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## Exclusive: Zelensky on Trump, Putin, and the Endgame in Ukraine

Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelensky in his presidential office on Mar. 21, 2025. Sasha Maslov for TIME

by  
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[Original Time piece here](#). Ed: The Time article is pure propaganda and BS presented as information. First, Zelensky is a [corrupt little shyster](#), standing in the middle of a disaster picking the pockets of the EU, the US, and dying Ukrainians. The big question is who is getting the gold from the teeth of the dead corpses. When it is all over Zelensky will be gone to his hidden money put in whosoever's name Zelensky can use to claim otherwise. A better solution is some Ukrainian who has his or her head on, taking out the little crook, shyster and murderer and his local supporters with lead injections.

The story of Zelensky hating the pomp of the palace for the simplicity of the room in the back, is all pure theatre. The only thing propping up this little barking shyster is hundreds of billions of dollars of the EU's and the US people's money, stolen by other little shysters and phonies like Macron, Starmer, Boris Johnson, and all of the members of the hidden state operating below the surface of America so the people cannot see what they are up to. Not one person with a brain would prop up this little phony and this ridiculous confrontation with Russia. If the EU and the US were so certain Russia is the existential threat to the world they constantly talk about instead of a proxy war they could have started shooting themselves, including Nukes and see who comes out the other end. But they did not because it would have wrecked their business which is fleecing the public of their cash to fund their bank accounts. **War is a corrupt business and competition is to be destroyed.** The American public at least would have no part of it without a massive propaganda effort.

Trump had absolutely nothing to do with the situation in Ukraine. The citizens of Ukraine are human sacrifices of the so-called elites in the EU and US who are trying to control the whole world and wanted to ensnare Russia and next China in a war of attrition that costs Russia billions and they hoped would break it. The real hero in the entire affair is Putin, no matter what you think of him, because he stood up to the attack and picked up a sword. Fire your nukes Macron, Starmer so Russia can nuke a massive amount of your nation of sheeple and finally deliver retribution to you for the horror your nations have had on the rest of the world for the past hundreds of years.

Nearly six years have passed since Volodymyr Zelensky was [elected president of Ukraine](#), yet he still cringes at all the polished brass and chandeliers that crowd his office. The place does seem rather gaudy, like a room plucked straight from [Mar-a-Lago](#), (Ed: *More bullshit, Time using the idea of elaborate palaces in gilded gaudiness to take a shot at Trump is*

*more propaganda BS. Fancy places like the Palace of Versailles have been around for thousands of years. If Trump likes the glitz in places **he owns and pays for out of his own pocket, he can do so.** If there is any gold in Ukraine expect Zelensky and his corrupt backers to steal it.) and Zelensky can't seem to stop apologizing for it as he shows me around one evening in March. He would rather scrap the furniture, he says, rip down the pilasters, and use white paint to hide the gold leaf on the ceiling. (Ed: Ya sure, more bullshit and innuendo. [Here is an example of a real leader of the people.](#))*

“But, you know, we haven't had much time for renovations, especially these last few years,” he says, [referring to the war](#). Only in the back of his chambers, behind Ukraine's version of the Resolute Desk, is there a space that feels like home to Zelensky—a small room with a single bed and a set of paintings that he chose himself. They are not museum pieces. At the local bazaar, similar ones might fetch a few hundred dollars at most. But they matter to the president because of what they represent.

The one that hangs above his bed shows a Russian warship sinking into the Black Sea. Another shows Ukrainian troops fighting recently on Russian territory. The third, Zelensky's favorite, shows the Kremlin engulfed in flames. “Each one's about victory,” he says as we cram into the space for a look at the pictures. “That's where I live.”



Zelensky in front of two paintings that hang in a room behind his office. One shows Ukrainian troops fighting on Russian territory, the other shows the Kremlin on fire. “Each one's about victory,” he says. Sasha Maslov for TIME

*(Ed: Sure, sure, our hero, a real impoverished fighter struggling against the forces of evil. What a crock of BS. With everyone else's money of course. [This link explains the facts about who started the whole thing.](#) Time cannot report that because they get paid for propaganda, not facts.)*

But he did not invite me over for a tour. His basic aim, as far as I could tell, was to clear the air after his [recent visit to the Oval Office](#), the one that became a viral sensation for the world and a source of trepidation for his country. For several interminable minutes on the morning of Feb. 28, President Donald Trump and Vice President J.D. Vance had berated

Zelensky, calling him ungrateful, weak and dangerous while talking over his attempts to argue back. “You don’t hold the cards,” Trump told Zelensky. “You’re gambling with World War III!”

