



The 'Peacemaker' Is Leading Us To Nuclear Armageddon - Part 2

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Dimitri Lascaris (DL): Good day, this is Dimitri Lascaris coming to you from Kalamata, Greece, for Reason2Resist on April 8th, 2025. This is part two of my three-part report on the foreign policy objectives of the second Trump administration. In part one, which Reason2Resist published on March 30th, I took a close look at the foreign-policy record of the first Trump administration. As I explained in that report, from 2017 to 2021, when Trump served as the 45th president of the United States, he prolonged and intensified wars in Syria, Afghanistan, and Yemen, he gave lavish support to Israel's apartheid hyperaggressive regime, he withdrew the U.S. from the Obama era nuclear deal with Iran, which Iran was respecting, and he almost provoked an entirely new war with Iran by murdering its top general. Also in his first administration, Trump provided lethal weaponry to Ukraine, something Obama had refused to do, and he withdrew the United States from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with Russia. That treaty had made Europeans safer. Withdrawing from it was a highly provocative move. As I've said many times before, you are what your record says you are. And the record of the first Donald Trump administration is unequivocally that of a warmonger.

In this part two, we're going to dissect Trump's so-called "peace initiative" in Ukraine. It will be my thesis that Trump has no real interest in a durable peace in Ukraine, and that what he's really trying to do is temporarily pause the fighting in Ukraine so that he can devote the U.S. military's depleted weapon stocks on other theatres of conflict, particularly in West Asia. In other words, and for reasons that I'll explain, I believe Trump will not end the war in Ukraine, that he is dead serious about attacking Iran, and that we are likely hurtling towards a war more destructive than any that the world has witnessed in our lifetimes. I don't believe that after he has finished off Iran in the axis of resistance, a task that I think is beyond the U.S. military's capacity, frankly, that Trump would have any objection at that stage to a resumption of the Ukraine war, as long as the Europeans are bearing most of the burden for arming Ukraine.

Now, as many of you will recall, during last year's presidential campaign, Trump repeatedly vowed to end the Ukraine war within 24 hours. He returned to the White House on January

20th of this year. That was 78 days ago. Yet today, the war in Ukraine rages on. Also, there is no evidence that the war has lessened in intensity since Trump regained the Oval Office. If anything, the intensity of the ground combat has increased since Trump returned to the White House. Rather than admit that he was wrong, something that Trump seems congenitally incapable of doing, he recently claimed that his promise to end the Ukraine war in 24 hours had been a, quote, "little bit sarcastic", close quote. Now, three days before Trump returned to the white house on January 20th of this year, Russia and Iran signed a strategic partnership agreement. Of course, the timing of this agreement could not have been coincidental. In all likelihood, Russia and Iran signed the deal just before Trump returned to the White House to send a strong message to his administration that in the event of a U.S. attack on Iran, Russia would somehow assist Iran. Although the strategic partnership agreement does not contain an explicit requirement that Russia come to Iran's defence if it's attacked, the agreement does contain numerous references to military and security cooperation between Russia and Iran. The agreement also contains numerous references to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the contracting parties and to international law, including the United Nations Charter. And of course, an attack by the United States on Iran in order to destroy what is clearly a peaceful civil nuclear programme, would constitute a severe violation of international law and in particular, the United Nations Charter. Thus, if Trump intends to attack Iran, and he has threatened unambiguously to do so, then he has a strong incentive to make nice with the Russians, in the hope of convincing them not to assist Iran when the U.S. attacks. Now, when Trump entered the White House for the second time, The Russian Federation had already told the world, and particularly the United States and the Europeans, what its position was with respect to a cessation of hostilities in Ukraine. In fact, President Putin explained Russia's position even before Trump won last year's presidential election. In June of last year, the Russian president stated that before Russia entered into a ceasefire, Ukraine would have to fulfil four conditions. Those four conditions were as follows: First, Ukraine would have to cede to Russia and withdraw from any areas it occupied in the four eastern oblasts of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson. Second, Ukraine would need to abandon its project of joining NATO. Third, Ukraine will have to demilitarise. And fourth, Ukraine would have to undergo denazification. To this very day, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has agreed to none of these conditions. In fact, Zelensky has strenuously rejected them and has done so repeatedly, including in an interview last month with ABC News. It's important to understand that Zelensky has powerful incentives to continue the war. Why do I say that? Well, first, if he accepts Russia's core demands, then far-right Ukrainian extremists might very well kill him. Second, even if he escapes the wrath of the neo-Nazis in Ukraine, how will he explain to ordinary Ukrainians that in early 2022, shortly after Russia invaded, Zelensky had the opportunity to end the war without ceding any territory to Russia. Instead, he listened to then-British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and abandoned a peace deal with Russia that focused on the issue of Ukrainian membership in NATO. If Zelensky exceeds to Russia's demands and cedes four oblasts to Russia, it will be obvious to the entire world that Zelensky's decision to abandon the 2022 peace plan was a sin of colossal proportions. It will mean that Zelensky abandoned that peace deal when he could have saved hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian lives without ceding an inch of territory to Russia. He would also have saved, had he accepted that deal, an enormous amount of money and considerable

