



Max Blumenthal addresses UN Security Council on Ukraine aid

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Max Blumenthal (MB): Thank you to Wyatt Reed, Alex Rubinstein and Anya Parampil for helping me prepare this presentation. Wyatt has first hand experience with the subject as a journalist whose hotel in Donetsk was targeted with a US-made howitzer by the Ukrainian military in October 2022. He was 100 meters away when the strike hit, and was nearly killed.

My friend, the civil rights activist Randy Credico, is also here with me today. He was in Donetsk more recently, and was able to witness regular HIMARS attacks by the Ukrainian military on civilian targets.

I'm here not only as a journalist with over 20 years of experience covering politics and conflict on several continents, but as an American dragooned by my own government into funding a proxy war that has become a threat to regional and international stability at the expense of the welfare of my fellow countrymen and women.

This June 28, as emergency crews worked to clean up yet another toxic train derailment in the United States, this time on the Montana River, that further exposed our nation's chronically underfunded infrastructure and its threats to our health, the Pentagon announced plans to send an additional \$500 million worth of military aid to Ukraine.

The development came as Ukraine's army enters the third week of a vaunted counter-offensive that CNN describes as "not meeting expectations," and which even Volodymyr Zelensky says is "going slower than desired."

As Ukraine's military failed to breach Russia's primary defense line, CNN reported that by June 12, Kiev, quote "lost" 16 US-made armored vehicles sent to the country.

So what did the Pentagon do? It simply passed that bill down to average US taxpayers like

myself, charging us another \$325 million to replace Ukraine's squandered military stock. There was zero effort to consult the US public's position on the matter; and the vast majority of Americans likely did not even know the exchange took place.

The US policy I just described — which sees Washington prioritize unrestrained funding for a proxy war with a nuclear power in a foreign land while our own domestic infrastructure falls apart before our eyes — exposes a disturbing dynamic at the heart of the Ukraine conflict: an international Ponzi scheme that enables Western elites to seize hard earned wealth out of the hands of average US citizens and funnel it into the coffers of a foreign government that even the Western-sponsored Transparency International ranks as one of the most corrupt in Europe.

The US government has yet to conduct an official audit of its funding for Ukraine. The American public has no idea where their tax dollars have gone.

That is why this week, The Grayzone published an independent audit of US tax dollar allocation to Ukraine throughout fiscal years 2022 and 2023. Our investigation was led by Heather Kaiser, a former military intelligence officer and veteran of US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

We found a \$4.48 million payment from the US Social Security Admin to the Kiev government.

We found \$4.5 billion worth of payments from the United States Agency for International Development to pay off Ukraine's sovereign debt, much of which is owned by the global investment firm BlackRock.

That alone amounts to \$30 taken from every single US citizen at a time when 4 in 10 Americans are unable to afford a \$400 emergency.

We found tax dollars earmarked for Ukraine padding the budgets of a television station in Toronto, a pro-NATO think tank in Poland, and, believe it or not, rural farmers in Kenya.

We found tens of millions to private equity firms, including one in the Republic of Georgia, as well as a million dollar payment to a single private entrepreneur in Kiev.

Our audit also revealed the Pentagon's \$4.5 million contract with a company called "Atlantic Diving Supply" to provide Ukraine with unspecified explosives equipment. This is a notoriously corrupt company that Thom Tillis, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, previously lambasted for its "history of fraud."

Yet once again, Congress has failed to ensure these shady payments and massive arms deals

are properly tracked.

In fact, much of the military and humanitarian aid shipped to Ukraine has simply vanished. Last year, CBS News quoted the director of a pro-Zelensky non-profit in Ukraine who reported that only around 30% of aid was reaching the front lines in Ukraine.

The embezzlement of funds and supplies is at least as troubling as the potential consequences of the illicit transfer and sales of military-grade weapons. Last June, the head of Interpol warned that the massive transfers of arms into Ukraine means “we can expect an influx of weapons in Europe and beyond,” and that “criminals are even now, as we speak, focusing on them.”

