

War for War's Sake

Three years into the Ukraine War, the West is stuck in a loop of self-serving delusion and denial.

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What began as a strategic miscalculation has turned into a geopolitical disaster of epic proportions—not for Russia but for the Collective West. First among them is the European Union, which, by now, looks more unstable and riddled with internal fractures than Russia did at any point in the war. Fueled not just by misjudgment, but by a refusal to admit failure, the EU kakistocrats haven't learned a thing, even after 17 (!) sanction packages. In a recent Neutrality Studies talk, economist and veteran policy advisor Jeffrey Sachs is here to dismantle the narratives keeping this war alive and lay bare the deep fractures in Western foreign policy thinking.

A War That Should Never Have Happened

We must repeat this like a mantra: This war was avoidable. The US and its NATO allies pushed eastward despite decades of warnings—from diplomats, scholars, and even their own intelligence officials—that such expansion would trigger confrontation with Russia. Those warnings were ignored. The Minsk Agreements, once a possible path to peace, were never honoured in good faith. Instead, the West treated Ukraine not as a sovereign actor, but as a pawn in a broader campaign to contain Moscow.

What resulted is this ongoing catastrophe for Ukraine and a strategic deadlock for the West. The public was sold a fantasy—that Russia's economy would collapse, Putin would fall, and Ukraine would triumph with NATO's backing. None of that happened. Russia's economy simply adapted (how dare they not drop-dead?!), the political leadership remains intact, and Ukraine is facing devastation. Yet the narrative continues, pushed by think tanks, media outlets, and career bureaucrats too invested in the war to admit they got it wrong.

Europe's Strategic Bankruptcy

Rather than recalibrate, European leaders have doubled down, sacrificing their own economic and diplomatic interests to maintain a war posture that was dictated from across the Atlantic. The EU has utterly failed to think for itself. The block just keeps sending weapons and parroting slogans about unity and values, while an entire generation in Ukraine is being whipped out. And instead of admitting that this war must be solved at the negotiating table, it's the Europeans who are still pushing for ever more of the same failed military and economic escalation, even while their Trans-Atlantic Patron has clearly already moved on.

In the meantime, Europe's domestic vows are mounting by the day. German industry is bleeding competitiveness. Energy costs are surging. And while the U.S. reaps profits from LNG exports and arms sales, its European allies are left holding the bill. And all of that because of a deeper fear: that admitting failure in Ukraine would expose the hollowness of EU foreign policy and shatter the illusion of Western coherence.

Media Enablers

One of the most insidious elements in all of this is the media. Far from challenging power, Western outlets have served as amplifiers of states' narratives—ignoring inconvenient facts, silencing dissenting voices, and framing diplomacy as betrayal. The result is a public that's been systematically misinformed. Peace, while possible, has become a hush-hush word.

This information control reflects a broader shift in liberal democracies, where war-making is now justified with guilt-tripping and questionable moral crusades. The Ukraine war has become a theatre of virtue-signalling, where nuances are banished, and anyone calling for negotiation is labeled a puppet of the Kremlin. Sachs got it absolutely right when he says that "*The longer this continues, the more the costs will*

rise, not just for Ukraine, but for Europe's autonomy and the credibility of the West as a global actor."

Living in Past Glory

If this war has exposed anything, it's the West's deep inability to adapt to a multipolar world. Clinging to the illusion of unchallenged dominance, Western leadership remains trapped in a post-Cold War delusion, where admitting failure would mean confronting their diminished place in a rapidly shifting global order. Rather than face that reality, they've chosen avoidance—sacrificing regional peace to preserve their own peace of mind. And so the war drags on, not for victory, not for values, but to spare a fading empire the humiliation of waking up.