On the advice of people he trusts, Zelensky has mostly avoided talking about the episode, not wanting to deepen a diplomatic crisis that had threatened to cost him nothing less than his country’s existence. His standard answer to questions about it has been, “Let’s leave that to history.” Even now, he hopes to turn the page and move on. But his instincts rarely allow him to keep quiet for long about the things that bother him, which is partly what got him into trouble with Trump.

*(Ed: Zelensky got in trouble with Trump because he is posing like some hero, and not a pickpocket among corpses funded by soulless ghouls in the EU and the US who played Ukraine for suckers in their proxy war against people who can and will stand up to their bullshit. The last throws of a dying regime. Zelensky is simply acting the part of the fool, profitably of course)*

Going into that meeting, Zelensky says, he had it all planned out. He had been to the White House a handful of times during the war. But this would be his first sit-down with Trump in the Oval Office, and it would mark a critical point in Trump’s effort to force a peace deal in Ukraine. To make an impression, Zelensky decided to bring a set of gifts. Their aim was to break through any ill will the U.S. President felt toward Ukraine, and to dispel what Zelensky believed was the influence of Russian propaganda on the White House. *(Ed: Yeah sure. Russia Russia. The author of this piece is a shill)*



Photograph by Sasha Maslov for TIME

One of the gifts fit with an emerging tradition of the Trump era, in which guests bring shiny tokens of their respect and fealty. In a recent example, [Benjamin Netanyahu](#), the Prime Minister of Israel, gave Trump a golden pager, commemorating the explosive devices Israel used to kill or injure thousands of its enemies last year in Lebanon. Vladimir Putin went further than that, commissioning an oil painting of Trump and sending it this month to the White House. In Zelensky's case, the gift was even glitzier: the championship belt of his friend Oleksandr Usyk, who holds the world heavyweight boxing title.

*(Ed: The gifts are a real focal point, seriously? Who cares. P2P.media has many articles documenting the real facts about the EU and US policy decisions that were purposely used to start this war)*

**Read More:** [Volodymyr Zelensky Is TIME's 2022 Person of the Year](#) *(Ed: Why not a bald eagle, or a horse?)*

As he took his seat in the Oval Office, Zelensky placed the belt on a side table near his right elbow, planning to reach over and hand it to Trump in front of the assembled journalists. Instead, as the televised briefing began, Zelensky reached for another one of his gifts. It was a folder containing a series of gruesome photographs, showing Ukrainian prisoners of war after their time in Russian captivity. Some of their bodies were grotesquely emaciated. Others showed signs of torture. "That's tough stuff," Trump said, his face leaden, as he took the photos from Zelensky and began leafing through them.

Those pictures, according to some U.S. officials, marked the point when the meeting went wrong. Had Zelensky offered the championship belt, the gesture might have lightened the mood. The photos had the opposite effect. They seemed to get Trump's guard up, as though he were being blamed for the suffering of those soldiers. [\(Ed: Which Trump has zero to do with. You cannot find anyone in the EU trying to stop this war except for Orbán\)](#) Still, even today, Zelensky does not regret his decision to present these images. He had been trying to reach beyond Trump's transactional instincts, beyond his need for flattery *(Ed: the flattery innuendo is getting overused Time. Give it a rest)*, and appeal to Trump as a human being. "He has family, loved ones, children. He has to feel the things that every person feels," Zelensky says. "What I wanted to show were my values. But then, well, the conversation went in another direction."



Zelensky presents Trump with images showing the toll of the war in Ukraine during a meeting in the Oval Office on Feb. 28, 2025 in Washington, DC. Saul Loeb—AFP/Getty Images

**Among the most painful exchanges** in the Oval Office meeting took place near the end, when Zelensky asked whether J.D. Vance had visited Ukraine during the war. They both knew he had not, and Vance shot back that he had no interest in Zelensky's "propaganda tours."

