

Zelensky's Intent to Fire Kiev Regime's Top General Zaluzhny. Mutiny in the Armed Forces if He is Removed?

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Since January 29, reports about the removal of the Kiev regime's top general Valery Zaluzhny have been spreading like wildfire. Although there hasn't been any official confirmation, [while some outlets of the mainstream propaganda machine even issued a rebuttal](#), new revelations by informed (albeit anonymous) sources show that the Neo-Nazi junta frontman Volodymyr Zelensky is still serious about removing Zaluzhny. On January 30, the Financial Times, an important part of that same mainstream propaganda machine, but still a somewhat more reputable source, [reported that Zelensky is preparing to replace his top general](#). Even the FT admitted that the controversial move would be "the biggest shake-up of Ukraine's military command" since Moscow was forced to launch its special military operation (SMO) almost two years ago.

Citing "four people familiar with the discussions", FT claims that, on Monday, Zelensky offered Zaluzhny a new role as a defense adviser, a ceremonial position that would effectively remove all of his executive powers as the military's top officer. The sources claim that Zaluzhny promptly refused the "offer". It's clear that Zelensky left him no actual options, which was also confirmed by two of the four anonymous sources. They also said that, while the decision on Zaluzhny's removal is final, he will keep his position for the time being, almost certainly in order to prevent the Kiev regime's destabilization. These developments are hardly surprising as there have been [simmering tensions between the two for quite some time](#). Occasional reports about the Zelensky-Zaluzhny rivalry started approximately a year ago in various media.

This is a clear indicator that's just when [the spat became so obvious that it couldn't be ignored anymore](#). The two men have diametrically opposing views on how the conflict with

Russia should unfold. Zelensky, a politician who primarily cares about his own interests, wants PR victories that would enable a constant flow of Western funds, [which he then uses for personal gain](#). In that regard, he has the full support of his henchmen, particularly as they're also getting a "slice of the cake". On the other hand, Zaluzhny, who is anything but a saint, still has to think about the fate of his soldiers, as his position depends entirely on the military's actual performance. PR victories are completely inconsequential for him, as they change nothing on the battlefield. The very fact that Zaluzhny is being replaced serves as a rather convincing evidence of that.

Zelensky's strained relationship with Zaluzhny reached a boiling point after the end of the Neo-Nazi junta's much-touted [summer/fall counteroffensive that failed miserably](#). The fact that Zelensky promised to not only defeat Russian forces in former Ukrainian regions, but also Crimea, was a bitter pill to swallow for Zaluzhny. He was certainly aware this was effectively impossible and frustrated that such a daunting task was given precisely to him. One strong possibility is that Zelensky was completely delusional ([something he's certainly prone to](#)), but another is that he deliberately announced such unattainable goals just so he could then blame Zaluzhny for the ([obviously imminent](#)) failure later on. Possibly realizing Zelensky's intentions, the general then tried to one-up him by shifting blame to the Kiev regime's civilian authorities.

And indeed, Zaluzhny has been regularly complaining about ([undeniable](#)) corruption and [a lack of more decisive support](#) for the military. He also [openly called the results of the counteroffensive a "stalemate"](#), which was tantamount to "heresy", as the Neo-Nazi junta and its NATO overlords have been fighting tooth and nail to conceal the humiliating failures of Western weapons and tactics, [which even Ukrainian officers and soldiers said were inferior to their Soviet-era counterparts](#). Coupled with his military career, Zaluzhny's tendency to admit [the Kiev regime's failures](#) (in stark contrast to the perpetual war propaganda echo chamber) has helped him build the reputation of a "war hero" in Ukraine. He will certainly try to capitalize on that to not only keep his power, but possibly even challenge Zelensky in the political arena.

Zaluzhny is surely aware that his removal would cause an uproar in the country. However, most importantly, he might be counting on [the possible armed mutiny](#), as he enjoys unrivaled support in the military. His popularity among civilians should also be taken into account. FT cited a Ukrainian poll released in December, which showed that Zaluzhny enjoys a massive support of 88%. Compared to the 62% that Zelensky got, that's a huge advantage, even if the numbers for the latter aren't grossly inflated (which they most likely are). FT also reported that Zaluzhny is yet to comment on the reports of his dismissal, but pointed out that he published an undated selfie with his chief of the general staff Serhiy Shaptala on Facebook in which both were wearing military sweatshirts. This can surely be interpreted as a message to Zelensky.

FT also mentioned the involvement of Petro Poroshenko, one of Zelensky's top rivals. [The political arena in Ukraine increasingly resembles a hyena brawl](#) as that's precisely how many of the participants have been behaving. The FT's sources claim that it's currently unclear who would replace Zaluzhny, but possible candidates are General Oleksandr Syrsky, commander of the ground forces, and Kyrylo Budanov, the GUR (military intelligence) chief. Political analyst Andrew Korybko recently argued that [the latter is the more likely choice](#). And yet, either of the two would have a tough time commanding respect and authority in the military. [Zelensky himself has been lacking in that department](#), as his attempts to

circumvent Zaluzhny by communicating orders directly to his subordinates have only resulted in disastrous losses.

Both Syrsky and Budanov will surely have big shoes to fill. The former might have a somewhat easier task, as he has been in the military for decades, while the latter has boasted about supposed “convert operations in the Donbass”, which doesn’t seem very convincing to the rest of the military. It doesn’t help that [Zaluzhny’s reputation](#) hasn’t been tarnished by corruption. Namely, some Russian sources are claiming that Zelensky’s offer also included several million dollars in what is essentially a bribe for Zaluzhny to step down, which, as previously mentioned, he promptly refused. Still, it’s highly questionable that he’s simply that virtuous. The much more likely scenario is that Zaluzhny understands that he stands to gain much more from a possible power struggle that he’s very likely to win rather than accept a comparably puny payout.

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