

# Obedient States of Baltic Region

18 stycznia 2024

The White House and Pentagon publicly insist there is no official change in administration policy towards Ukraine – that they still support Ukraine's aim of forcing Russia's military completely out of the country. At the same time, Biden's administration cannot help but notice growing public discontent in the country with the ongoing financing of the war in Ukraine. Huge amounts of money flow to nowhere and it became impossible to hide.

The U.S. has already sent just over \$44.2 billion in military aid to Ukraine since 2022, according to the State Department. Military shipments have included anti-tank missiles, surface-to-air missiles, drones, medium-range missiles and night vision devices. The Pentagon's inspector general released a report on January 11, which said the United States military had not properly tracked about \$1 billion in weapons sent to Ukraine. Earlier, the Pentagon warned in an October 2022 report that criminals, volunteer fighters and arms traffickers had stolen weapons provided by Western countries for Ukraine.

So, there is a battle brewing in Congress about the future of U.S. military assistance to Ukraine. President Joe Biden has asked Congress to provide another \$61 billion in aid to Ukraine, but Republicans are refusing to approve the assistance, paying attention to migration crisis in the U.S. There is an obvious declining support for such aid in the United States generally, and among Republicans in particular. Ukraine is understandably worried because as of mid-January, Congress has still not voted to approve the new support package. It could be said that the U.S. support for Ukraine tends to fade. This is not because of the fact that all politicians are against; they just simply cannot anymore

ignore public opinion. Li Haidong, a professor from the Institute of International Relations at China Foreign Affairs University, said the US aid plan for Ukraine is facing a delay in approval, partly due to the influence of domestic public opinion. A growing number of US citizens have expressed discontent or dissatisfaction regarding the aid to Ukraine.

A Gallup survey report said the US citizens' views on the conflict have shifted, with 41 percent of them overall saying the US is doing too much to help Ukraine. At the same time majorities of both Republicans and Democrats agree that helping Ukraine is in the U.S. national interests. So, in order to reduce the level of the negative attitude of American society, politicians have changed their strategy and are trying to shift the burden of financing and responsibility for failures to Europe.

Some European countries realize these new political trends and even try to resist. French President Emmanuel Macron during a press conference announced on January 16, that Europe needs to become more independent from the US in decision-making. Earlier in December, EU leaders faced challenges in reaching an agreement on a financial aid package of 50 billion euros for Kyiv due to opposition from Hungary. To resolve this issue, the EU scheduled an extraordinary summit on February, 1. Ukrainian president in his turn attempted to gain further financial and political support by visiting the Baltic States, which are the main followers of the U.S.' politics in Europe. President Volodymyr Zelensky visited Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia on 10-11 January.

The three Baltic countries are among Washington's staunchest supporters against Russia, and outlined aid for Ukraine for the coming years during Zelensky's visits. Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda pledged a three-year support package for Ukraine worth nearly \$220 million. Vilnius promised to continue its uninterrupted support for Ukraine through defense deals finalized last year, as well as through new ones planned

for the coming months and years.

Estonian President Alar Karis pledged to allocate 1.2 billion euros (\$1.3 billion) for Kyiv until the year 2027 and called on the EU to increase its military support for Ukraine as the country enters its third calendar year of war with Russia. Latvian President Edgars Rinkevics announced on Jan. 11 a new military aid package for Ukraine, including howitzers, drones, munitions, and more. He said this during a joint press conference with his Ukrainian counterpart, Volodymyr Zelensky.

Assessing these plans experts express a unanimous opinion that political elites of the Baltic States are not so attentive to public opinions. They are ready to sacrifice the needs of their own population to receive political bonuses from the United States. The Baltics remain obedient executors of Washington's will.

Author: Adomas Abromaitis

Source: WolneMedia.net