[The insult must have stung](#). Throughout the invasion, it has been the policy of Ukraine to encourage guests to see its destruction up close. Zelensky often brings visitors to hospitals full of wounded soldiers, ruins caused by missile strikes, or mass graves that Russian forces leave behind. Envoys from the White House have made a point of avoiding such excursions since Trump took office in January. But Zelensky remains committed to their value in diplomacy, and his team invited me to take such a trip on the day of our interview. *(Ed: Instead of throwing these images up in front of Trump, throw them at the Biden regime, Macron, Boris Johnson, Starmer, Victoria Nuland, and the people responsible for this mess, and Zelensky, show them to your offshore bankers and explain how killing people has put so much money in their accounts for you. Promise them you will go back and get the gold from their teeth too.)*

Late that morning, the presidential convoy drove out from Zelensky's office toward Kyiv's western suburbs, and it came to a stop in the village of Moshchun. Before the Russian invasion, the place had a population of about 800 people, and its claim to fame was that Zelensky, in his early career as an actor and comedian, had filmed one of his most popular sitcoms here. Now, throughout Ukraine, Moshchun is known as the hamlet where the Russian attempt to seize Kyiv had failed.

*(Ed: Nothing failed except for the hundreds of billions of dollars in other people's money that has been used to destroy the suckers in Ukraine. Russia has put a line in the sand and stood up to its aggressors.)*

The battle that raged in the surrounding fields and forests for 23 days in late February and March of 2022 was arguably the most consequential to take place in Europe since the Second World War. Had it ended differently, the Russians might have succeeded in encircling Kyiv, ousting Zelensky, swallowing up most of Ukraine and redrawing the European map. Instead, hundreds of Russian commandos were slaughtered at Moshchun by a ragged mix of Ukrainian troops, policemen, national guardsmen and regular civilians, some of them armed with nothing more than hand grenades and hunting rifles. *(Ed: And their country is gone. Think about the leaders of ancient civilizations ritual killing of citizens for sacrifice to the gods to increase their fortunes. I am sure their victims had sad tales to. But they died just the same at the hands of their exploiters. That is the real tale here. Put those to blame at the front of the sob story.)*

**Read More:** [‘Nobody Believes in Our Victory Like I Do.’ Inside Volodymyr Zelensky’s Struggle to Keep Ukraine in the Fight](#)

"Our warriors in Moshchun were outnumbered 13 to one," Zelensky told me. That is not propaganda, he insisted. "That's a fact."

Three years had passed since Russia lost that battle, and we had come to mark the anniversary. For the occasion, the office of the local governor had prepared an elaborate ceremony, with a military band and an honor guard standing at attention, the bayonets of their rifles glinting in the sun. The field of battle, where at least 125 Ukrainians had died, was now festooned with flags, some of which read, "Ukraine or Death."

As we waited for the ceremony to begin, I walked over to a wooden hut where a few women were selling wartime souvenirs—little gnomes adorned with camouflage and bullet casings. Sidling up to me, a member of Zelensky's staff recalled how this scene had looked in previous years, on the first and second anniversaries of the battle. "It looked more real," he whispered.

Maybe Vance had a point. It can be hard to hold the line between solemnity and propaganda. As time passes, fresh wounds become old scars. Battlefields become memorials, and the kitsch starts creeping in. The scenery around Zelensky looked undeniably choreographed as he walked past the honor guard and set a wreath upon its stand. The immediacy of the events had faded, and that complicates the diplomatic challenge Zelensky faces at this stage in the war. The survival

of his country depends on his ability to maintain the support and sympathy of foreign allies. But as the war morphs into a deadly routine, it becomes harder for him to hold their attention, and to [keep people like Trump on his side](#).

