

Will the US Replace Zelensky in the First Half of Next Year?

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Global Research, June 24, 2024

Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#)

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Zelensky's only use right now is to legitimize radical policies and he'll then be cast aside once he's done what's needed of him, though it's unclear when that'll be since everything depends on whether NATO conventionally intervenes in Ukraine.

President Putin [shared his view](#) during a press conference in Hanoi that the US will replace Zelensky during the first half of next year after they use him to make unpopular decisions such as further lowering the draft age. His prediction coincided with Russia's foreign intelligence service publishing its [latest such report](#) about this scenario, which claimed that Zaluzhny is being seriously considered by the US as his replacement and is also deemed to be more suitable for [negotiating peace with Moscow](#) than others.

It was explained last month how "[Russia Hopes To Influence Ukraine's Possibly Impending US-Backed Regime Change Process](#)" after that same service released a related report about this at the time. This strategy continues unfolding as evidenced by President Putin [declaring](#) two weeks ago that the Rada Speaker is now the legitimate leader of Ukraine if the Constitution is still being followed. Accordingly, he said that Russia could negotiate with him or someone else if Kiev is interested in peace, but not Zelensky.

As regards the conflict's [military-strategic dynamics](#), they continue trending in Russia's favor and [won't be changed by minor adjustments](#) to US policy such as letting Ukraine use its arms to hit any targets across the border that are allegedly planning to cross the frontier.

The only variable that can make a meaningful difference at this point in time is if NATO stages a [conventional intervention](#), but that would [spike the risk of World War III](#) by miscalculation.

Returning back to President Putin's prediction about Zelensky being replaced in the first half of next year, he's either assuming that no such conventional intervention will occur or that the subsequent escalation would remain manageable instead of spiraling into the apocalypse. Regarding the first possibility, there's a chance that this won't happen since it's dependent on Russia achieving a military breakthrough across the front lines, which NATO could then exploit to justify directly involving itself in this conflict.

That might either not happen and thus rule out this scenario, or it'll unfold and then set that sequence of events into motion, therefore leading to the second possibility of them managing this escalation. In that case, Russia might either eschew striking NATO units so long as they don't cross the Dnieper and pose a credible threat to its new regions, or they'll engage in controllable tit-for-tat strikes before freezing the conflict. No matter what happens, however, Zelensky's political future is set in stone.

The first possibility is actually much worse for him since he'll be pressured like never before to lower the draft age as soon as possible in order to replace all the meat that'll have to be ground to prevent a Russian breakthrough across the front lines. It's impossible to predict the timing with which he'd then be replaced since it depends on when that policy is implemented and whether (and how long) the secret police can control the public's furious reaction to sending their young adult males to the slaughter.

If NATO conventionally intervenes in Ukraine but the escalation doesn't spiral into World War III by miscalculation, which of course [can't be taken for granted](#), then the bloc might keep Zelensky in place only until they reach a deal with Russia for [comprehensively managing](#) Europe's "new normal". Once that's achieved, whenever it may be, he'll then be pushed aside in order to herald the coming of the so-called "new Ukraine" under these new circumstances and turn the page on this dark period.

Just like in the first possibility, he'd only remain in power long enough to make unpopular decisions, albeit under totally different circumstances in that case. Nevertheless, the writing is on the wall, and it's that his political career is drawing to a close either way. Zelensky's only use right now is to legitimize radical policies in either scenario. He'll then be cast aside once he's done what's needed of him, though it's unclear when that'll be since everything depends on whether NATO conventionally intervenes.

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This article was originally published on the author's Substack, [Andrew Korybko's Newsletter](#).

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