



A Game of Tic Tac Toe: No Winners with an Invasion 2/8/22

It has been my view from the beginning that Russia won't physically invade the Ukraine. No one wins. Sanctions would further cripple an already damaged economy and Nord Stream 2 would not see the light of day. Russia obtained an important crown jewel in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea. It gave them access to a 12-month warm water port.

If Russia planned on crossing the border, why wait over a month? Why give the West time to prepare, thereby raising the price the Russians would pay in cost and lives if they invaded? They don't want to and can't afford to "own" Ukraine. They want to make sure no one else does (i.e. entrée into NATO). The U.S. and NATO don't want the Ukraine in NATO now either.

Something can be worked out here. If war is prevented, then Biden can take credit for stopping it. He will garner some political capital with Congress. He could use that capital over the second half of the year to step back from opposition to Nord Stream 2. He should also try to leverage the pipeline issue with the Germans by getting them to reconsider the decommissioning of the last three nuclear units for at least one to three years.