

News From Ukraine

Russian Invasion of Ukraine

December 12, 2025

By: Robert Homans (in Nairobi, Kenya)

Happy Kenyan Independence Day!

The “Yakety Yak Don’t Talk Back” Issue

As the song says, “Take out the papers and the trash, or you don’t get no spending cash.” President Trump is making a similar threat to President Zelenskyy, about not signing the U.S. peace deal by this Christmas. It is far more likely that the trash will be taken out, than Ukraine would sign the U.S. peace deal, as presently drafted, by Christmas. The reason – the U.S. Peace Deal is unworkable. I explain below.

Why is the U.S. Peace Deal Unworkable?

Let’s assume that President Zelenskyy agrees to sign the U.S. Peace Deal – 28 Points, 19 Points, it doesn’t matter. What will happen next?

- President Zelenskyy Won’t Survive in Office - Ukrainians are in no mood to give up territory and leave their fellow citizens in occupied Donbas, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, the remainder of Donbas currently unoccupied, and Crimea, to the depredations of the Russian “Horde,” especially not after

Russian atrocities in Bucha, Irpin, Mariupol and every other place in Ukraine soiled by Russian occupation.

- The U.S. Peace Deal Would Leave the Line of Contact That is Unenforceable - People use the Korean Armistice Line as an example of what can be done in Ukraine. They forget that reason why the Korean Armistice Line has been effective for over 70 years is the presence of 30,000 U.S. troops to enforce it. Russia has already said that they don't want any foreign troops along the contact line.
- The Line of Contact, Incorporating the Remainder of Donbas into Russian Control, Would Create the Conditions for the Resumption of the War – Ukraine's "Fortress Belt," consisting of the cities of Kramatorsk and Sloviansk will be turned over to Russia without a shot being fired in anger. Kharkiv and Sumy would be in increased danger of being outflanked. The U.S. Peace Deal leaves Ukraine wide open to continued Russian invasion, at a time of Russia's choosing.
- ATESH and Other Partisan Groups (Collectively, "the Partisans") Now Operating in Both Occupied Ukraine and Inside Russia Won't be Bound by the Terms of the U.S. Peace Deal – After the signing the U.S. Peace Deal it won't be long before ATESH, et al, conduct a partisan operation that the Russians will consider a violation of the U.S. Peace Deal and the war will resume.
- Russian False Flag Operations – With the Line of Contact Unenforced, Russia won't need ATESH to provide a pretext to resume their assault on Ukraine.

We can debate the fine points of security guarantees, membership in the EU, etc. ad infinitum, but these 4 "poison pills" for Ukraine,

described above will, if Pres. Zelenskyy signs the U.S. Peace Deal, guarantee the resumption of the war.

Then there is Russia. Russia cannot afford to stop the war – why?

- What is going to happen in Russia when 750,000 Russian soldiers go back to Russia? – Putin must be scared to death of the prospect of demobilized Russian soldiers returning to Russia, most of whom have been traumatized by their experience in Ukraine, and for what? They will have to explain, despite the 1,000,000 plus casualties, that Ukraine still stands.

There is only one solution – give Ukraine everything it’s asking for, stand back, and let Ukraine finish Russia off.

Two Wall St. Journal Articles Poking Holes in Trump’s Narrative About the War

“Trump Says Ukraine is Losing the War – Officers at the Front Line Disagree”

Based on the leadership in the Department of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence (DNI), it is easy how Trump can come to the conclusion that Ukraine is losing the war. First there is Defense Secretary Hegseth, and then the former Russian apologist Tulsi Gabbard, now the DNI. Gabbard is responsible of giving the President his daily brief. She likely tells President Trump exactly what he wants to hear.

If one is to believe Ukrainian officers at the Front, the actual situation is different. Excerpts From the Article:

- President Trump says Ukraine is losing the war against Russia. That’s not what it looks like to Ukrainian Army Maj. Oleh Hlushko, a battalion commander whose men repelled another assault on their part of the southeastern front this week.

“Occasionally, they manage to raise their flags and claim that a position has been taken, but we then conduct clearing operations, remove the symbols, and the position remains under our control,” said Hlushko, of the Separate Presidential Brigade.

- The differing perceptions of the state of the battlefield make it harder for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky to compromise on [Russian demands](#) that Kyiv hand over territory that Moscow has failed to conquer in nearly four years of war as part of a U.S.-backed peace plan.
- Seth Jones of the Center for Strategic and International Studies said the Russian rate of advance is slower than virtually every major campaign over the past century, including the Battle of the Somme in World War I. Russia, after nearly four years of war—by which time the Soviet Union in World War II had fended off a German invasion and seized Berlin—is far from taking the eastern Donetsk province, a target since its first, covert invasion of Ukraine in 2014.

