so).

## Political circumstances and perceptions, 2021

- Ukraine is slipping west, toward the EU. But it is not in NATO.
- Biden Administration is incompetent (Afghanistan withdrawal fiasco). The US is divided and unstable. Trump, out of power, will support Russia.
- The West didn't act re Georgia 2008 or Syria 2015 or Ukraine 2014. Won't act now.
- Europe, particularly Germany, won't tolerate cold kitchens. The new German Chancellor, Olaf Scholz, is from the party that believes in good relations with Russia.
- Zelensky is an amateur, not a serious leader.

**Conclusion: finish the job in Ukraine started in 2014 and split the West. GO!**

**Let's see if we can split the French and Germans from the "Anglo-Saxons"**



**With (?) Emmanuel Macron**

# Russian goals: the draft treaties of December 2021

On December 17, 2021, the Russian Foreign Ministry sent official formal drafts of two treaties, one with the US and another with NATO.

- NATO forces will leave all countries east of Germany, restoring the situation of 1991.
- No new NATO members (Ukraine, Georgia).
- No NATO or US military activity in Ukraine, South Caucasus, Central Asia and eastern Europe.
- US will not do nothing that undermines “core security interests” of Russia.
- US will withdraw all nuclear weapons to its national territory.

*Takeaway: Control over Ukraine would not – will not - end Putin’s quest to secure Russian “interests” (empire?) in Europe.*

*Was Putin told by his advisers that invasion would be quick, successful, and painless – a “short, victorious war”? This is a very old story, and a recent one (US invasion of Iraq, 2003).*



Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu

Can anyone tell Putin what he doesn't want to hear?



God bless  
our bombs.

(A sentiment  
not  
unknown in  
the US.)

# Putin gave a belligerent speech then invaded, February 24

Arrows show Russian advance



Scope of airstrikes



Russian-controlled region



Russia expected a replay of Crimea 2014.

## War aims

Install a new pro-Russian government.

Add Ukraine to the Russia-Belarus Union.

Annex Donbas and the southern coast (Novorossiya).

“De-Nazify” Ukraine.

*This is still the Russian plan. Regime change in Kyiv has been delayed.*



# The three miscalculations

## 1) Military

The Russian Army is strong. Russia won in Chechnya, Georgia, and Syria. Russian tanks will roll into Kyiv in a week.

## 2) Ukrainian nationalism and resistance

Russian-speakers will welcome liberation. They are “little Russians” at heart.

Ukrainian soldiers will not resist for long.

Zelensky is an amateur clown; oligarchs will take over and make a deal.

## 3) Western disunity and division

NATO and the European Union will split and shatter.

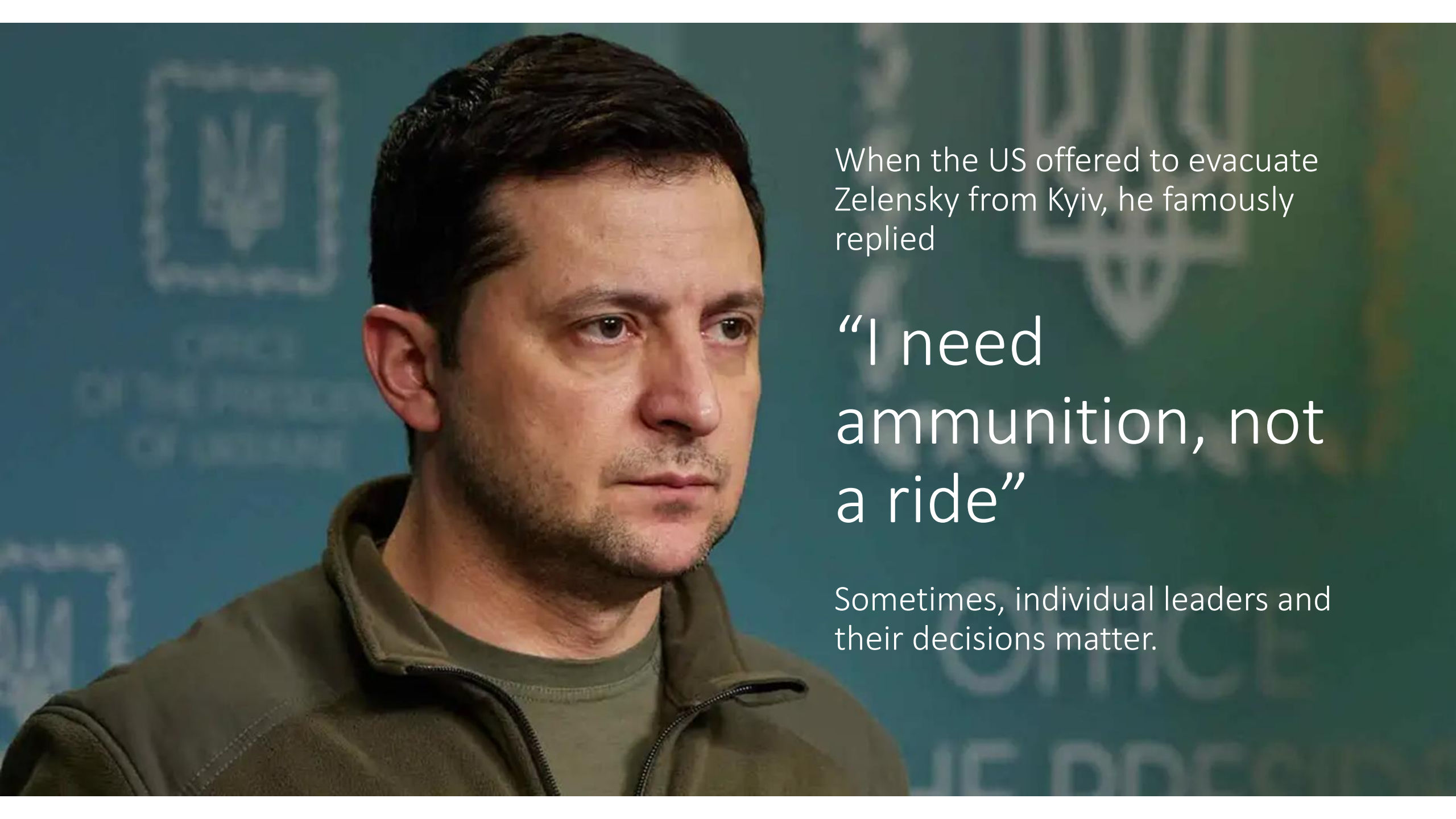
Germany values its Russian investments and gas supply and will do nothing.

Biden is weak; US leadership is incompetent (Afghanistan); Trump’s Republicans will oppose and block action.

***The expectation: Easy victory and regime change in Ukraine, showing the weakness and disunity of NATO, will pave the way for further Russian gains.***

***All these misperceptions were shared by most US and Western analysts.***

The US moved its Embassy out of Ukraine expecting a quick Russian victory.



When the US offered to evacuate Zelensky from Kyiv, he famously replied

“I need  
ammunition, not  
a ride”

Sometimes, individual leaders and their decisions matter.



Kyiv, April 2022

# Russian armor never reached Kyiv

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3FGWPMil6M&ab\\_channel=Kronika24.pl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S3FGWPMil6M&ab_channel=Kronika24.pl)

Если вам попадётся свободный или брошенный БТР - держите лайфхак как его запускать

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVuDeB4wo&ab\\_channel=Skrrq\\_](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CVuDeB4wo&ab_channel=Skrrq_)



Zelensky launched a virtual tour of Western capitals.



Speech to Congress March 16 <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/video/war-ukraine-president-zelensky-addresses-congress-83478394> go to 11:35 video at 13:50



# The West – NATO and the EU – acted together

Sanctions. Most Western companies out of Russia. Restrictions on computer chips and other technologies. Cutback of oil purchases.

Weapons to Ukraine. Most from US. Gradual flow with most advanced weapons kept in reserve – a bargaining chip with Russia.

US Intelligence sharing with Ukraine.