This May, a group of anti-Kremlin Russian neo-Nazis outfitted with gear supplied by the Ukrainian government, was hailed by Western politicians for carrying out terrorist attacks in Russian territory using American-made Humvees. Although the group, the so-called “Russian Volunteer Corps,” is led by a man who calls himself the “White King” and includes numerous open admirers of Adolf Hitler, the Western weaponization of this militia against Russian forces has not prompted any outcry from Congress.

And while the Biden administration has promised that it’s keeping tabs on the weapons sent, a State Department cable leaked last December conceded that “kinetic activity and active combat between Ukrainian and Russian forces create an environment in which standard verification measures are sometimes impracticable or impossible.”

The Biden administration not only knows that it can not track the weapons it is shipping to Ukraine, it knows it is escalating a proxy war against the world’s largest nuclear power, and is daring it to respond in kind.

We know they know this because back in 2014 and this timeline is so important – that is when NATO secretary Jens Stoltenberg said, that the war started following a US-backed coup d’etat – President Barack Obama rejected demands from Kiev to send lethal offensive weaponry because, as the Wall Street Journal put it, he had a “long-standing concern that arming Ukraine would provoke Moscow into a further escalation that could drag Washington into a proxy war.”

When Donald Trump entered office in 2017, he attempted to hold the line on Obama’s policy, but was soon branded a Russian puppet by the Washington press corps and Democratic Party for refusing to send Raytheon’s Javelin missiles to the Ukrainian military. Trump’s reluctance to send the Javelins became part of the basis for his impeachment. He unsurprisingly relented.

As the US-made offensive weaponry began to reach the front lines of the Donbas, the collective West exploited the Minsk Accords to “give Ukraine time” to arm up, as former

German Chancellor Angela Merkel put it.

In January 2022, the US announced a \$200 million arms package to Ukraine. By the 18th of February, observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe reported a doubling in ceasefire violations, with OSCE maps showing the overwhelming majority of targeted sites on the side of the pro-Russian separatist population in Donetsk and Lugansk. Five days later, Russia invaded Ukraine.

And since then, the US and its allies have been scurrying up the escalation ladder at every opportunity.

“Things we couldn’t give in January because it was escalatory were given in February,” a former State Department official complained after meeting with Ukrainian counterparts. “And things we couldn’t give in February we can in April. That has been the distinct pattern, starting with, for crying out loud, Stingers,” they said, referring to shoulder mounted missiles.

President Joe Biden himself said in March 2022, “The idea that we’re gonna send in offensive equipment and have planes and tanks... don’t kid yourself, no matter what you all say, that’s called World War III.”

Just over a year later, Biden changed his tune, backing a plan to provide F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine, and after pressuring Germany to send in the tanks he once feared would provoke World War III.

It would only take two months from receiving HIMARs systems from the US for the Ukrainian military to begin targeting critical infrastructure, using them to strike the Antonovskiy Bridge over the Dnipro river, and again, two months later in a test strike on the Kakhovka Dam “to see if the Dnieper’s water could be raised enough to stymie Russian crossings,” as the Washington Post reported.

Three weeks ago, the Kakhovka Dam was destroyed, triggering a major environmental catastrophe that caused mass flooding and contamination of the local water supply. Ukraine, of course, blames Russia for the attack, but has produced no evidence.

Around this time, Ukraine also baselessly accused Russia of planning a provocation at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant. This triggered a resolution by Senators Lindsey Graham and Richard Blumenthal (no relation to me) calling for NATO to intervene directly in Ukraine and attack Russia if such an incident occurred.

The move by Blumenthal and Graham thus established a de facto red line for initiating US military action, much like the one set down in Syria which, as a former US diplomat commented to journalist Charles Glass, “was an open invitation to a false flag.”

Will we see another Douma deception, but this time in Zaporizhzhia?

Why are we doing this? Why are we tempting nuclear annihilation by flooding Ukraine with advanced weapons and sabotaging negotiations at every turn?