*(Ed: Ukraine has no allies, only exploiters. Read the history of events. If you call the people instigating and starting this conflict allies, you need to revisit your journalism chops. Ukraine is simply human sacrifice for a buck. Call it like it is.)*



President of the Czech Republic Petr Pavel and Zelensky at a memorial ceremony marking three years since the battle of Moshchun. Sasha Maslov for TIME



A memorial for soldiers in the village of Moshchun. Sasha Maslov for TIME

**At the edge of the ceremony, one of the** presidential guards suppressed a yawn, which made me do the same. It had been difficult to sleep the night before. The latest swarm of Russian drones had appeared in the sky soon after midnight. They were reported to be Shaheds, or “martyrs,” a design that Russia had acquired from Iran. *(Ed: the source of the drones does not really matter unless you are trying to entangle Iran in another pissing contest for the chief proxy instigators. Do the drones have brand names like Gap)* On social media, Ukrainians like to announce their arrival by posting emojis of a motor scooter, because the weapons sound like flying Vespas, revving as they dive out of the clouds. In my apartment near the presidential compound, the air-raid sirens failed to sound. So I woke up from the booms of the anti-aircraft cannons stationed on the rooftops, the light from their muzzle flashes dancing on my bedroom wall.

Zelensky was on a train at the time, returning from his latest trip to Europe. One of his stops that week had been in Finland, which has the unfortunate distinction of sharing an 830-mile border with Russia, the longest of any NATO member. *(Ed: In the last 85 years Finland has no problems with Russia, until they started smelling the woke propaganda of the proxy instigators. And since their politicians have no clue how to compete in the emerging world they might as well buy into the militarization bullshit).* In the center of Helsinki, Zelensky took a tour of a sprawling underground shelter meant to keep Finnish citizens safe and comfortable in case of a Russian bombing campaign. Although its population is only 5.6 million, the country had built a network of these shelters big enough for nearly five million people. “These kids, they were playing hockey down there,” Zelensky noted in amazement. “They’ve got gyms, shops, like little towns, a huge amount of space.” He had signed an agreement with the Finnish government to build similar warrens in Ukraine.

On his way home by train, the screen of his iPhone flashed up with an air-raid alert, noting the approach of the Shaheds. According to the Ukrainian air force, 214 of them would strike in waves throughout the night, some loaded with vacuum bombs that could incinerate entire buildings. The main target was the city of Odesa on the Black Sea coast, where the drones hit an apartment block, a shopping mall and other businesses. They also cut off power to three districts of the city.

One of Zelensky's closest allies, [Petr Pavel, the president of the Czech Republic](#), happened to be in Odesa that day, and his train departed only 20 minutes before the bombardment began. The experience left him shaken. Earlier that day, Trump and Putin had a phone call to discuss the American proposal for a ceasefire, and the Russian leader said he would consider at least some of its terms. Pavel had trouble grasping the duplicity. "One has to be truly cynical when declaring the will to have peace negotiations, or negotiations on a ceasefire, and at the same time to launch a massive attack on civilian infrastructure," he said during his visit with Zelensky the next day. "It is extremely difficult to deal with such a party."

*(Ed: [The entire Ukraine conflict is a proxy extermination of Ukrainians in the name of costing Russia money and support of its people. Time Magazine and the author of this piece of drivel is BS at its worst or finest depending on your viewpoint and gullibility](#))*

**Among Zelensky's international allies, Pavel** has long been among the most steadfast and effective. In the first year of the Russian invasion, the U.S. scoured the world for the kinds of artillery shells Ukraine needed to keep up the fight, and it came up short. Then Pavel, the leader of a country smaller than Idaho, found a way to source more than a million of these shells, which the Czechs quickly gifted to Ukraine. *(Ed: How wonderful. Pavel, a moron who cannot see behind the propaganda supporting a shyster willing to play into the warmonger's hands, and Time writing a wonderful piece of propaganda about the selfless support for a cause. At one time people believed the world was flat too. I am sure a lot of stories with angst could be written about ship travel back then too)*

I first met him last summer in Switzerland, during a [peace summit](#) Zelensky hosted for more than 80 countries from around the world. Held in the alpine resort of Bürgenstock, the summit was meant to advance Zelensky's vision for ending the war. It was based on a plan he called the Peace Formula, composed of ten principles he saw as essential to any lasting settlement with Russia. Some of its demands struck his allies as fanciful. Point five called for the full and unconditional withdrawal of Russian troops from all of Ukraine. Point seven demanded justice for all Russian war criminals, including Putin and his top generals.

