

America Looks to Preserve a New Balance in Europe

News:

Recently, the US has suggested that the patience of countries supporting Ukraine will wear thin if peace talks with Russia do not commence. [*Washington Post*] The change in tone from the Biden administration indicates that perhaps America does not want to see Russia further weakened.

Comment:

At first, it appears odd for the Biden administration to encourage President Zelensky to engage in peace talks, especially when Ukraine has made considerable gains and hastened Russia's retreat from several important territories. Furthermore, Russia's failure to establish air supremacy and Putin's mobilisation draft—largest since WWII—clearly underlines how badly the war is going for Russia. Given Russia's predicament, one would have expected Biden to press Ukraine to achieve more battlefield gains before any negotiated peace settlement.

A close examination of the circumstances behind American efforts to get Ukraine talking to Russia reveals a complex web of factors at work. The high energy prices—caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Western sanctions—are making it difficult for the American people to cope with the rising costs of living. Additionally, successive attempts by the US Fed to curb inflation by raising interest rates to new highs have not only failed but have also heaped more misery on the people. A similar cost of living crisis is wreaking havoc across Europe and testing the resolve of America's closest allies to the limit. Then there is the perpetual threat from the Republican establishment to block the Ukraine aid bill. This could happen soon after the mid-term elections—where the Republicans are expected to make sweeping gains in the US Congress.

These are all important factors that help shape the longevity of America's Ukraine policy. But the most significant reason behind America's recent posturing is that balance has been achieved and US primacy restored. US foreign policy is predicated on maintaining balance of power in different parts of the world under the custodianship of US hegemony. US support for Ukraine was contingent on weakening Russia and not to collapse the country. In April the US Secretary of Defence, Lloyd Austin said, "we want to see Russia weakened to the degree that it can't do the kinds of things that it has done in invading Ukraine." [*CNN*] This makes strategic sense because if Russia was to collapse, it would create a security vacuum in central Asia, enable China to expand its influence in Eurasia and compromise America's existing China containment strategy.

As things stand, US policy makers have calculated that Russia is severely weakened, its armed forces humiliated, and Europe—in particular Germany—is more than ever reliant on US security. Hence, in the light of the foregoing reasons underpinned by a new balance in Europe, Biden is looking to cement peace between Ukraine and Russia. During any peace negotiations, America will do its utmost to ensure that unoccupied Ukraine is off limits to Russia, thereby rendering it as an Asiatic power unable to pose security challenges to Europe.

It is incumbent upon the aware Muslims to be cognizant of the power politics between great powers and to seize opportunities to liberate the Ummah from the shackles of foreign powers.

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