

West provokes escalation of Ukrainian conflict, encouraging Kyiv to intensify hostilities

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Leaked secret US documents have revealed that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has been planning to escalate the current confrontation with Moscow by invading Russian villages, targeting Russia beyond the Donbass and the current conflict zone with long-range missiles and even blowing up the Druzhba pipeline which provides NATO member Hungary with Russian oil, according to the [Washington Post](#). Kiev's plans for further exacerbating the crisis cross a number of red lines and should be a problem for Washington too, as US President Biden has already [made clear](#) to Zelensky that he and his Western allies want neither "to go to war with Russia" nor "a third world war". However, paradoxically, the US seems to be pushing for precisely such escalation.

The possible scenarios are quite worrisome. In addition to the aforementioned developments, according to the same leaks, Ukraine was also [planning to attack Russian forces in Syria](#), which would mean making the Eastern European conflict spill into the Middle East and thus risk spiraling out of control across Western Asia and subsequently maybe even the Caucasus, too. Some analysts have already pointed out that the Russian-Ukraine confrontation potentially intersects with the South Caucasus, which is already the stage for today's Armenian-Azerbaijani war.

According to Pulitzer Prize winner American investigative journalist Seymour Hersh' [report](#), countries in the region such as Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and the Czech Republic, led by Poland are [pressuring Zelensky to find a compromise](#) and end the crisis, even by resigning himself if needed.

The conflict had been transitioning into a protracted phase and the US seems to be encouraging Kiev to intensify its hostilities along the whole front line. However any kind of trench warfare or [proxy attrition war](#) is extremely harmful for Ukraine – and would not be such bad news for Russia, who can go on with a minimal offensive strategy further exhausting Ukrainian forces.

A major problem, from an American perspective, is that the Ukrainian political elite and its military leaders seem to be increasingly inclined to ignore the advice and instructions of their Western benefactors. Besides the aforementioned bold plans against Russia, there have been other signs of it: Zelensky refused to withdraw troops from Artemovsk, for example, which resulted in Ukrainian defeat there. Kiev's political and military elite itself are divided however, and a rising number of voices are reconsidering Zelensky's ideas about "reconquering Crimea" and [openly talking about compromising](#).

Moreover, in the US itself, according to [Hersh's intelligence sources](#), "some of the better

intelligence about the war does not reach the president” and he “is said to rely on briefings and other materials prepared by Avril Haines, director of National Intelligence”, while CIA Director William Burns “has come around in opposition to some of the White House’s foreign policy follies.” This indicates that there is division within Washington’s “deep state” also over the issue.

Calls for escalation, both in Kiev and in Washington, might also be a sign of desperation. There clearly is no consensus in the United States’ own establishment regarding the matter of aid to Ukraine itself – Republican lawmakers are opposing it also due to the [debt ceiling](#) now and former President Donald Trump, [who is still a Republican favorite](#), has promised to end it if re-elected. [Corruption scandals](#) abound in both US and Ukraine and recent reports about a [\\$3 billion Ukraine aid “error”](#) are part of the latest one. The truth is that American [weapons’s manufacturers](#) as well as Western ones have been profiting from prolonging the conflict while also selling obsolete military equipment. Moreover, Zelensky’s rebellious “stubbornness” can only increase such division within Washington and across the transatlantic alliance, as seems to be already happening in Eastern and Central Europe. All of that creates a very dangerous and unstable situation which outcome is quite unpredictable.

Harvard political scientist Graham Ellison has warned that Western countries are trying to solve their own problems by escalating the Eastern European crisis and should it spiral out of control this could lead to dangerous war between the great powers involved.

The Western air defense systems Kiev is getting are in itself, for a number of reasons, not enough to protect Ukraine’s airspace, as I [wrote](#). Neither are [F-16s](#), for that matter. So far, Washington has been showing itself to be really willing to fight “to the last Ukrainian” (as in the cruel joke which Biden [almost paraphrased](#) in a December statement). Further escalation would show a willingness to fight if not literally to “the last European”, at least to something quite near it in terms of the damage to local economies and the migration/refugee crisis. It remains to be seen whether Europe in general and particularly Poland, Hungary and other nations in the region happen to also have a similar inclination – and for how long.

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