Germany came out firmly against Russia. Big surprise. Reluctant to send Leopard tanks, but moving rapidly to get Germany off Russian gas, which was more important.

US competence and leadership, *with* Europe.

Russian cruiser  
Moskva, Black  
Sea flagship,  
sunk in April.

US intelligence  
provided the  
coordinates for  
Ukrainian  
missiles.







The Moskva sank before it could be towed to port. The symbolism was huge.

The Black Sea is a military front. Russia did not capture the port of Odesa.

**In August 2022 Turkey and the UN brokered an agreement to ship Ukrainian wheat.**

# Himars rocket launcher system

**Range:** 50 miles (80km)\*

**Crew:** 3

**Weight:** 16.25 tonnes

**Speed:** 53 mph (85 kmph)



US Himars rockets enabled Ukraine to attack Russian command centers and fuel depots. The US eventually sent longer range ATACMS that could target Russia but limited their use. Ukraine niw asks for that permission.

Jan.26, 2023. German leopard tanks will go to Ukraine. Also US Abrams tanks.



Consider the precedent –

German vs Russian tanks on the Ukrainian steppe.

Except, it seems, tanks are relatively useless.

# As the “special military operation” goes badly, why don't Russians rise up?




- 
- Plain old patriotism (like Americans). We Russians get it that America and NATO control Ukraine and want to control Russia.
- Putin knows what he's doing, so why should I worry?
- My life is normal. Sanctions are annoying but no real hardship.
- 200,000 casualties? Fake news! (Free media outlets silenced.)
- If I speak up I'll get in trouble. To criticize the war (or call it a war) is now a crime.
- Love it or leave it. If you don't like Russia, go.





Z is the symbol of the war.  
No one knows what it means.



   Рукопольская сельская библиотека -филиал РМУК  
«Краснопартизанская МЦБ» присоединяется к акции

#СвоихНеБросаем

#ЗаМир

#ЗаРоссию

#ЗаПрезидента

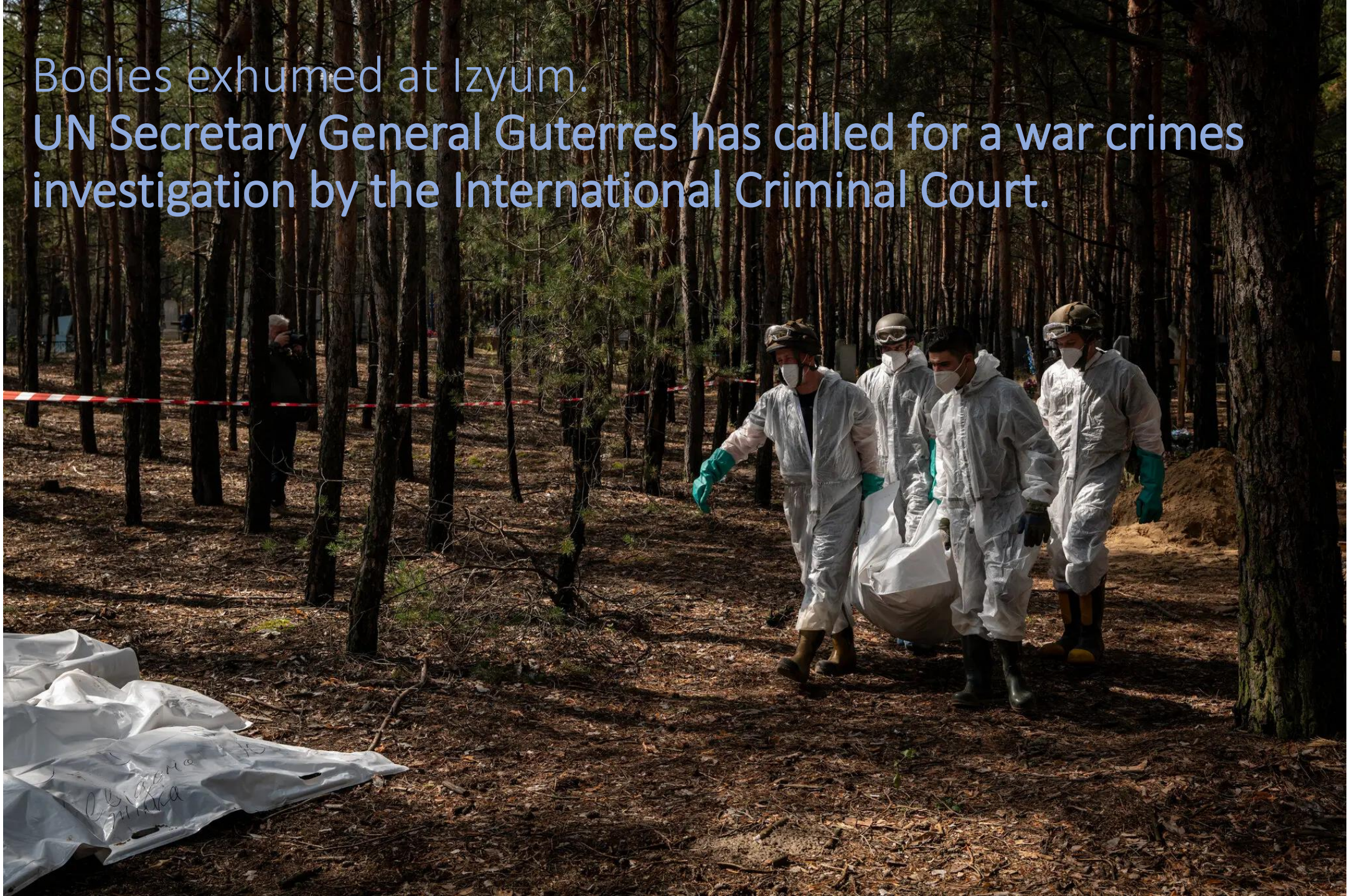


Ukrainian offensive.  
Tanks in Izyum, Sept. 16.  
Reports of low Russian  
morale and lack of recruits.



Bodies exhumed at Izyum.

UN Secretary General Guterres has called for a war crimes investigation by the International Criminal Court.







# Putin speech September 21, 2022

- the West is the enemy. Ukraine is its puppet to attack Russia
- phony referendums in Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhya, Kherson provinces
- annex these as part of Russia. Crimea model.
- Partial mobilization. Callup of 300,000; could be expanded.
- Nuclear threat: “We will certainly make use of all weapon systems available to us. This is not a bluff”.

Mothers protest in Dagestan – “our children are not fertilizer”



But most will comply

At the Russia-Georgia border, draft age men walk across. Cars wait for days. Finland and other EU countries closed their borders.



# Estimated Russian emigration in 2022

Georgia	112,000
Kazakhstan	100,000
Serbia	100,000
Turkey	78,000
Armenia	65,000
Israel	37,000
Kyrgyzstan	30,000
US	22,000
Mongolia	8,000

**Many Russian emigrants may move on to other countries. Probably few will return.**

**Neighboring former Soviet countries were pulling away from Russia before the war. Will this accelerate?**

**Should Russian immigrants be welcome?**

Not listed: Dubai, the destination of choice for rich Russians.