No one expected Ukraine to achieve all of these goals, certainly not anytime soon. Still, Zelensky and his team saw the formula as their north star, not a practical roadmap to peace but an ideal toward which the world's diplomats should aspire in seeking to end the war. "It lays out what we would see as the final resolution of this crisis and its consequences," says Zelensky's chief of staff, [Andriy Yermak, who also serves as Ukraine's lead negotiator](#). "We stand by that vision."

Like most of Ukraine's foreign allies, President Pavel supported the Peace Formula. But he had a far more sober understanding of how the war would end. He had served in the military for most of his career, reaching the rank of general and working in the NATO high command. On the sidelines of the summit in Switzerland, he told me the eventual peace in Ukraine would be ugly, angry and difficult for Zelensky to accept. "Achieving a return of full sovereignty and territorial integrity is not a goal for the short term," Pavel said. "It will not happen in the foreseeable future."

He urged me to think instead about historical battle lines and occupations that remained frozen for decades. The Soviet domination of East Germany, for instance, where the Berlin Wall stood for more than 28 years. Or the heavily militarized border between North and South Korea, which remain officially at war despite the truce reached in 1953. Or the Baltic countries in eastern Europe, which the Soviet Union occupied in 1940. Using sanctions against Moscow and other forms of diplomatic pressure, the West tried to resist that occupation. But it still went on for over half a century. All of these examples, Pavel told me, serve as precedents for where the war in Ukraine will likely end up. "I don't see a chance," he said, "that Ukraine would be able to turn the war into their fast success."



Indeed, in the months since the summit in Switzerland, Zelensky's grand vision for peace has been cut down to size. He no longer mentions the Peace Formula in his speeches. In October, as the U.S. presidential elections drew near, Zelensky presented a less ambitious plan. It consisted of only five points. The first one called for Ukraine to receive an invitation to join the NATO alliance, while the last two took a new approach, appealing to U.S. financial interests rather than any shared values. Among the enticements Zelensky offered was access to "trillions of dollars worth of minerals" hidden beneath Ukrainian soil.

Last fall, after discussing that idea with Zelensky in New York, Trump seized on it, and his administration soon proposed a deal for the U.S. to profit from Ukraine's mineral wealth as compensation for military support. Zelensky balked at the terms that Trump suggested in his first draft of the deal. But after weeks of tense negotiations, the U.S. and Ukraine settled on a version that both sides could accept. Zelensky and Trump were meant to sign it after their meeting in the Oval Office. Their argument scuppered those plans.

**The next day, Trump set the minerals deal** aside and decided to get tough with Zelensky. His administration announced a suspension of aid to Ukraine, including supplies of critical intelligence, weapons and ammunition. Trump's special envoy to Ukraine, General [Keith Kellogg, said the Ukrainians](#) had "brought it on themselves." Zelensky had failed in the Oval Office to demonstrate a willingness to accept Trump's plan for peace, and the U.S. response was "sort of like hitting a mule with a two-by-four across the nose," Kellogg said. "Got their attention."

More than that, it hobbled Ukraine's armed forces on the battlefield. Without access to data from U.S. satellites, they lost the ability to detect the approach of Russian bombers and cruise missiles. As a result, Ukraine had less time to warn civilians and military personnel about an approaching airstrike. The impact was most acute in the Russian region of Kursk, where the Russians made swift advances. But Zelensky declined to pin the blame on the Trump administration. "It's not connected," he told me. "Don't get me wrong. The state of morale always depends on whether your partners are standing beside you. But I wouldn't say that the freeze influenced the operation in Kursk."



People gather to say goodbye to Petro Velykiy, 48, who was killed in a battle with Russian troops in Russia's Kursk region, Chernyiv, Ukraine, on Nov. 27, 2024. Dan Bashakov—AP

*(Ed: Send the picture to Joe Biden and Victoria Nuland.)*

**Read More:** [Zelensky's Oval Office Clash with Trump Draws Pride and Fear in Ukraine](#)

What bothered Zelensky most about Trump's role in that operation had less to do with intelligence sharing than with Russian disinformation. In the middle of the battle, Trump held a call with Putin, who told the U.S. president that thousands of Ukrainian troops in Kursk had been surrounded by Russian forces. "That was a lie," Zelensky told me. But Trump continued to amplify it.