amount of infrastructure that now lies in smoking ruins. Finally, the third reason that Zelensky has a powerful incentive to prolong the war is that if the war ends, then Zelensky will be forced to go to elections. And if he goes to elections, he will almost certainly lose, particularly if Ukrainians realised the enormity of the error that he committed, and I'm being generous in calling it an error, when he abandoned the peace deal that was on the table in 2022. After losing an election, Zelensky will then spend the rest of his decrepit life, assuming he survives the end of the war, wallowing in the shame of having abandoned a far better deal than Ukraine could possibly obtain today.

Now, if Trump is as intelligent as he claims, he would understand all of this. He would know that Zelensky is incentivized to fight tooth and nail to continue the war. and that he cannot count on Zelensky to make meaningful concessions to Russia unless Trump forces him to do so. Now, let's pause here. Some of you may be thinking that Russia's demands are morally wrong, that Ukraine is a sovereign country, and that it can therefore join any military alliance it wishes to join and celebrate any World War II era Nazi collaborator that it wishes to celebrate. Or you might be thinking that Russia should not be permitted to acquire Ukrainian territory by force because that would violate the United Nations Charter. I've had a lot to say about these positions over the past three years, and in the interest of brevity, I'm not going to repeat those arguments here. For present purposes, I'm simply going to focus on one simple issue, and that is the issue of military reality. However indignant you may feel. about Russia's actions in Ukraine. You are no friend of Ukraine if you insist upon prolonging a war that Ukraine is destined to lose, and that is precisely the reality that Ukraine now confronts. With each passing day, Ukraine loses more men, more infrastructure, and crucially more land. If the goal of arming Ukraine is to expel Russia from its territory, and if prolonging war will simply cause Ukraine to lose more territory, then Ukraine soldiers are dying in vain, and prolonging the war is profoundly inhumane and just plain stupid. If you're going to take a position on whether or not the Ukraine war should be ended, then in my opinion, you're obliged to inform yourself about the military realities of this war. And for that purpose, you should not rely solely or even primarily on Western corporate media because Western corporate media have lied to us repeatedly about U.S. wars of aggression; for example the criminal war of aggression on Iraq.

Now, I'm not a military expert, but throughout this war, going all the way back to February 2022, I've paid careful attention to individuals who are military experts and who are not employed by any government, military contractor, corporate media outlet, or warmongering think tank based in Washington or London. Those military experts include, but are not limited to, Jacques Baud, a former Swiss intelligence officer, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, former Chief of Staff to U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, retired U.S. Army Colonel Douglas Macgregor, retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Davis, and Andrei Martyanov, a former officer in the Soviet Navy, who now lives in the United States. Furthermore, on virtually every day of this war, which has been going on for more than three years, I have devoted anywhere from 30 to 90 minutes a day reviewing reports from the battlefield. The totality of this evidence leaves no doubt in my mind, nor in the minds of these military experts whom I've mentioned, that Ukraine is losing this war badly and is hurtling toward

military collapse. To help explain my perspective, I'm going to show you a detail from a battlefield map compiled and published by the Institute for the Study of War, or ISW. ISW is based in Washington and is run by notoriously anti-Russian neocons, including retired U.S. Generals David Petraeus and Jack Keane. If anything, ISW's claims about the war are likely to paint a relatively favourable picture for Ukraine. And yet, not even ISW can conceal the extent of Russian advances on the battlefield. The map I'm showing you can be found on ISW's website. It currently shows ISW's assessment of the control of territory in Ukraine as of April 7th, 2025, or yesterday. Now, if you look at the bottom of this image on the screen, you'll see the explanation of what these various features signify. So you'll see, for example, that territory that is coloured pink is territory that ISW has assessed as being under the control of Russian forces. Territory that is shown in a beige to yellowish colour at the bottom there of the symbol key signifies territory that Russia claims to have taken control of, but that ISW has not yet confirmed it does in fact control. So if you look here on the screen, you'll see all along the eastern edge of the pink territory, the territory controlled by Russia, there are two lines. One is a solid red line and one is a broken red line. So the solid red is the limit of the land that ISW assesses Russia actually controls. And then beyond that, west of that, is land that Russia has advanced into, but does not necessarily control in the judgement of ISW. And if you look closely, and I encourage you to go to the website of ISW and expand this map, get a closer look at the details of the front line, and what you're going to see is – is in essence – that Russia is advancing all along this enormous front line.