“Putin Isn’t In It For the Money” Stephen Miller, the author, is a long-time correspondent covering Ukraine. According to Miller, “The administration misreads Mr. Putin’s interests. His economy is stable. His war aims are territory and imperial control. He doesn’t want our money. He wants Ukraine—a stepping stone toward remaking Russia’s great-power status. The only way to push Mr. Putin toward peace is to convince him his war will fail.”

Miller continues, “The Trump administration’s offer of economic inducements misses the point. Russia doesn’t want a business deal, it wants Ukraine: a building block of Mr. Putin’s new sphere of control and a victory that could humiliate the West and demonstrate his great-power status. Mr. Putin will agree to a cease-fire only when he is convinced that he can’t win on the battlefield. If Mr. Trump wants a deal, he should focus less on deal-making and more on countering

and undermining Russia's offensive capabilities. Paying Mr. Putin for peace is precisely the wrong strategy."

Unfortunately, Witkoff and Kushner know nothing else, except to offer economic inducements, something in which Putin doesn't have the slightest interest. After all, Putin already owns Russia. The only real estate Putin is interested in is Ukraine – nothing less.

["An Uneasy Ground Truth in Ukraine"](#) / "The Cipher Brief"

Interview with 2 former CIA agents on their recent visits to Ukraine. None of the nonsense about the U.S. Peace Deal that increasingly seems to be a reprieve of the reports that were common during the first days of the war, that Russia will win in 5 days. This time it's parsing the tealeaves contained in the U.S. Peace Deal.

A few additional takeaways (my comments in bold face):

- "It's no longer an infantryman's war." **If that's the case then why do the pundits keep carrying on about Ukraine's lack of manpower being their critical weakness? Ukraine has successfully used drones to supplement infantry, or in some cases even replace infantry?**
- Ukraine is making great strides in developing an integrated battlefield information system, combining sensors, using a points system, assigned to knocking out a drone, armored personnel carrier, etc.
- "Ukrainians occupying leadership positions in the military are increasingly coming from private industry, bankers, computer programmers, etc."
- They said that they hope to get back the position where the United States stands by countries that are fighting for their freedom and sovereignty. **I remember Dean Acheson's autobiography, "Present at the Creation," about his role when he was Secretary of State in the establishment of**

NATO and the Marshall Plan, or what we have come to call the “Rules-Based International Order” that has helped keep the peace for the last 75 years. I wonder if J.D. Vance will one day write an autobiography called “Present at the Destruction,” or how the United States became simpatico with Putin’s Russia. Vance, and others in the Trump administration responsible for Ukraine policy, aren’t qualified to hold Acheson’s overcoat.

- “Polls in Ukraine show that they’re more concerned about corruption than they are about the war.”
- “Our new Russian friends will never stand by Americans on the battlefield as Europeans have.”
- Ukrainians are still putting up Christmas lights.
- “The Russians won’t sign a peace agreement unless they get everything they want, and we shouldn’t give them everything they want because they don’t deserve it.”
- “We’ll see increased mobilization on the Russian side.”
(already happening)
- “There’ll be more pressure on the Russian side to continue the war.”

[“Why Does Ukraine’s Grid Survive Missiles that Would Black Out Europe? Ousted Energy Chief Explains”](#)/Euromaidan Press – Interview with Volodymyr Kudrytskyi, former Head of Ukrenergo, Ukraine’s national electrical transmission system operator.

Kudrytskyi is an unsung hero. This is why.

- **You disconnected from Russia mere hours before the invasion and connected to Europe in three weeks. How critical has that been?** Without the European connection, we would simply collapse. The energy system would collapse—and after that, the front line would collapse too, because there would be no

logistics in place. The country would be paralyzed. You can imagine a bicycle. Managing a power system is like riding a bicycle—you need to keep balance every second. Europe makes our bicycle four-wheeled. When Ukraine has disruptions—for example, after a missile hits a power plant—if we were not connected to Europe, we would probably collapse. Because we are connected, some oscillations that could be deadly for us standing alone are much softer. Europe softens the disruption during those first critical milliseconds. Europe also supplies Ukraine with up to 20% of its power consumption. When you have a 20% deficit, that means two to three groups of disconnected customers out of six. Europe decreases the number of disconnected groups by two. That's absolutely critical. During the partial blackout in November 2022, we powered up our system from Europe. Had we still been connected to Russia, they could shut down our power system without any missiles—their control center operated the whole area from the Urals to Ukraine. They would just switch us off from their control room.

- **Do you see a silver lining in the current scandal?** I do. When it was covered up, we had no chance to heal. Now we have a real chance for change. We demonstrated to the world not only that we have corrupt officials, but also that we have a huge demand from society for justice. Ukrainian society, with its zero tolerance for corruption, is European. The government doesn't fit the expectations of such a society so far. We cannot change the president and parliament right now, but they can change their behavior in response to pressure from society and Western partners. These are very unpleasant events. But surgery is always unpleasant—yet in the majority of cases, it's for the good. I would compare this to a complicated surgery on the governance system of Ukraine. And it's not hard to stop stealing during the war. I would not say this is a very difficult reform. You don't need to wait until the end of the war to stop doing that.