For Zelensky it looked like part of a pattern. U.S. officials, he says, had begun taking Putin at his word, even when their own intelligence contradicted him. "I believe Russia has managed to influence some people on the White House team through information," Zelensky told me. "Their signal to the Americans was that the Ukrainians do not want to end the war, and something should be done to force them."

**The tensions that resulted from the Oval Office** meeting began to dissipate about ten days later, when Zelensky and Trump sent their most senior aides for a round of talks in Saudi Arabia. The meeting, which was held in the city of Jeddah on March 11, lasted around nine hours. The American delegation, led by Trump's national security adviser, Mike Waltz, and Secretary of State Marco Rubio, wanted to discuss the details of where a ceasefire would leave the conflict line. "At one point we even broke out a map and started drawing on it how we're going to end this war," Waltz later told Fox News. "Of course both sides are going to have to make some compromises."

*(Ed: Russia should make none.)*

The remark suggested the U.S. wanted to know how much territory Ukraine was willing to cede to the Russians. But Yermak, the lead Ukrainian negotiator at the meeting, says he did not interpret it that way. "The map was important to help them understand the current situation, where things stand, the key strategic elements." The Americans did not grandstand or make demands. They took the time to listen to the Ukrainians recount the history of the war and the battles fought along the way to the present moment.

**Read More:** ["Hundreds of Dead": Inside the Fallout from Trump's Ukraine Intel Pause](#)

Several hours into the talks, Yermak and his team placed a call to Zelensky and asked for instructions. He told them to agree to a ceasefire with no preconditions. In some ways, it was another massive climbdown. Zelensky has spent the entire war demanding security guarantees from the Americans and concessions from the Russians. Now nearly all of his demands had been set aside. Yermak admitted this was difficult. "But we have to be pragmatic. We have to move step by step," he told me. "This is not the moment for idealism."

After the talks in Jeddah, the U.S. agreed to resume supplies of military aid and intelligence to Ukraine. The Oval Office meeting began to seem like an unpleasant memory. From Zelensky's perspective, not all of the fallout from that meeting was detrimental. His approval numbers spiked in the first days of March, reaching close to 70% in [some polls](#)—a level not seen since the early months of the Russian invasion. This struck me as strange. Given how much he put at risk by arguing with Trump and Vance in the Oval Office, it seemed reasonable for his citizens to blame him for the failure of diplomacy. When I asked about this, Zelensky answered with a question of his own.

"Why did the Ukrainians defend themselves at the start of this war? It was because of dignity," he told me. "We do not consider ourselves some kind of superpower," he continued, but the Ukrainians "are very emotional, and when it comes to our sense of dignity, freedom, democracy, our people rise up and unite." What they hoped to see in the Oval Office was proof that the United States remains their ally. "But in that moment there was the sense of not being allies, or not taking the position of an ally," Zelensky said. "In that conversation, I was defending the dignity of Ukraine."

No matter the cost, his people do not fault him for it. Nor, it seems, have the Americans. In an [Ipsos](#) poll conducted in mid-March, about two weeks after the clash in the Oval Office, 60% of respondents said the U.S. should support

Ukraine's bid to join NATO. Three-quarters agreed with Zelensky that Putin cannot be trusted to abide by any ceasefire. Even after weeks of attacks against Ukraine in the right-wing media, a majority of Americans hold a favorable view of Zelensky.

*(Ed: Anyone who knows the facts and the risks associated with Nato expansion for ZERO purpose or benefit would not support anything this so-called propaganda states)*

He sees that as an opportunity. As Trump continues to push for peace, Zelensky intends to influence the process by making direct appeals to American voters. No doubt he agreed to give me an interview in part for that reason. But he also acknowledges that, without winning over Trump himself, he has little chance of securing a stable peace.