## *Referendum propaganda*

KHERSON – FOREVER WITH RUSSIA



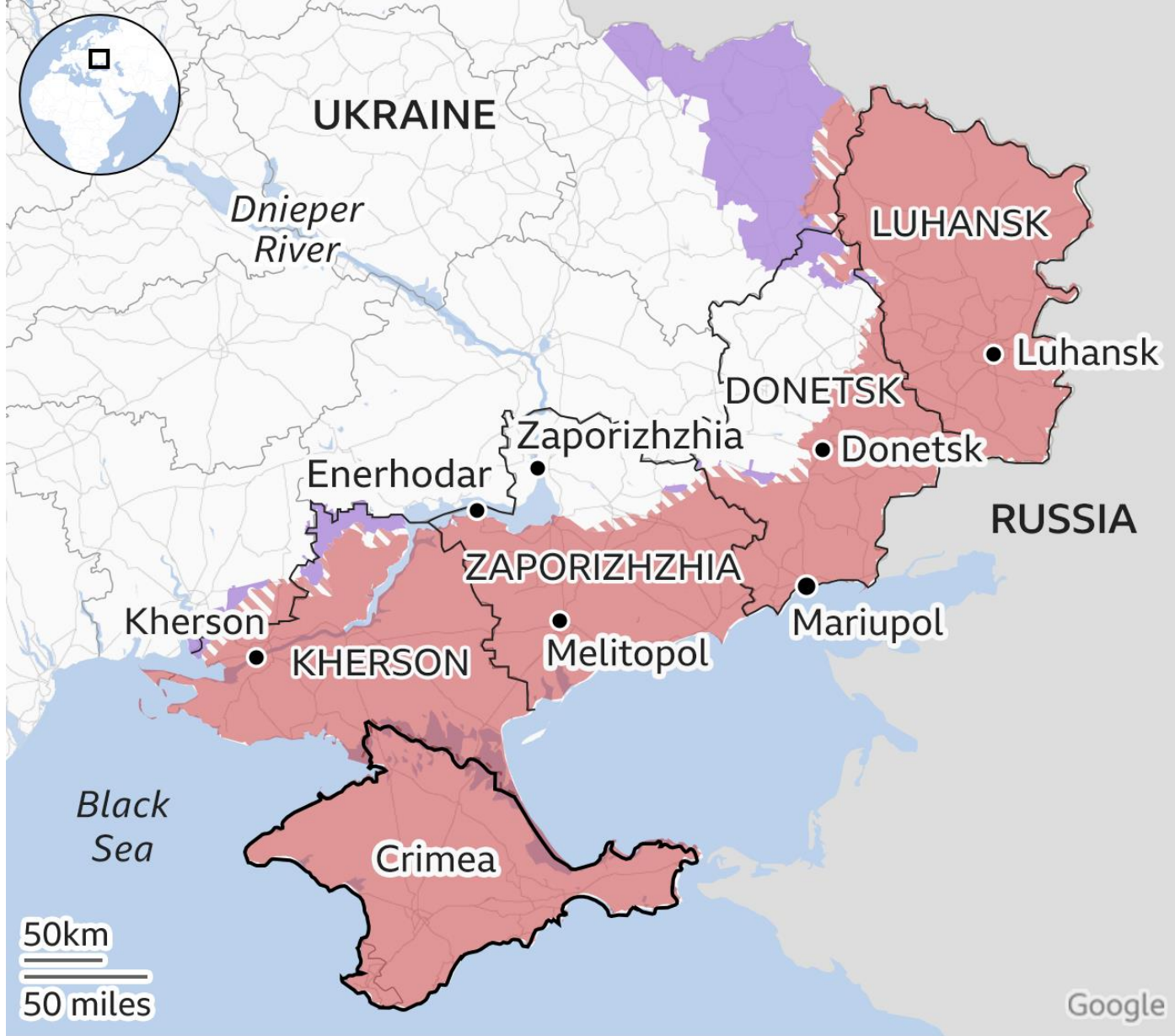
RUSSIA IS HERE FOREVER!

“RUSSIANS AND UKRAINIANS - ONE  
PEOPLE, A UNITED WHOLE”  
V.V. Putin



# Voting in Donetsk, September 23

Note the transparent box.



Annexing land you do not control is somewhat odd

- Russian military control
- Held or regained by Ukraine
- Russian advances
- Russia annexed Crimea in 2014



Putin with new governors of the annexed regions, September 30

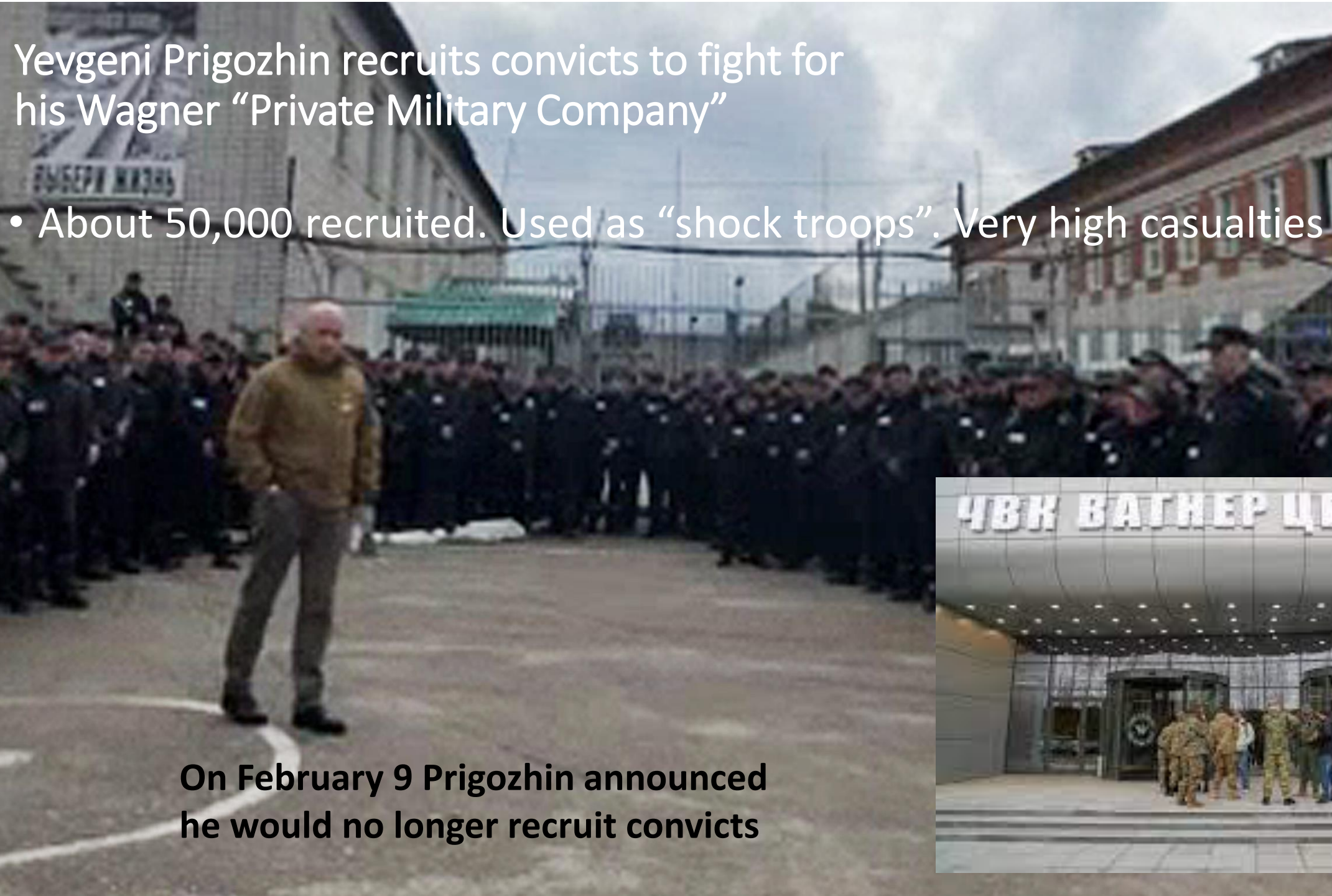


Their task –  
“denazification”?

# Yevgeni Prigozhin recruits convicts to fight for his Wagner “Private Military Company”

- About 50,000 recruited. Used as “shock troops”. Very high casualties

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/16/world/europe/russia-wagner-ukraine-video.html>



**On February 9 Prigozhin announced he would no longer recruit convicts**



# “Join Up” - War is good for you



St. Petersburg street

Signing bonus, about \$7,000

salary, about \$2,300 / month, Twice the average wage.

the death benefit of 5 million rubles (\$56,000) isn't advertised on the billboard. It's 7-10 years' wages for rural Russians.

