

Zelensky Should Have Stayed Home. Visit to Attend the United Nations General Assembly and Meet Biden Turns Out Badly

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Most Americans do not understand how the United Nations functions, or does not function as the case might be, preferring to think of it as some kind of debating society where the 193 member nations representing the world community can vent over issues that they rarely have control over. Nevertheless, in spite of the torrent of words and the lack of any real program, it is always interesting to watch and listen to the UN's annual General Assembly meeting, which is held in New York during September. This year's meeting was particularly interesting as it came complete with a major war blazing in Eastern Europe as well as political turmoil in Africa and rising tension with China. It also features the rumblings coming from a new emerging global economic movement, the so-called BRICS developing as a champion of a multipolar-world currency challenge to the US-European dollar dominated international monetary and banking system.

And with economic union, there is [also some political realignment](#), with China strengthening its ties to the developing world and Russia entering into defense arrangements with Iran. President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin [will be meeting](#) in Beijing later this month to discuss common concerns. And, as usual, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu showed up to vent his hostility towards Iran with demands that that country's alleged "nuclear program" be confronted militarily and the sooner the better, just as he has been claiming for the past twenty years.

Indeed, several back stories playing out during this year's meeting made it more than usually interesting. Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky had hoped to turn the gathering into an anti-Russian hate fest, but though there was much complaining about Moscow's attack on Ukraine coming from the Baltic States and others, the ground continues to be shifting against Zelensky over concerns that the war has become an unwinnable money pit that could easily escalate into a nuclear exchange.

Speaking before a UN Security Council session, Zelensky was reduced to harshly criticizing the UN itself for failing to prevent or resolve conflicts before calling for Moscow to be stripped of its veto power on the Security Council. Zelensky, his voice rising in anger, complained how “It is impossible to stop the war because all actions are vetoed by the aggressor.” Observers noted immediately that Zelensky’s complaint did not help his cause. While there have been calls for UN reforms in the past, including over the veto power, the existence of the veto for a limited number of post-1945 greater powers was the only reason the United Nations could be created in the first place at all.

Zelensky also did real damage to his position when he said that while the Ukrainian refugees in Europe have “behaved well . . . and are grateful” to those who have given them shelter, it would not be a “good story” for Europe if a Ukrainian defeat “were to drive the people into a corner.”

It was reasonably enough seen by critics as nothing less than a threat of possible unrest producing domestic terrorism as well a possible internal insurrection uncontrollable by whatever Ukrainian government survives defeat. Such unrest might involve the millions Ukrainian refugees without houses and jobs already in place in other European nations if Zelensky is not given all the support which he apparently believes is his due.

Zelensky’s actual message to the General Assembly was not quite so incendiary and impulsive as his other interactions while on his visit, but he offered little new. He [reportedly received](#) an obligatory “warm welcome” from those in attendance, but “he delivered his address to a half-full house, with many delegations declining to appear and listen to what he had to say.” He [warned those present](#) that “The goal of the present war against Ukraine is to turn our land, our people, our lives, our resources into a weapon against you, against the international rules-based order. We have to stop it. We must act united to defeat the aggressor.” Zelensky did go overboard when he referred to Russia and Russians as “evil” and as “terrorists” and accused them of carrying out a “genocide” against Ukraine. Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov [responded](#) to comments made by both President Joe Biden and Zelensky by turning the argument around and observing that it is the US and its NATO “puppets” who already “are waging war against us.”

Zelensky’s frustrations spilled over in Washington on the following day [where he met](#) both with Biden and with some members of Congress and also dropped by the Pentagon and left flowers at the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial in Arlington Virginia. His meeting at the White House with the president went relatively well with the announcement of a new aid package in the works including “significant air defense capabilities,” and, [according to one report](#), even some of the much sought after ATACMS long range missile systems. Nevertheless, to his evident disappointment, Zelensky was not given a hero’s welcome like he received last year. He met privately with Kevin McCarthy, speaker of the House, and several other GOP hawks who will be instrumental in approving any aid, as well as with Senators Mitch McConnell and Chuck Schumer who promised to be “in his corner.” McCarthy boldly asked what Zelensky needed to win the war and to provide lawmakers with “a vision of a plan for victory.”

