

Forget Congress! “The Deep State” is America’s “Real Bad Guy” in Ukraine

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In his [introduction](#) to the US-Russia Expert Panel prompt about whether Congress can be lobbied away from arming Ukraine, Mr. Doctorow mentions previous American interventions abroad that were “well-intentioned and even noble” but ultimately “resulted in catastrophe”, such as “Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya”. The strong issue taken with this statement is that the US’ interventions there and everywhere else were and always will be anything but well-intentioned and noble, being driven by pure geopolitical power plays in each and every instance.

It’s exactly this “well-intentioned and even noble” mindset that has convinced the vast majority of Congress of the righteousness of arming Ukraine, and no amount of lobbying will get them to see beyond this perspective unless they themselves really want to. Suggesting that “developments outside the States, meaning from decisions made in Europe” could have a positive effect on convincing Congress to pull back from its current course completely ignores the reality of American Exceptionalism and the fact that Congress may actually feel emboldened to arm Ukraine simply because the EU is seen as being ‘weak’ and ‘dilly dallying’ over this artificially pressing topic.

It’s important at this point to question the logic of even lobbying Congress against arming Ukraine in the first place, since President Putin has previously said that [Kiev is already getting arms from Western countries anyhow](#). This shows that Congress’ function isn’t to call the shots in American foreign policy, but to function as ‘democratic’ window dressing for established deep state policies. To expand upon this further, the deep state is defined by the author as representing the permanent diplomatic, defense, and intelligence bureaucracy that doesn’t cycle out of power whenever presidential administrations change. They represent a continuous and consistent force in shaping the application of America’s foreign policy, hence why despite the regular shuffling of the state’s upper echelon (e.g. Secretary of State, Director of the CIA, the President), the country’s policies proceed unabated amidst these symbolic periodic transitions.

✖ This is exceptionally true for American foreign policy against Russia, and one needs look no further than the new [US National Security Strategy of 2015](#) to recognize both the power of the deep state and the futility of lobbying Congress against its dictates. The document explicitly makes it clear that Russia is now seen as a threat to American national security and that the US “will continue to impose significant costs on Russia through sanctions and other means”. Specific attention should be drawn to the last part, “and other means”, which is an obvious allusion to hostile covert operations such as arming Ukraine. The die has already been cast when it comes to sanctions (see the certainty with which the document

speaks about the continued imposition of sanctions without any reference to Congress whatsoever), so it should be no different when it comes to weapons shipments either.

Finally, in the absolutely unlikely event that Congress passes legislation expressly prohibiting the arming of Ukraine, then the deep state, with the rubber stamping of the President, can resort to more surreptitious methods to carry out its preplanned shipments, with the Iran-Contra scandal immediately coming to mind. It doesn't matter what exact form this takes, but what's important is to acknowledge that 'where there's the will, there's the way', and the US deep state certainly has the will to continue pushing Russia's buttons and prodding it into a costly conventional intervention in Ukraine on terms which are controlled by Washington. The solution, therefore, lies not in fruitlessly lobbying Congress and impossibly reversing a *fait accompli*, but in accepting the reality of the deep state's overriding influence on foreign affairs and redirecting one's efforts towards more constructive endeavors, such as raising awareness among the population about this state of affairs and supporting independent media and political oversight initiatives that seek to shed light on it.

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