Now, I want to draw your attention, in particular, to a part of the map that shows us the Donetsk area of eastern Ukraine. In the upper right-hand corner of this map, you can see the town of Avdiivka, just north of Donetsk city. This heavily fortified town was captured by Russian forces in February of last year. As you can see here, the ISW map shows that Russian forces have now advanced well beyond Avdiivka, both to the north and to the west, then in the centre of the map, you can see a town called Kurakhove, spelled K-U-R-A-K-H-O-V-E. This too was a heavily fortified position for the Ukrainians. They lost that town to Russian forces in January of this year. As you can see, the ISW map shows that since January, Russian forces have advanced well beyond Kurakhove, again, both to the north and to the west.

Now I'm showing you another section of the ISW battlefield map. This is the Kursk region of Russia. In the centre of the map, you can see a pink area. At or near the bottom of the pink area, there is a line coloured in both red and black. That is the northern border between Russia and Ukraine, with Russia above the black-red line and Ukraine below it. Last year, the area coloured pink on this map was captured by the Ukrainian forces in a huge offensive they launched in August. The Russians then acknowledged that in that offensive, Ukrainian forces had seized 38 Russian settlements. This was, by the way, the first time that Russian territory was occupied by a foreign army since World War II, in which the Soviets lost some 27 million people to the Nazi horde. For its Kursk offensive, Ukraine deployed tens of thousands of soldiers and hundreds of armoured vehicles. At the time, independent military experts questioned why Ukraine launched this offensive. The area it seized was sparsely populated and contained no towns or cities or infrastructure of strategic importance. Moreover, the Kursk offensive required Ukraine to divert desperately needed forces from the eastern front

where Russia was advancing. Now as this map shows, virtually the entire area captured by Ukraine in the Kursk offensive is now back under Russian control. Not only that, but as this map shows, Russian forces have crossed the border with Ukraine and are now advancing in a southerly direction, deeper into Ukrainian territory and in the general direction of the city of Sumy. All over the internet, you can find photos and videos of dead Ukrainian soldiers in Kursk, as well as military hardware that the Russians captured or destroyed from Ukrainian forces. One image that circulated widely on social media recently, shows Russian soldiers looking at a fully operational and undamaged M1A1 Abrams tank that they captured in Ukraine. U.S. military officials claim that the M1 Abrams is one of the best tanks in the world. If that's true, then surely the Russians are happy to have a fully-operational Abrams to dissect and study for future purposes. At this stage, it's painfully obvious that Ukraine is running out of soldiers, whereas Russia's army is expanding. There are countless videos out there of Ukrainian men being forcibly conscripted off the streets by conscription thugs sent by the Ukrainian military. Many of these men attempt to resist their would-be kidnappers. In this recent video, Ukrainian women courageously came to the defence of a young man who had been ambushed on the streets by conscription thugs.

DL: At this stage, those who truly care about the Ukrainian people and who understand the realities of this war would advocate for the war to be ended now, even if that requires the acceptance of Russia's four core demands. If those demands are not accepted, the situation will simply become worse for Ukraine. Now this brings us back to the Donald. As I mentioned, the Donald says he wants to end the Ukraine war, but Zelensky refuses to accept any of Russia's four core demands. In the circumstances, if Trump was serious about ending this war, he would force Zelensky to accept those demands, and he could easily do so by withholding military aid, economic assistance, and battlefield intelligence from Zelensky's regime. But after claiming that he had paused military aid to Ukraine, a dubious claim in my view, Trump announced recently that he had resumed military aid and the provision of battlefield intelligence to the Ukrainian military. Why did Trump resume aid? The explanation we are told is that Trump resumed military aid because Ukraine said it was open to a 30-day ceasefire. Now, what planet does Donald Trump live on? As I mentioned, Russia has stated repeatedly that it will not agree to a ceasefire until its four core demands are met. It has never wavered from that position, not once. Therefore, it was entirely foreseeable, indeed inevitable, that Russia would reject a ceasefire when Zelensky openly rejected Russia's core demands. By resuming the provision of military aid and battlefield intelligence to Ukraine, Trump eliminated any incentive that Zelensky might otherwise have had to accept Russia's core demands.

