

Small US Military Groups Visit Ukraine Regularly to Learn From Conflict. Zelensky's "Victory Plan" Described as a "Shopping List"

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*Army units stationed in Europe, from platoons to headquarters, are learning from the battlefield in Ukraine as Kiev makes a new push to acquire equipment, US officials confirmed. **It is through the so-called "Victory Plan" that Ukraine hopes to acquire new equipment, however, it appears that the plan has received mixed reaction from allies.***

According to Defense One, a "small element" of soldiers is flying in and out of the conflict-torn country to learn lessons, Gen. Darryl Williams, commander of US Army Europe and Africa, said during a roundtable with media at the Association of the United States Army's annual meeting in Washington.

Under the command of **Lt. Gen. Curtis Buzzard**, who was named head of the Allied effort coordinating aid to Ukraine, **soldiers assess the situation on the ground and gather critical information about the conflict.**

"He's [Curtis Buzzard] able to get insights on the environment in terms of the number of drones that they're flying," Williams said. "Learning is taking place as we speak, at the tactical level, the operational level, to inform the strategic level."

According to the report, **a spokesman for the US Army in Europe said that the team rotating through Ukraine is limited to working inside the US embassy and does not provide advice to the Ukrainian government.**

The lessons learned from this team are shaping how the Army approaches its "Transformation-in-Contact" equipment strategy. In an eight-month effort, the Army is flooding certain units with new drones, counter-drone technology and communications equipment that are not necessarily part of any registered program, connecting drone operators to mortars, artillery and loitering munitions, all in response to what is happening in the Ukraine conflict.

"Over the last few years, based off of the fight that's in the Ukraine, and just with us being right there with the enemy at the doorstep...we've been able to extract a lot of lessons learned that's kind of drove us to kind of think about how we do agile and adaptive command and control," Command **Sgt. Maj. Dennis Doyle** of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment said.

Earlier, US Space Force **Major General Devin Pepper** said the US should benefit from the Ukrainian conflict by studying how Kiev uses various capabilities and technologies on the battlefield.

However, **Maj. Gen. Ron Ragin**, commander of the unit responsible for helping manage aid transfers to Ukraine, the 21st Theater Sustainment Command, believes that not all lessons are about new tech. Senior Ukrainian officers told him that if they could have done things differently before the war, they would have invested in ammunition production and stockpiles, created multiple locations for maintaining equipment, and strengthened storage and command-and-control infrastructure.

“I’m using those lessons from our Ukrainian partners that are currently under strain and in contact to inform how I approach the priorities that Gen. Williams has given us,” Ragin said. “So I’m working with not only the acquisition community but also with the joint material enterprise to make sure that we’re taking the lessons learned from Ukraine and applying it to how we move forward in the future.”

In effect, Ukraine’s immense failures in its conflict with Russia are being used as opportunities for the US to learn from. This is a far cry from the early days of the war, when Washington believed that Ukraine would win because of Western support and the sanctions regime imposed on Russia. Recently, several Western media outlets admitted that the Ukrainian Army is losing territory daily and that the West recognises that the situation for Ukraine will only get worse.

Under such conditions, it is unsurprising that the so-called Victory Plan of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has been described as more like a [“shopping list”](#) while Western countries have given mixed reactions to it.

Even Ukraine’s greatest backer, the US, was muted and noncommittal to Zelensky’s Victory Plan, with **Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin** saying, “It’s not my position to publicly evaluate his plans.”

German **Chancellor Olaf Scholz**, despite leading the country providing the second most aid to Ukraine, stood by his refusal to supply Taurus long-range cruise missiles, adding,

“We are taking care that NATO does not become a party to the war so that this war doesn’t culminate in an even bigger catastrophe.”

Meanwhile, Hungarian **Prime Minister Viktor Orbán** described Zelensky’s plan as “more than frightening” in a Facebook post.

The refusal by major Western countries to back the Victory Plan signals Zelensky’s failure to galvanise support behind it. In effect, the Ukraine proxy has become nothing more than a disposable army used in the vain attempt to weaken Russia, whose failures are an opportunity for the US military to learn from.

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