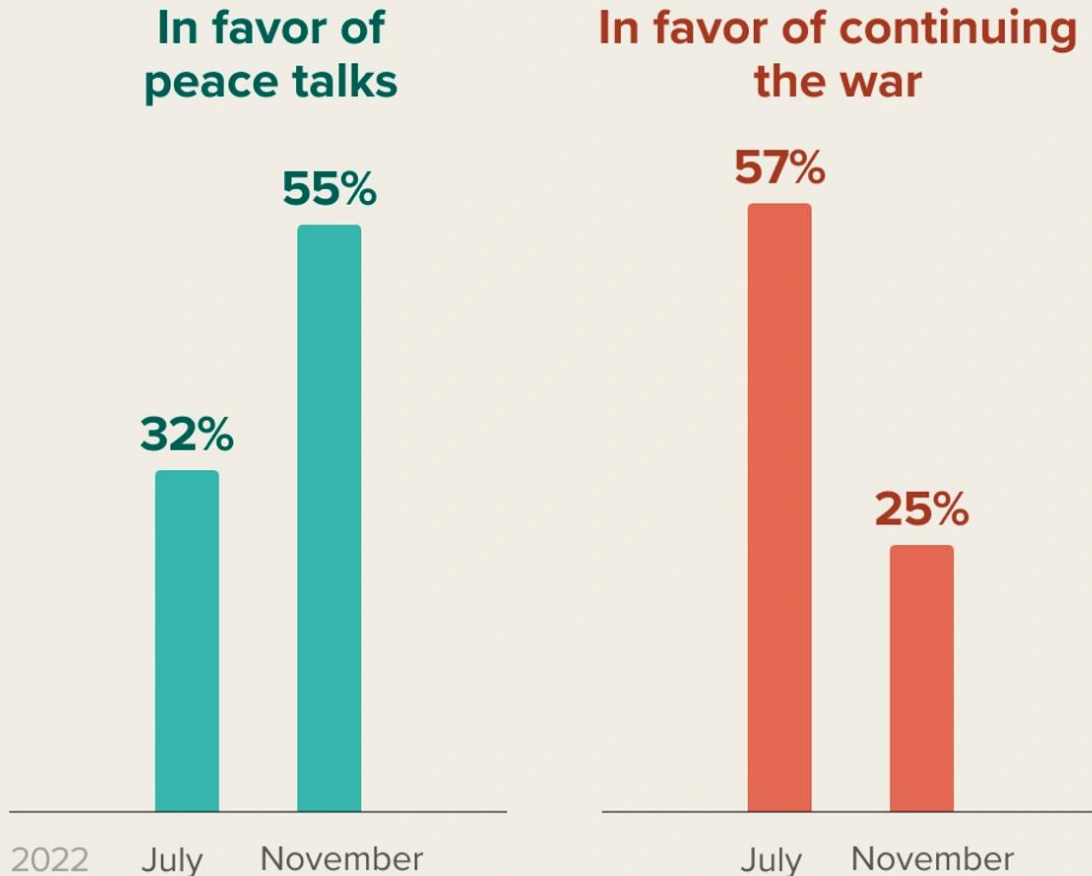
# How to buy your kid an iPhone



<https://meduza.io/en/feature/2022/12/20/i-hope-this-propaganda-won-t-influence-viewers>

<https://meduza.io/en/feature/2022/12/16/a-propaganda-sampler>

# How Russians' attitudes toward the war have changed



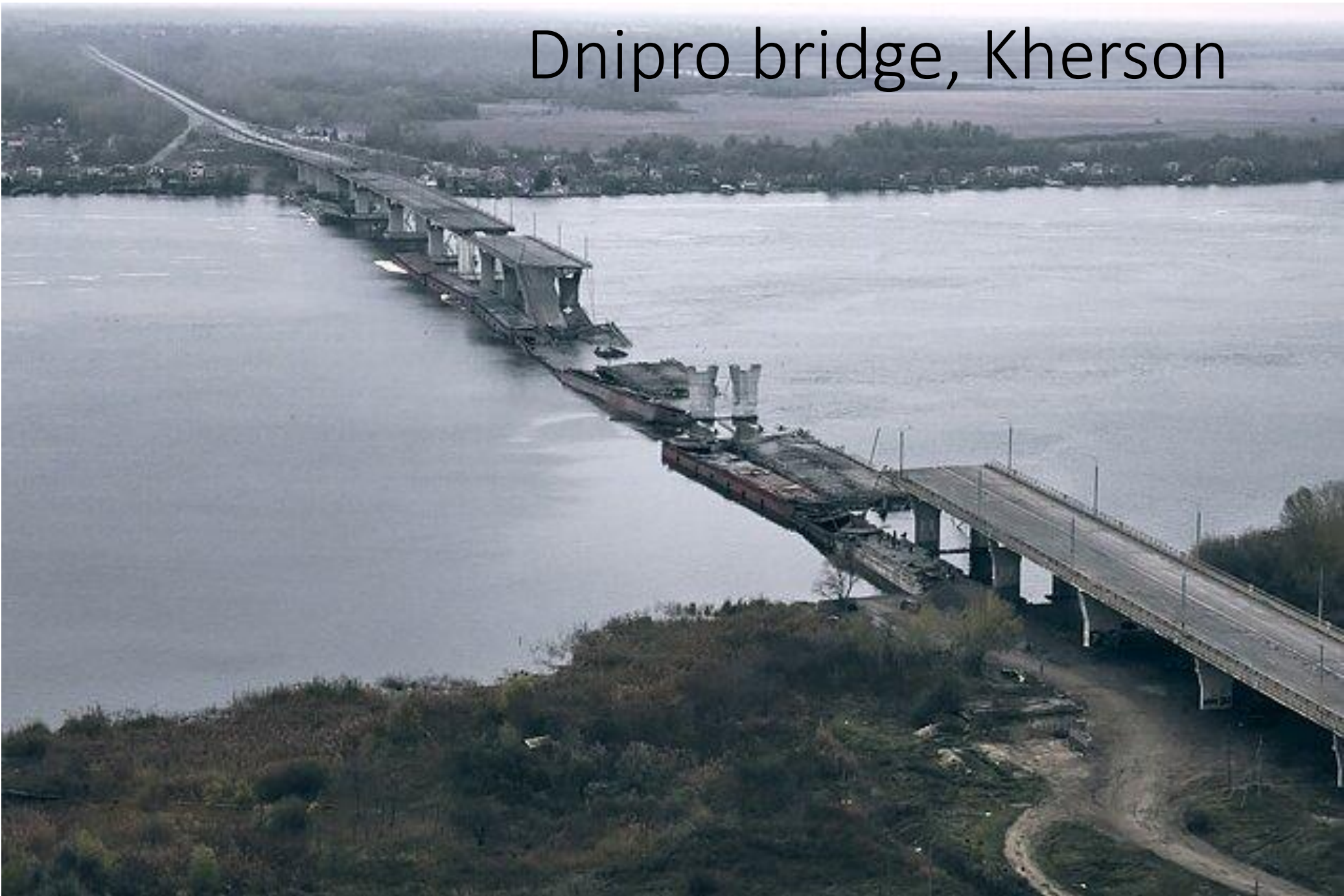
Internal polling data commissioned by the Kremlin

Reported Kremlin poll, July and November 2022

Shift against war is clear. What Russians understand by “in favor of “peace talks” is not.

[https://meduza.io/impro/izjLU3YgZ2gtAEc-kNgN63V9qvNZhE6Dr2vMCRvCH5E/resizing\\_type:fit/width:1300/height:0/enlarge:1/quality:95/aHR0cHM6Ly9tZWRR1/emEuaW8vaW1hZ2Uv/YXR0YWNobWVudHMv/aW1hZ2VzLzAwOC81/MDQvNjczL29yaWdp/bmFsL1dTWIJ1Uzdw/TUtnTFIEbUZIZmt6/eEEucG5n.webp](https://meduza.io/impro/izjLU3YgZ2gtAEc-kNgN63V9qvNZhE6Dr2vMCRvCH5E/resizing_type:fit/width:1300/height:0/enlarge:1/quality:95/aHR0cHM6Ly9tZWRR1/emEuaW8vaW1hZ2Uv/YXR0YWNobWVudHMv/aW1hZ2VzLzAwOC81/MDQvNjczL29yaWdp/bmFsL1dTWIJ1Uzdw/TUtnTFIEbUZIZmt6/eEEucG5n.webp)

# Dnipro bridge, Kherson



Russian troops evacuated on barges in an orderly retreat.