Nevertheless, it seems that many conservative Republicans and some progressive Democrats are fed up with the war and are concerned over the lack of accountability combined with the all too evident level of corruption within the Ukrainian government. [There are moves](#) by some in the GOP to separate Ukraine funding from other defense

appropriations, requiring a separate vote, and other proposals by the White House to guarantee the money even if the government shuts down. One wonders if anyone had the grit to ask Zelensky how many mansions he owns in Israel, Europe and the United States, but that is precisely the sort of story that is being increasingly written about Ukraine's comedian turned war hero, demonstrating that the public and even the media have become tired of the charade. A continuing multi-billion-dollar cash flow, seen by Joe Biden as necessary to keep the war going until the 2024 election to vindicate his policy, is still likely but it is no longer a slam-dunk.

Two other media accounts also suggest that the dissatisfaction with Zelensky and the war is breaking through the self-imposed acceptable narrative on the war, that Vladimir Putin is an aggressor without any real provocation from Kiev, a despot and the human monster. One came surprisingly from the *New York Times* and is apparently a leak from the White House or Pentagon on a September 6th missile attack on the Ukrainian village of Kostiantynivka which killed at least 18. The attack was quickly labeled by Zelensky as [a war crime](#) carried out by Russian "terrorists" which was echoed by the US media but an investigation, presumably carried by the US military and intelligence using satellite and other technical methods, has now determined that the missile [was fired by Ukraine](#). This is similar to the missile attack that struck Poland in November 2022, which also was blamed by Zelensky on Russia but [turned out to be from Ukraine](#), both incidents reflecting just how willing Zelensky is to lie and cheat to get a NATO and US intervention in a full-scale war with Russia, which could easily go nuclear.

The other story tells how Poland will not be [providing any more arms](#) to Ukraine, in part because it is now building up its own defenses and also over Ukrainian attempts to flood the Polish agricultural market with cheap low quality grain that it cannot sell elsewhere. To describe the Polish action as disappointing to Zelensky would be an understatement, but it is one more indication that many former allies are now seeing Ukraine as a lost cause and are looking to their own national security and economic interests. Both of these stories were, incidentally, published while Zelensky was in the United States hat in hand, and it must be considered that the timing was deliberate to damage the Ukrainian president's credibility to coincide with the UN General Assembly visit and the trip to Washington.

Zelensky's journey to North America ended in Ottawa, where he apparently recouped some of his swagger during a speech to the Canadian government and parliament which resulted in standing ovations. Or so it seemed. The Canadians produced a 98 year old Hungarian veteran of the Second World War named Yaroslav Hunka who had fought against the Russians and emigrated to Canada after the war ended. He too was cheered by the assembled Canadian politicians. The intention was clearly to present a narrative of a brave Ukrainian who fought valiantly to free his country from Russian domination but it didn't quite work out that way. To fight the Russians required being in Nazi Germany's armed forces and it turned out that Hunka had served in the 14th Waffen-SS Grenadier Division, also known as the Galicia Division, a volunteer unit made up mostly of ethnic Ukrainians commanded by German officers that has been rightly or wrongly credited with a number of wartime atrocities against Russians, Poles and Jews. Soldiers in the division swore a personal loyalty oath to Adolf Hitler. The bad judgement shown by the Canadian government in producing Hunka without fully investigating his story subsequently produced a huge uproar in Canada, with the head of parliament resigning, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in deep political trouble and the Polish government demanding that Hunka be extradited to them for a war crimes trial. There has been [some suspicion](#) that Zelensky may have been

instrumental in arranging the affair in expectation that it would strengthen Canadian support for his cause. Instead, it has accomplished the reverse and Zelensky returned home with little or nothing accomplished.

Zelensky must also confront back home a war that he is decisively losing and a country in ruins. And Joe Biden made clear in his speech addressing the UN General Assembly that negotiations with Russia to end the Ukraine fighting would not be considered. [Joe included](#) a pledge to support the conflict until it is Russia that is doing the surrendering:

“The United States, together with our allies and partners around the world, will continue to stand with the brave people of Ukraine as they defend their sovereignty and territorial integrity and their freedom... Russia alone bears responsibility for [the war]. Russia alone has the power to end this war immediately. And it is Russia alone that stands in the way of peace, because Russia’s price for peace is Ukraine’s capitulation, Ukraine’s territory, and Ukraine’s children.”

In short, the speech was a lot like Joe Biden and the band of scoundrels and grifters that he has gathered around him in the White House, heavy on bellicosity but short on any serious planning or strategies to make the world and this country a better place. Joe would like to see the war continue to bring its eventual end a lot closer to the US elections, where he hopes to self-identify as a strong leader and a “winner” taking on America’s enemies. Good luck Joe.

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