We have been told by people like Sen. Dick Durbin that Ukraine is “literally in a battle for freedom and democracy themselves,” and we must therefore supply it with weapons “for as long as it takes,” as President Biden said. Anyone who opposes military aid to Ukraine opposes the defense of democracy, according to this logic.

So where is the democracy in Volodymyr Zelensky’s decision to ban opposition parties, criminalize the media outlets of his legitimate political opponents, to jail his top political rival, round up his top deputies, raid Orthodox Churches and arrest clergymen?

Where is the democracy in the Ukrainian government’s imprisonment of Gonzalo Lira, a US citizen, for questioning the official narrative of their war effort?

And where is the democracy in Zelensky’s recent decision to suspend elections in 2024 on the grounds that martial law has been declared? Well, it seems that Ukraine’s democracy is harder to find these days than its military’s suddenly inconspicuous commander-in-chief, Valeriy Zaluzhny.

Senator Graham has offered a much more grim – and on-the-mark – rationale for supplying Ukraine with billions in weapons. As the senator boasted during a recent visit with Zelensky in Kiev, “The Russians are dying...it’s the best money we’ve ever spent.”

Graham, we should remember, has also said that we, the US, must fight this war to the last Ukrainian. While official casualty numbers are strictly classified, we must worry that Ukraine is well on its way to fulfilling the senator’s ghoulish fantasies.

As a Ukrainian soldier complained this month to Vice News, we don’t know what Zelensky’s “plans are, but it looks like extermination of its own population — like of the combat-ready and working-age population. That’s it.”

Indeed, military cemeteries in Ukraine are expanding almost as rapidly as the Northern Virginia McMansions and beachfront estates of executives from Lockheed Martin, Raytheon and assorted Beltway contractors benefitting from the second highest level of military spending since World War Two.

These are the real winners of the Ukraine proxy war. Not average Ukrainians or Americans. Or Russians or even Western Europeans.

The winners are people like Secretary of State Tony Blinken, who spent his time between the

Obama and Biden administrations launching a consulting firm called WestExec advisors which secured lucrative government contracts for intelligence firms and the arms industry. Blinken's former partners at WestExec advisors include Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines, CIA deputy director David Cohen, former White House press secretary Jen Psaki, and almost a dozen current and former members of Biden's national security team.

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, for his part, is a former and possibly future board member of Raytheon, and ex-partner of the Pine Island Capital investment firm that collaborates with WestExec and which Blinken has advised.

Meanwhile, the current US ambassador to the UN, Linda Thomas Greenfield, is listed as a senior counsel at the Albright Stonebridge Group, a self-described "commercial diplomacy firm" that also finesses contracts for the intelligence sector and arms industry. This firm was founded by the late Madeleine Albright, who infamously declared that the deaths of half-a-million Iraqi children under the US sanctions regime was "worth it."

So while middle-aged Ukrainian men are ripped off streets by military police and sent to the front lines, the financially and politically connected architects of this proxy war are planning to walk through the revolving door to reap unimaginable profits once their time in the Biden administration is over.

For them, a negotiated settlement to this territorial dispute means an end to the cash cow of close to \$150 billion in US aid to Ukraine.

When the United States, a permanent member of this council, has fallen under the control of a government which seeks to perpetuate a proxy war for "as long as it takes," which considers diplomacy synonymous with unilateral coercive measures to "turn the ruble to rubble," as Biden has pledged to do; whose leadership subverts negotiations in order to pursue profit while refusing to properly inform its own citizens what they are paying for, and which pushes the sons and brothers of its supposed Ukrainian partners out onto a killing field in order to bludgeon a geopolitical rival; when both Zelensky and members of the US Congress are calling for preemptive strikes on Russia which contravene the spirit of Article 51 of the UN charter, this council must take action to enforce that charter.

Articles 33 – 38 of Chapter VI of that Charter are clear that the security council must use its authority to guarantee a pacific settlement of dispute, particularly when it threatens international security. That should not only apply to Russia and Ukraine. This council has an obligation to strictly monitor and restrain the US and the illegal military formation known as NATO.

Thank you.

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