Now, it's true that Russia has expressed openness to very limited ceasefires, namely a 30-day cessation of attacks on energy infrastructure and a 30-day cessation on attacks on Black Sea shipping. But these limited cease fires, even if they went into effect and were observed completely by both sides to the conflict, would not end the bulk of the fighting, slow Russia's advances into Ukrainian-held territory, or meaningfully reduce the number of soldiers who are dying on the battlefield. All of Trump's theatre about a ceasefire will not change this harsh reality. Now, speaking of theatre, about 10 days ago, Trump announced to the world that he

was pissed off with Vladimir Putin because he had criticised Zelensky's credibility. Yet, only a few weeks ago, Trump himself had called Zelensky a dictator. Even worse, along with U.S. Vice President J.D. Vance, Trump belittled Zelensky in the White House, telling Zelensky before the entire world that Zelensky had no cards to play and that he was not sufficiently grateful for U.S. military assistance. I want to point out that Trump accused Zelensky of being insufficiently grateful, even though Zelensky had sacrificed over one million of his countrymen to fight a US-led proxy war. So when Trump said he was pissed off with Putin – and by the way, what statesman talks this way? – no one had done as much to undermine Zelenskys credibility than Donald Trump. Again, these theatrics cannot conceal a reality that ought to have been apparent to Trump even before he returned to the White House. There will be no halt to the fighting until both the U.S. and its Ukrainian proxy accept Russia's four core demands, and so far, neither of them has done so.

The bottom line is that as long as Trump and the Europeans keep arming Zelensky's regime and providing battlefield intelligence to Zelensky, then Zelensky will continue to reject Russia's demands, thereby guaranteeing that no peace deal will be struck and that the war will end with Ukraine's total collapse. If Ukraine and its military collapse, Ukraine will undoubtedly lose considerably more territory than Russia has demanded. It might even lose Odessa and the Black Sea coast that remains to it, which Russia has not demanded thus far. If Ukraine loses Odessa and the remaining Black Sea coast, it would become a landlocked, failed state and a festering wound in the heart of Europe for decades to come.

Now, not only has Trump continued to arm Ukraine, but his administration has unambiguously encouraged Europe to continue arming Ukraine as well. Indeed, in February of this year, U.S. Secretary of Defence Pete Hegseth gave a highly revealing speech to the Ukraine Defence Contact Group in Brussels. This is some of what Hegseth had to say to Washington's European vassals on that day: "Safeguarding European security must be an imperative for European members of NATO. As part of this, Europe must provide the overwhelming share of future lethal and non-lethal aid to Ukraine. Members of this Contact Group must meet the moment. This means donating more ammunition and equipment, leveraging comparative advantages, expanding your defence industrial base. And importantly, leveling with your citizens about the threat facing Europe. Part of this is speaking frankly with your people about how this threat can only be met by spending more on defence. 2% is not enough: President Trump has called for 5%, and I agree. Increasing your commitment to your own security is a down payment for the future. A down payment, as you said, Mr. Secretary, of peace through strength".

Now, let's be clear about what Hegseth is saying here. He is not simply expressing the Trump administration's willingness to allow European states to continue to arm Ukraine. On the contrary, he is directing them to do so. The word that Hegseth used twice was must. Europe must provide lethal aid to Ukraine and Europe must meet the moment. Not only that, but at least implicitly, he referred to Russia as a threat to Europe, and one that justified the increase of military spending on the continent to an eye-watering level of 5% of GDP. Hegseth then went on to explain in Brussels what the U.S. planned to do with its own military assets.

Quote, "The United States faces consequential threats to our homeland. We must – and we are – focusing on security of our own borders. We also face a peer competitor in the Communist Chinese with the capability and intent to threaten our homeland and core national interest in the Indo-Pacific. The U.S. is prioritising deterring war with China in the Pacific, recognising the reality of scarcity, and making the resourcing tradeoffs to ensure deterrence does not fail. Deterrence cannot fail, for all of our sakes. As the United States prioritises its attention to these threats, European allies must lead from the front. Together, we can establish a division of labour that maximises our comparative advantages in Europe and Pacific, respectively".

Now, I don't know how much clearer Hegseth could have been. He made zero effort to dissuade the Europeans from prolonging the Ukraine war by continuing to arm Ukraine. On the contrary, on behalf of Trump, he basically ordered them to do so and to expand their military spending to unprecedented peacetime levels. At the same time Hegseth explained that the intention of the Trump administration was to reallocate its military assets to confronting the supposed threat posed by China. And where, by the way, does China, the world's largest oil importer, obtain much of its oil? You guessed it folks, West Asia, including Iran.

In part three of this report, we'll examine Trump's criminal wars on Palestinians and Yemenis, as well as his looming war on Iran. In the course of examining Trump's latest aggressions in West Asia, we'll ask a question that has existential implications for humanity: How will China and Russia respond if the United States attacks Iran? This is Dimitri Lascaris coming to you from Kalamata, Greece, for Reason2Resist on April 8th, 2025.

END

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