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# Ukraine has a new butcher-in-chief – all the better to feed Ukrainians to the grinder

Syrsky is gone, but his replacement is a sign that Zelensky as committed as ever to prolonging a losing war at terrible human cost

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By **Tarik Cyril Amar**, a historian from Germany working at Koç University, Istanbul, on Russia, Ukraine, and Eastern Europe, the history of World War II, the cultural Cold War, and the politics of memory



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The rule of Vladimir Zelensky has been a catastrophe for Ukraine, and that is how it will be remembered once the dust of relentless info war campaigns in his favor – and against his critics – settles.

While the [corruption of the Zelensky regime is stupendous](#), that fact – sad as it is – is not what makes him special, however. Because exorbitant, shameless embezzlement, kickbacks, and fraud have been the Ukrainian

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Former Ukrainian commander-in-chief Aleksandr Syrsky © Ed Ram / Getty Images

are certain to have cashed in like no one before because the West has pumped in money as never before [while turning two blind eyes](#) to what happens to it. But in principle, Zelensky has merely done what they all do. Not that that makes it any better.

Zelensky's truly distinct contribution to Ukraine's misery has consisted in two other things. His unprecedented [ramping-up of authoritarianism](#) – begun long [before the escalation of the war in 2022](#) – and his merciless choice to relentlessly sacrifice his country and its people to serve as cannon fodder in a Western proxy war against Russia.

Zelensky's responsibility before his country is all the greater because he once either knew better or he lied. During his 2019 election campaign, when he generally *"avoided serious interviews and discussions about policy – preferring instead to post light-hearted videos to social media,"* [as the BBC](#) back then was still ready to report, the comedian-on-the-way-to-the-presidency made one and only one specific promise: that he understood the absolute priority of peace and would do everything to find a negotiated solution with Russia.

And then in the spring of 2022, Zelensky, of course, deliberately missed a golden opportunity to end the large-scale war when it had barely begun. Heeding not Ukraine's obvious national interest but duplicitous advice from the West's emissary, then British Prime Minister Boris Johnson, [Zelensky personally ditched an almost finished peace agreement](#), locking in years of devastation for his country. In the end, once the war will be fully lost, Kiev is virtually certain to get a deal much worse than what was on offer then.

Now, in the summer of 2026, it may seem as if Zelensky's grip on Ukraine is finally slipping. A combination of street protests and – inevitable if quiet – [Western pressure](#) has forced him into a humiliating climb-down. After the president's sudden dismissal of the popular – and much-hyped – defense minister Mikhail Fedorov, the protesters had demanded his re-instatement and the sacking of Fedorov's rival, the military's commander-in-chief Aleksandr 'the Butcher' Syrsky. [Zelensky has now fired Syrsky](#) to be replaced by General Mikhail Drapaty, while some new influential position for Fedorov is being discussed.

Boris Johnson, currently a more-than-usual washed-out has-been of British politics, busy trying to catch the public eye, has made meager headlines [with blaming the Ukraine War on the Britain's new foreign secretary, Ed Miliband](#). How is that supposed to work? Somehow via Syria. Yes, really.

establishment's perverse normal since independence. Zelensky and his cronies



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**'They used axes to spare the ammo': How modern Ukraine's Nazi heroes massacred Poles during WWII** FEATURE

The single most important cause of this perfectly avoidable war was of course the West's reckless policy of NATO expansion. And the man who helped most directly to make the war go on when it could have ended quickly was Boris Johnson. But sure: "Syria."

Boris, though, does stand for something, namely just how bizarre much of this developing story is. Here is a regime that, together with its Western supporters and users, has just been running [an absurd but pervasive propaganda campaign](#) claiming its drone and missile strikes are winning the war. And yet both the minister of defense and the head of the military have to go. An odd way to celebrate impending victory.



**Read more:** Ukraine's leadership crisis: Has Zelensky created another political rival?

reports. And while firing the defense minister, Zelensky himself created the cover story that there was no other way to deal with conflicts between Fedorov and Syrsky. In that way, it is Zelensky who made Syrsky, already widely disliked for wasting the lives of Ukrainian soldiers with futile and stubborn tactics, a target for the protesters.

The [diehard Zelensky fans at Britain's Telegraph](#) may try to sell this outcome as "nimble" Zelensky successfully buying time by making Syrsky his fall guy in the same manner that he had already sacrificed his very intimate friend and top fixer Andrey Yermak to dodge the fallout from his own corruption. In reality, Zelensky has lost face again. His authority, brittle in any case, has taken another hit.