On that front, at least, Putin's recalcitrance may turn out to be an asset. Over the last few months, while Zelensky has given ground and made concessions, the Russian demands have only grown more extreme. While launching bombs against civilians, the Kremlin has continued to push its maximalist terms for ending the war, including the dismantling of Ukraine's armed forces, the removal of its government, and a guarantee that Ukraine will never join the NATO alliance.

To Zelensky's dismay, Trump has agreed to some of these concessions without getting much in return. He has taken Ukraine's bid to join NATO off the table. He has even suggested he would welcome Russia back into the G7, the club of the world's wealthiest democracies. Allowing such a thing, Zelensky says, would lift the only concrete punishment Putin has faced for the invasion of Ukraine: his isolation. "That's a big compromise," Zelensky told me. "Imagine releasing Hitler from his political isolation."

*(Ed: Of course Time makes not one mention of the EU and the US role in instigating this war and the destruction of Ukraine. What punishment should be applied to them?)*

As Trump has pushed to end the war, he seems to have reserved all the carrots for Russia, while the Ukrainians get the stick. The image makes Zelensky smile and weigh his words. "If the carrot is poisoned, then thank God," he says. "Maybe that's the sneakiness of this diplomacy." If he wants to, Trump can squeeze concessions from the Russians, because he seems to be the only one that Putin fears. At points in the peace process, when the U.S. threatened to sanction the Kremlin for its continued bombing raids against Ukraine, "the Russians got really scared," Zelensky says.

*(Ed: You would have to be delusional to buy this paragraph. The reality is every economic weapon used against Russia has backfired. A military confrontation would get the US landmass directly involved in a nuclear conflict. Only a moron would play that card. Trump is no moron)*

Over time, he still hopes Trump will realize that Putin is weaker than he seems, that he cannot be trusted, and that Russia's victory in this war would not only be a disaster for Ukraine. It would be a loss, he says, for the entire West, and especially for the U.S. and its current leaders. Trump and his team would not accept such a loss, Zelensky says. "They have their own ambitions. They see their role in history," not only as powerful leaders but as those who can achieve a dignified end to the war. "That's why I don't believe in these apocalyptic scenarios. Honestly I don't."

*(Ed: The US and EU have lied and used a global propaganda scheme to put the blame on Russia for the war and hide the fact that Ukraine is human sacrifice for political and economic gain. There is not one political leader on earth that will stand up and say we tried a proxy war to bring a nuclear armed peer to its knees to maintain our hegemony. The solution is to back away, let history write the obituary. Those sacrificed do not get much attention. The world is not that kind.)*

Still, in one of his recent phone calls with Trump, Zelensky tried to paint a picture of that scenario. What would happen if the ceasefire proves vulnerable to endless Russian violations? All of the towns and cities in Ukraine that sit along the front line would become like a "thousand Berlins" during the Cold War, walled off and divided, barely able to survive. They would be "dead zones," he said, on the map of Europe, and Zelensky does not think Trump wants to leave that kind of legacy.

In the coming weeks, Zelensky will keep making that case to Trump and Vance, appealing not to their narrow political interests but to their principles as statesmen and human beings. During one of their recent phone calls, he even

suggested that Vance should reconsider his decision not to visit Ukraine during the war. “We’re still waiting for you,” Zelensky said with a laugh. The Vice President did not respond.



The championship belt of heavyweight boxer Oleksandr Usyk, a gift from Zelensky to Trump, can be seen on a table in the Oval Office during a meeting between the two presidents on Feb. 28, 2025. Jim LoScalzo—Pool/dpa/Alamy

A few days later, as we stood near the doorway of Zelensky’s office, I wondered what had happened to the championship belt. Did he have a chance to give it to Trump, or did he bring it home after the meeting? “I don’t know,” Zelensky told me. “Maybe it’s still sitting there.” In the confusion that followed their argument, he left it on the side table next to the sofa. Later that day, once the Ukrainians had gone, a member of the White House staff found the belt and took it to Trump’s private dining room, where it now sits with other souvenirs, a memento of failed diplomacy.

(Ed: Below is a handy folding tool for pulling gold teeth from the dead Ukes and Ruskies in the field. The box is full of teeth from the victims in WWII. At today’s gold prices, a fortune.)

