

War and Peace in Donbass: The Reversal of Kerry's Ukraine Statement Came from Obama, Not Nuland

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When Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland on May 15th contradicted her boss John Kerry's statement of three days earlier, in which Kerry had warned Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko not to violate the Minsk II agreement, and not to invade Crimea, and not to re-invade Donbass, the source of this reversal was actually U.S. President Barack Obama, and not Victoria Nuland (as the State Department had reported).

When I first noticed the contradiction [as I reported on May 21st](#), Nuland's statement on May 15th was being quoted by Ukraine's Interfax News Agency, without any link to its U.S. source. I looked but didn't right away find its U.S. source, but the official Ukrainian news agency would not quote a U.S. Government official falsely, and so I went with the story on that basis.

Now that I have found the U.S. source in [the full May 15th U.S. State Department press briefing in Washington](#), there can be little doubt that Nuland had actually been instructed by the White House to be quoted there as issuing this reversal of Kerry's statement.

The press conference, by the Department's press spokesperson Jeff Rathke, opened with an introductory statement in which he asserted:

Assistant Secretary Nuland's ongoing visit to Kyiv and her discussions with Prime Minister Yatsenyuk and President Poroshenko reaffirm the United States' full and unbreakable support for Ukraine's government, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. We continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Ukraine and reiterate our deep commitment to a single Ukrainian nation, including Crimea, and all the other regions of Ukraine.

That's all that was reported by Ukraine's Interfax. Much later in the press conference, however, after reporters had asked him many questions about Iran, Burundi, Japan, Iraq, and other countries, but not Ukraine, one reporter finally asked a single (but unrelated) question about Ukraine, and, after answering it, Rathke interrupted the next reporter's question, which was about Cuba, to ask all of the assembled press-stenographers, "I'm sorry, any other questions on Ukraine?" and, after not getting any such question, he simply went directly on to say:

I would – if I could take the opportunity, I would also just want to go back to what I said at the top, and just to review what has happened this week with regard to Ukraine. Secretary Kerry was in Sochi at the start of the week, where the Secretary was clear with Russia – President Putin, Foreign Minister Lavrov – about Ukraine and about the consequences for failing to uphold the Minsk

commitments. Right after that discussion, he called President Poroshenko to update him and to reaffirm our support for Ukraine. He went from there immediately to the meeting of NATO foreign ministers in Antalya, where he briefed them and also underscored the United States' commitment when he met with Foreign Minister Klimkin in Antalya. Assistant Secretary Nuland is in Kyiv right now, and the message of all of these engagements is that we stand for the implementation of Minsk. We stand in support of the Ukrainian Government, President Poroshenko, Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, and the Ukrainian people. And I wanted just to make sure that I took that opportunity.

In other words: Kerry, after his statement on May 12th to Putin in Sochi, saying, about Poroshenko's repeated warnings that Ukraine will retake both Crimea and Donbass —

"we would strongly urge him to think twice not to engage in that kind of activity, that that would put Minsk in serious jeopardy. And we would be very, very concerned about what the consequences of that kind of action at this time may be."

— was taken to the woodshed by his boss, Obama; and the best way that could be decided upon to issue the reversal was by this indirect one, which would be sourced to his subordinate Nuland, so that Kerry himself wouldn't have to be the person contradicting himself, and so that the blame for the actually anti-Minsk-agreement position of the U.S. President himself would go instead to Nuland, whom everybody already knows to be a "neo-conservative," and a hardliner against Russia — and would definitely not go to the Nobel Peace Prize winning U.S. President, Barack Obama.

In other words: the President, who had been behind [the February 2014 coup](#) that instigated Russia's defensive measure of protecting its main naval base (ever since 1783) in Crimea and so Russia's accepting the overwhelming desire of Crimea's residents on 16 March 2014 to become again a part of Russia (of which Crimea had always been a part until 1954), wanted to move forward again with the war in Ukraine, and with the resulting sanctions against Russia, all of which were part of Obama's plan ever since at least [the summer of 2013, when the organizing of the overthrow of Yanukovych had started at the U.S. Embassy in Kiev.](#)

The Minsk II agreement had been engineered by Merkel and Hollande of the EU, against the wishes and without the participation of Obama, and this is the sort of thing that Nuland had had in mind about the EU when she had told Geoffrey Pyatt, America's Kiev Ambassador, [on 4 February 2014, "F—k the EU!" and instructed him then whom to get appointed to run Ukraine after the coup \("Yats" Yatsenyuk\), which coup then culminated 18 days later, on February 22nd.](#) (Yatsenyuk received the official appointment on February 26th.)

This likewise explains the reason why Ukraine's President Poroshenko, as I [reported on June 7th](#), said again, on June 5th, that Ukraine will retake both Crimea and Donbass. He has Obama's wind to his sails on this (and not only Nuland's).

So: the war will continue, as Obama wants, and probably the resistance to it on the part of the EU will continue to be ineffectual and half-hearted.

And the sanctions against Russia, for [responding as it must to Obama's actions](#), will also continue, which is also part of Obama's original plan. (What was *not* part of Obama's plan,

however, was the continued survival of millions of the residents in Donbass, the former region of Ukraine [that had voted 90%+ for the man, Viktor Yanukovich, whom Obama overthrew](#). But Obama evidently has not given up his goal of eliminating them.)

The people who say that Obama doesn't have a plan are simply ignoring it. The evidence is very clear what the plan is. And it is succeeding: it's [a war-plan against Russia](#).

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#), and of [Feudalism, Fascism, Libertarianism and](#)

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