For Ukraine, though, none of this is good news. Yes, the de facto dictator Zelensky has suffered a defeat, and the abhorred 'butcher' Syrsky has been removed. But he has been replaced by a man who, while almost two decades younger, is very unlikely to be any better. Drapaty, who is treated with the usual kid gloves by Ukrainian and Western mainstream media, may or may not be an efficient commander. What is certain is that he first came to public attention in 2014, when his units [brutally cracked down](#) on resistance in the eastern Ukrainian city of Mariupol (before, as often forgotten, losing control of the city). Nothing in his career since then indicates a change of attitude. This is the man in charge of the whole Ukrainian military

In reality, one thing the Fedorov-Syrsky saga shows is that even Zelensky doesn't believe in his own boasts of moving the war from "*the earth into the sky*" and securing victory in that manner. Fedorov did not have to go despite finding a winning "*asymmetrical*" strategy, as many of the protesters and Western mainstream media claim. He never did. Fedorov did not fall over his alleged struggle against corruption either. He may have antagonized one set of war profiteers, but in Ukraine that only means another network will take a larger cut.

The most likely real reason for Fedorov's sacking – whether it will be reversed or sort-of-reversed – is that [Zelensky fears him as a rising political competitor](#), as Ukrainska Pravda



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now.

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Zelensky may well know that his own hype about the current air campaign turning the war around is propaganda. Yet clearly that does not mean that the Ukrainian leadership is willing to be serious about a negotiated solution. Emboldened by exceedingly rash Western support, Kiev has not yet given up on continuing a losing war, propped up by brutal forced mobilization, until an end that will be even more bitter than Ukraine's current wretchedness.

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# OPINION

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T

**Thoorsa Doom** 7/22/2026 at 11:07 PM

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Why don't Putin target all command centers in Ukraine, and impose a no-fly, and no drive zone over all of Ukraine.

[Reply](#)

M

**Michael Zenar** 7/23/2026 at 6:30 AM ↕

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... nope, little putko not allowed!

[Reply](#)

D

**DONALD DRIVER** 7/23/2026 at 3:32 AM

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Ukraine has the same butchers that the US and Europe do, the Zionist and or Marxist jews trying to take over the world with globalism. Thank God for Russia, China and Iran. I think God is tired of these people and is delivering them up as he did in the past. But God knows these are not related to the ancient Hebrews but are eastern Europeans who converted to that faith. They are self chosen and self important. They are fortunately despised by the rest of the world.

[Reply](#)

M

**Michael Zenar** 7/23/2026 at 6:28 AM ↕

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... fake tiny hats 🧢, khazars!

[Reply](#)

J

**Jimbo** 7/22/2026 at 9:33 PM

-4

Slaughter the goyum, make room for the second Israel.

[Reply](#)

**D** DONALD DRIVER 7/23/2026 at 3:40 AM ↕

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I think Russia will go to the Polish border. What will they do with the gated Jewish only settlements mentioned by Col McGregor and others as they are heading West? Was this an attempt to relocate Jews from a dying Israel? They also seem to be trying to establish new colonies in South America and Cyprus. Their globalist dreams ending. Thank you Jesus!

[Reply](#)

**M** Michael Zenar 7/23/2026 at 6:25 AM ↕

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... they're trying, we will see what they will really get, hopefully 109th time expelled from the land they are trying to steal!

... btw, what about Canada? It appears that land is under full bankers control, i. e. khazars rule!

[Reply](#)

**M** Michael Zenar 7/23/2026 at 6:21 AM ↕

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... I am afraid that is exactly what is happening!

... all the facts and statistics point to it, renewed khaganat is in the works!

[Reply](#)

 Dante 7/23/2026 at 4:36 AM

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Remember back when Russia first launched their «invasion» the news was filled with reports of «logistical problems» for the Russians, running out of ammo, etc.

The Russians aren't going anywhere and this war will not end until Russia achieves all of its objectives, if that isn't clear to everyone by now, then you are beyond help. Enjoy getting blown up by Russian artillery you westernized imbeciles.

[Reply](#)

**V** Vinnie Johns 7/23/2026 at 1:21 AM

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Zelenski knows that if he is ever forced to step down, for whatever reason, he will ultimately face the gallows.

That's why he is perfectly happy to keep this war going, no matter what the cost to everyone else.

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**L** Lucas Good 7/23/2026 at 1:41 AM ↕

-4

They say the same about Putin 🙄

[Reply](#)

**I** Ilva 7/23/2026 at 4:28 AM ↕

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