They took pro-Russian officials and the bones of Potemkin, dug up from a church crypt.

Kherson is Ukraine



# Kherson November 11. Will the Russians be back?





Zaporizhya nuclear power plant. Shells fell nearby, repeatedly.

November: IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi said it was a "close call".

"We were fortunate that a potentially serious nuclear incident did not happen.

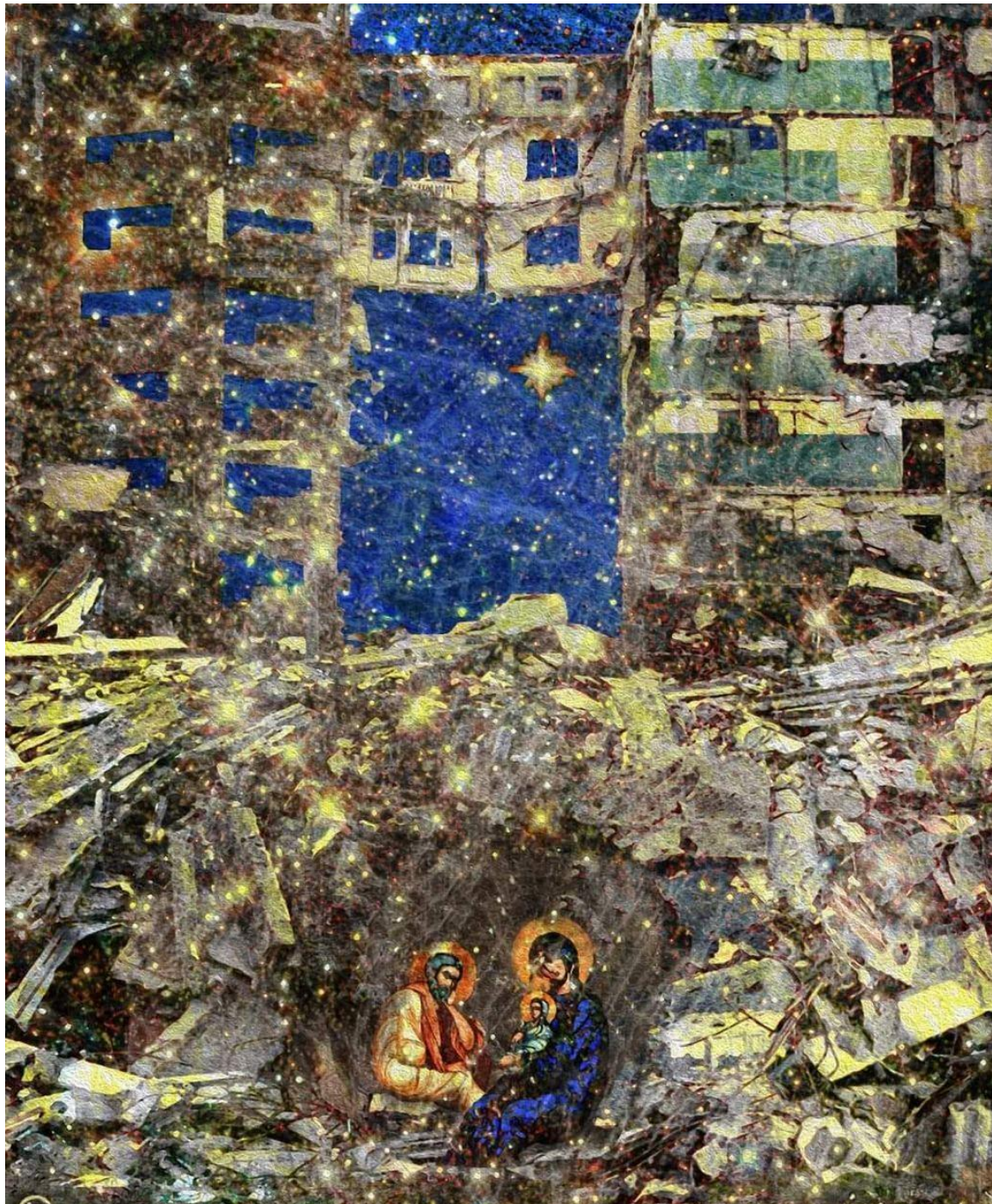


# Missiles attack Ukraine's Power and Water supply



... And also attack cities, to spread terror

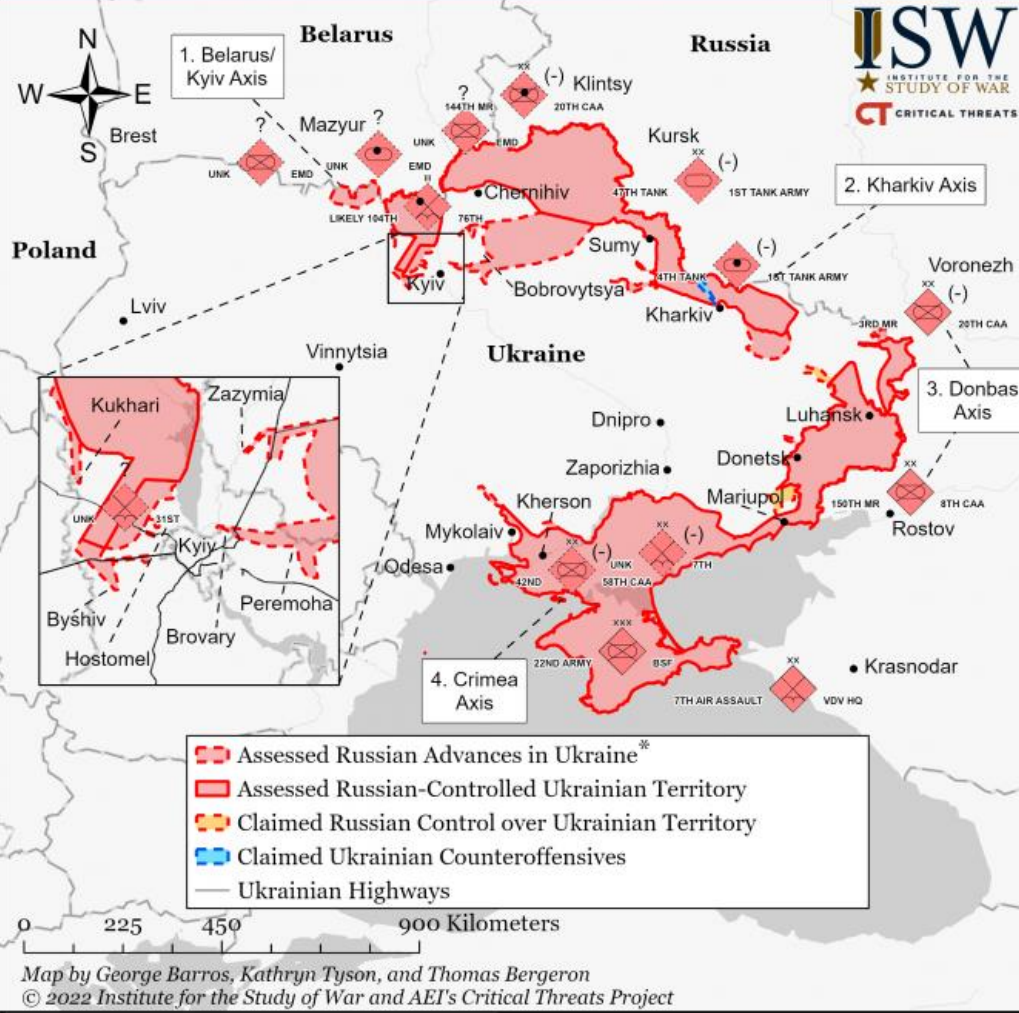




Christmas 2022

Painting by I. Yurchuk

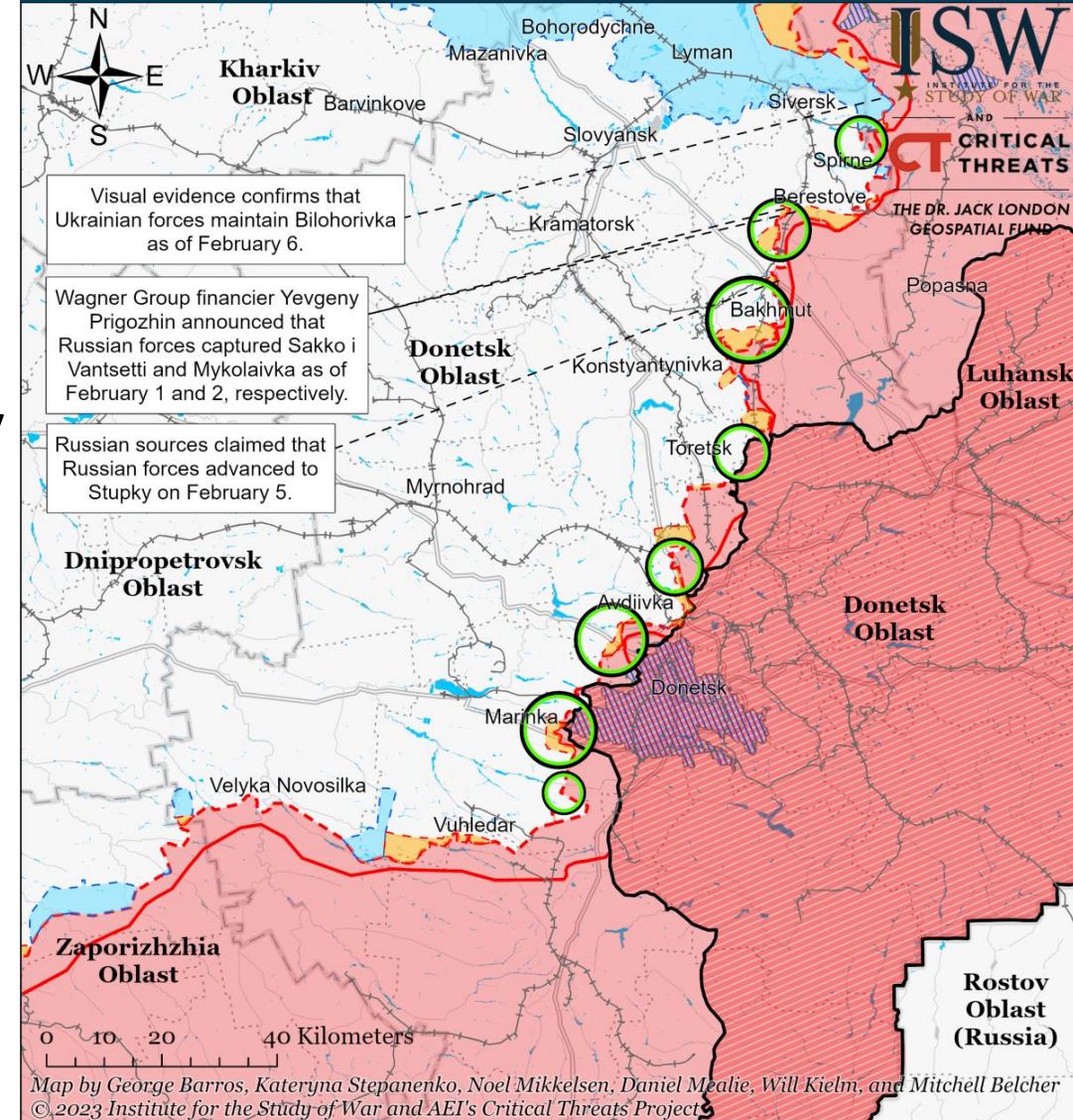
# Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of March 6, 2022, 3:00 PM EST



March 2022 (left)

February 2023 (right)

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of February 6, 2023, 3:00 PM ET





2024?

1916?

As in WWI,  
who will run  
out of shells  
first?

Whose morale  
will break  
first?

# Bakhmut, January 2023



# Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of September 28, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



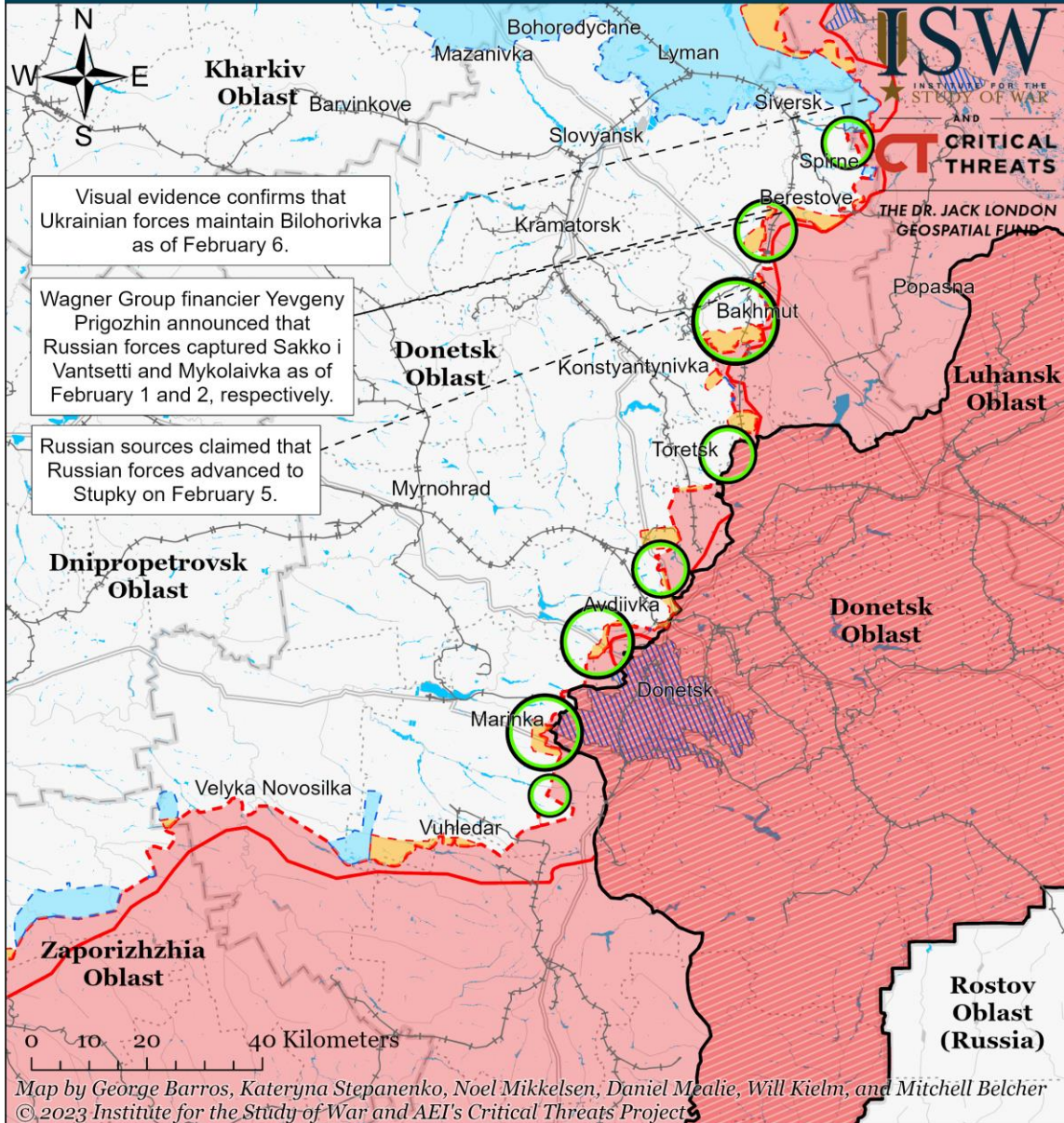
For all 2023, the net result of fighting was that Russia gained 100 square miles



\* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.



# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of February 6, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



New Russian offensive, February 2023

Putin has reportedly ordered General Gerasimov to take all of Donbas by the end of March.

Politics drives military plans.  
Putin needs a win.

Russian Military and Paramilitary Objects in Range of ATACMS.



Russian Military Air Bases in Range of ATACMS as of August 26, 2024



Maximum Range of Ukrainian ATACMS (300 km variant) as of August 26, 2024



Russian Territory in Range of HIMARS (77km)



Russian-occupied Territory as of August 26, 2024



Ukrainian-controlled territory as of August 26, 2024







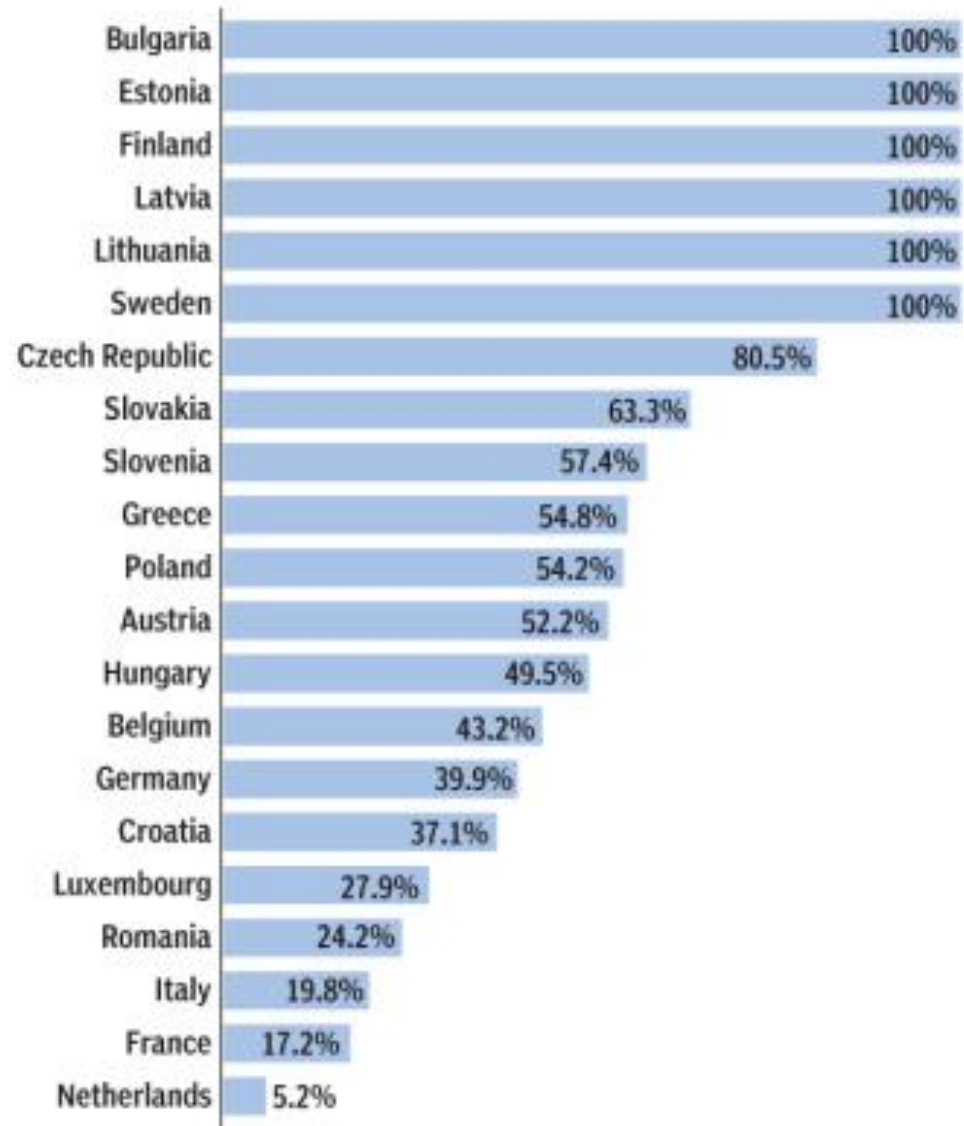
Ukraine is the main transit route for gas to Europe.

North Stream was built to bypass Ukraine. It was blown up, probably by the Ukrainians, after Germany decided not to open it.

South stream has been cancelled.

## EUROPEAN UNION DEPENDENCE ON RUSSIAN NATURAL GAS

PERCENTAGE OF NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION DERIVED  
FROM RUSSIAN NATURAL GAS



SOURCE: CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

ANDREW BARR / NATIONAL POST

Pre-war data. Now, in 2024,  
very little Russian gas reaches  
Europe.

German kitchens stayed  
warm. Two of the 100%  
dependent countries,  
Finland and Sweden, have  
joined NATO.

Targets of economic warfare  
resist, not kowtow.



Unequal  
partnership.  
China is taller

GDP (2023;world bank)

Russia \$2.0 trillion

China 17.8

US 27.4

Germany 4.6

EU 18.3

NATO ca. \$50+ trillion

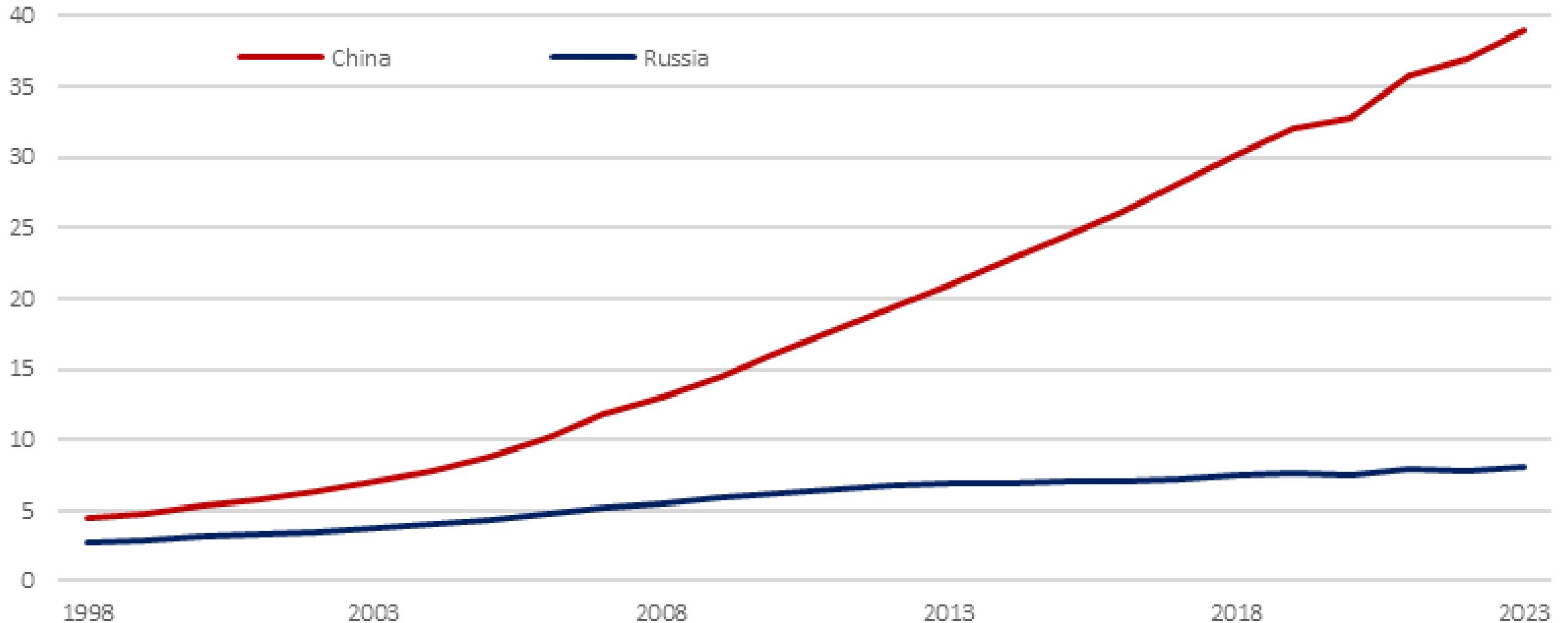
Hookup for a 30% discount



# Will Russia become China's "economic vassal"?

## Chinese and Russian GDP

(GDP PPP, Int\$ Trillions)

