

Versione Italiana

At the beginning of the year there was a heated debate, at various levels and in various places, about the supply of M1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine. These very expensive and complex war machines, it was thought, would allow the Ukrainian forces a greater reaction capacity, to the point that the Russians considered the move to be a provocative, unacceptable leap in offensive quality. It didn't take long to understand how obsolete those enormous, armored monsters were now, due to their vulnerability to kamikaze attacks from tiny Russian FPV drones, super-light aerial devices easily maneuverable by soldiers on the ground, which can be produced at low cost in large quantities. CNN recently broadcast an investigation documenting the grotesque condition of six of these giant, stationary tracked vehicles at the front, hidden by foliage and practically unusable, partly due to repeated breakdowns, maintenance difficulties and lack of fuel. They were a gracious gift from Biden, the 31 Abrams, testimony to America's "enduring and unfailing commitment" to Ukraine, a gift that had the effect of provoking a further escalation of the conflict, without even the greater strengthening the Ukrainian military apparatus to show for it; rather, it was weakened. How many steps like this have been taken during the 27 months of the war in Ukraine? How much strategic incompetence has been mixed with political improvisation? How many choices, especially in recent months, have been dictated by internal political calculations in an election year for the USA and Europe?



M1 Abrams Tank

These questions are first of all aimed at the Americans, the major “shareholders” of NATO and those most committed to supporting Kiev, but also at the European allies, while another phase is looming that will involve yet another increase in the level of conflict, with the supply of long-range offensive armaments to Ukraine, which is authorized to use them to strike the Russians in their territory. This time the increase in the level of conflict is even more fraught with consequences and risks, including that of a slide towards nuclear conflict. Putin has now put the use of nuclear weapons in his normal rhetorical repertoire.

NATO foreign ministers are meeting today in Czernin Palace in Prague, a conclave where the dangerous combination of strategic incompetence and political improvisation once again seems set to dominate, with the aggravating circumstance of an ever-increasing weight of the hawks, led by Emmanuel Macron on the European side, and the members of the Biden administration who represent the interests of the military industrial complex, the current led by Anthony Blinken, alias the advisor to the general secretary of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg. The US Secretary of State is the most influential official of this current, more than the Secretary of Defense, Lloyd Austin, who is often engaged in missions far from the main conflict areas in Europe and the Middle East.



The 61 billion dollars in military assistance destined for Ukraine - with Joe Biden's signature dated April 24th - together with the other 34 billion destined for Israel and Taiwan, is not an aid package, it is a campaign tactic, given that the bulk of the dollars allocated will remain in America for the production of armaments in American factories, to then be tested on the ground in Ukraine. Joe Biden has not yet expressed his opinion on the sending of long-range weapons, poised as he is between strategic choices that would do nothing but fuel the conflict and political decisions useful for his re-election in states where the presence of the military industrial complex with its related activities is strong. An escalation of the conflict in Ukraine, combined with the exacerbation of the Israeli war in Gaza, is certainly not desirable in the final phase of the electoral campaign, faced with an opponent who can easily press him, now posing as a hawk, now as a dove, in order to highlight the wavering of Biden's leadership.

As with Israel, where the influence of the rocker Blinken has led the president to gradually give in to Netanyahu's destructive incontinence, when it comes to Ukraine Biden also seems to listen to the Secretary of State, lacking the counterweight of a National Security Advisor who has direct access to the Oval Office, as has always been the case for a president. We don't expect the current one, Jake Sullivan, to be of the caliber of a Brzezinski or a Kissinger, but he is an expert in international politics who wrote an essay in *Foreign Affairs*, published five days before October 7, 2023, in which he claimed that "the Middle East has not been so peaceful in decades" and "we have de-escalated the crises in Gaza".

It is not clear how one can feel safe under the umbrella of a NATO like this, which now carries on day by day with à la carte moves, and knowing how the opening of an honest discussion about its very existence could be considered heresy, a debate that Europeans may yet be forced to engage if Donald Trump is elected president on November 5th.

il manifesto

Translation by Paul Rosenberg

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