- **Someone called protecting energy infrastructure “a waste of money.” What’s the consequence of decision-makers thinking that way?** The result is you have no shelters—and this is what we see in many energy companies. Ukrenergo has shelters for transformers at substations. But other infrastructure—such as Energoatom, power plant operators, distribution grids, and gas infrastructure—is not effectively sheltered. I heard today that some gas transit and storage infrastructure was damaged by kamikaze drones. That means they’re not sheltered.

If all institutions had been properly coordinated by the Energy Ministry in 2023, and if they had started sheltering then, we would have the country’s gas and energy infrastructure much more protected by now. We would have less damage. It doesn’t mean we would have no problems when Russia spends thousands of missiles and tens of thousands of Shaheds. But we would have fewer problems.

- **Is it physically possible to protect large power plants?** Let’s define protection. We’re not saying concrete shelters mean you feel nothing when 30 missiles and 500 drones hit you. The formula of this energy war is: you must recover more quickly than your adversary is able to destroy. You decrease the success rate of Russian strikes by combining air defense with shelters, creating an emergency stock of equipment, and training personnel to recover quickly. You increase your speed of recovery and decrease their speed of destruction. You can shelter big power plants—not the machine hall, but you can shelter the autotransformer. Two missiles would still damage the machine hall, but 50 Shahed drones would not be able to destroy the autotransformers. Therefore, you recover quicker.
- **What else explains Ukraine’s resilience?** First, we have in-house employees trained to recover. European operators typically have 300-500 employees, mostly in administrative roles—they outsource everything. Ukrenergo had 8,000 people, 6,000 working in the field.

Second, Ukrainian infrastructure has a huge safety buffer from Soviet times. Ukraine consumed 300 billion kilowatt-hours in 1991. It consumes less than 100 now. The grid has only increased since then. So we have a threefold safety buffer of grid capacity. When the adversary destroys one autotransformer, you can allow him to destroy another before you feel consequences. In Europe, the safety buffer is around 20%. In Ukraine, it's 200-300%. It was bad because these Soviet factories produced non-competitive goods nobody wanted—a waste of energy. But it's a positive externality of an otherwise inefficient economy.

- **How resilient is Ukraine entering another war winter?** We survived many winters already—2022-23, then the next, then another. Nothing catastrophic will happen. The system will not collapse for two weeks. It will be a hard winter with very uncomfortable power cuts at times. When it gets colder, power cuts will be nastier. When it gets warmer, and after a week or two after the last attack, recovery takes hold. If you're in Ukraine, you know all customers are divided into six groups. The severity of the deficit is characterized by how many groups are disconnected simultaneously. One group is more or less soft. Two is moderate. Three is bad. Four is nasty. The situation will fluctuate following weather patterns and the recovery-destruction balance.

But we will survive the winter. I don't think there will be a national blackout. And I don't think this winter will be much harder than the 2022-23 winter. The most complicated winter we have already passed—the first winter of the full-scale war. This doesn't mean a pleasant journey. It just means nothing particularly new. Two groups disconnected sometimes, four sometimes, one sometimes, none, and in this way, we will pass.

Instead of being indicted, Kudrytskyi should be given the Order of Yaroslav the Wise.

[“Recognition for energy workers, conversations with Ukraine's anti-corruption leaders: the UP100 Awards 2025”/Ukrainska Pravda](#)

If you want to know why Ukraine will defeat Russia, read this.

[“Swedish Church warns parishes: Don't let Belarusian nuns fundraise for Russia's war”](#)

Once again, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP). Some excerpts:

- The Church of Sweden has issued an official warning to its congregations not to invite nuns from Belarus's St. Elisabeth Convent, citing the monastery's financial support for Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its connections to Russian military intelligence. The warning comes as evidence mounts that Moscow-affiliated religious institutions function as nodes in Russia's war machine.
- The convent's spiritual leader, Archpriest Andrey Lemeshonok, has publicly declared that his monastery "is also a combat unit" whose nuns "fight for our future."
- The language echoes the Russian Orthodox Church's March 2024 [declaration](#) of Russia's invasion as a "holy war." Since 2022, the ROC has emerged as a key Kremlin [partner](#) in war crimes, blessing military aggression, spreading propaganda, and facilitating the deportation of Ukrainian civilians.
- Sweden joins a growing list of European countries pushing back against the convent's fundraising operations. In December 2024, Belarusian diaspora protesters in Szczecin, Poland, held banners reading "Buying here you support Russian aggression against Ukraine" outside the convent's Christmas market stand, leading to its closure, Veridica reported.