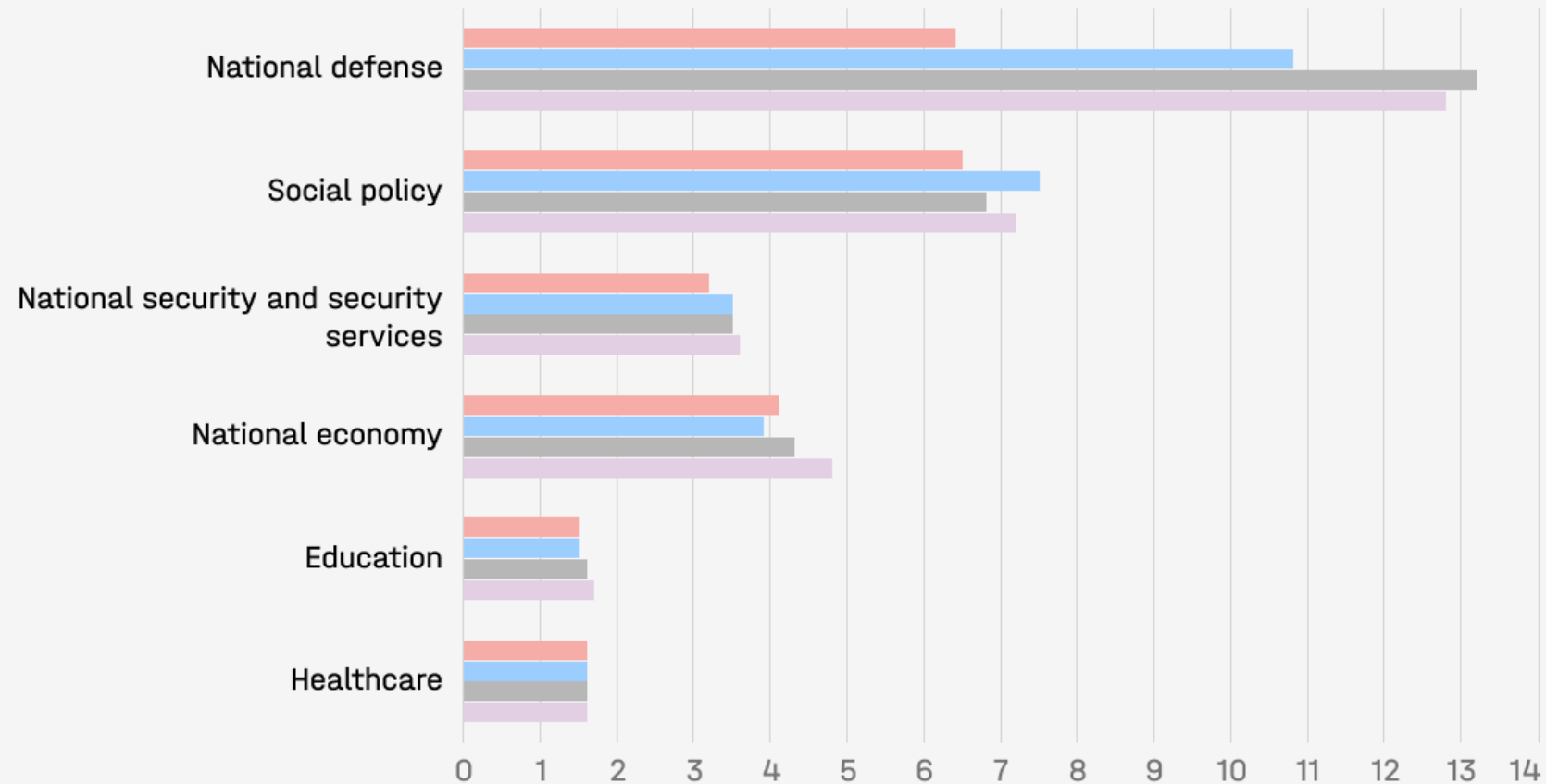




# Government spending, 2023-2026

Trillions of rubles

2023 2024\* 2025\* 2026\*

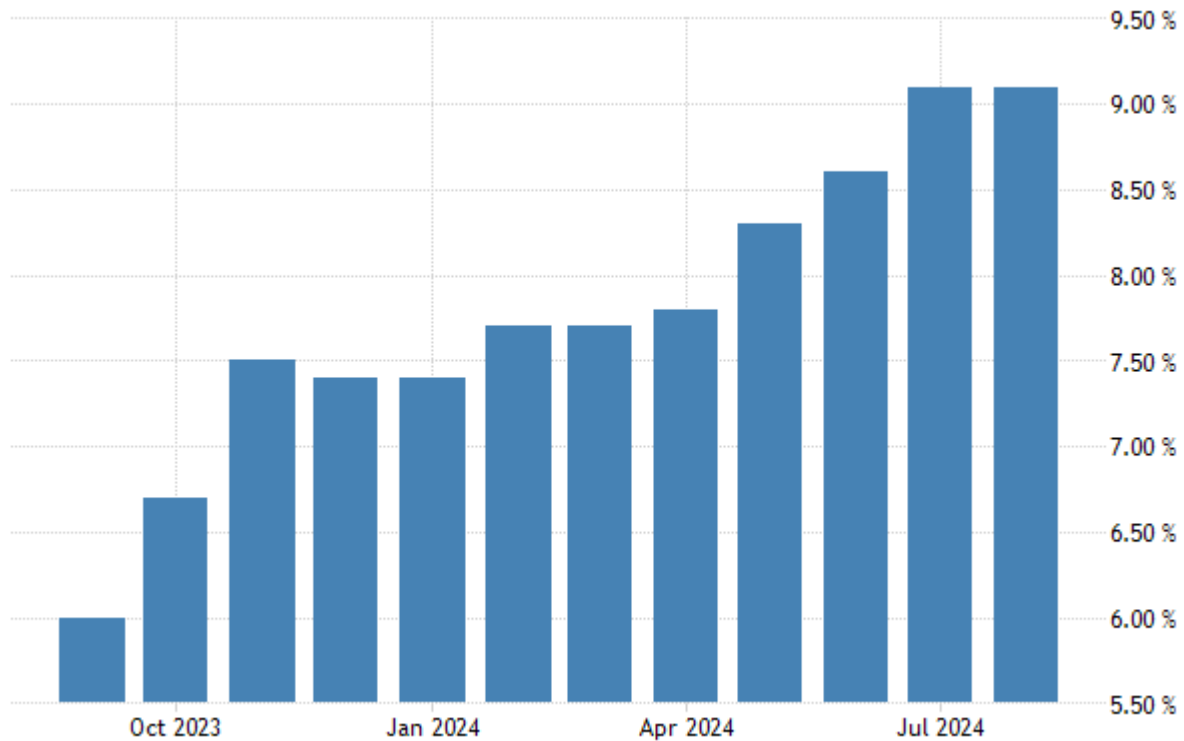


\*planned

Source: Bloomberg

**THE BELL.**

Russia says military spending is 6% of GDP slated to rise to 6.5%. It is probably much more.



Current inflation is about 9%.

The Russian central bank interest rate is 16% and may increase.

Russia has high economic growth due to war production.