



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on January 31, 2024

## Ukraine Corruption Continues. Five Arrested for Stealing \$40M Meant for Weapons

Americans who wonder how Ukraine is spending all the tax money the Deep State Uniparty has sent there just found out where some of it is going.

Straight into the pockets of corrupt officials who work in the Zelensky Regime's defense ministry.

Five officials have been arrested for stealing some \$40 million, and if past reports indicate anything, a lot more than \$40 million has gone down the drain for the sake of the Uniparty's latest globalist adventure.



alfexe/iStock/Getty Images Plus

Ukraine says corrupt officials stole \$40 million meant to buy arms for the war with Russia  
<https://t.co/Tirs8pzxt6>

— The Associated Press (@AP)  
[January 28, 2024](#)

### The Arrests

"Employees from a Ukrainian arms firm conspired with defense ministry officials to embezzle almost \$40 million earmarked to buy 100,000 mortar shells for the war with Russia," the Associated Press reported, citing the nation's security service, or SBU.

Five officials could land 12 years in the slammer if found guilty. One tried to escape arrest by fleeing the country.

### [Continued AP:](#)

The investigation comes as Kyiv attempts to clamp down on corruption in a bid to speed up its membership in the European Union and NATO. Officials from both blocs have demanded widespread anti-graft reforms before Kyiv can join them.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was elected on an anti-corruption platform in 2019, long before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Both the president and his aides have portrayed the recent firings of top officials, notably that of Ivan Bakanov, former head of the State Security Service, in July 2022, as proof of their efforts to crack down on graft.

Security officials say that the current investigation dates back to August 2022, when officials signed a contract for artillery shells worth 1.5 billion hryvnias (\$39.6 million) with arms firm Lviv Arsenal.



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After receiving payment, company employees were supposed to transfer the funds to a business registered abroad, which would then deliver the ammunition to Ukraine.

However, the goods were never delivered and the money was instead sent to various accounts in Ukraine and the Balkans, investigators said.

Maybe they have “cracked down” on graft, but the unanswered question is how much American tax money meant to fight Russia is sitting in Switzerland or offshore bank accounts.

And Zelensky didn’t fire Bakanov for “graft.” He fired him for “treason.”

In July 2022, Bakanov and Prosecutor General Iryna Venediktova were pink-slipped when Zelensky “was responding to a large number of treason investigations opened into employees of law enforcement agencies, including the prosecutor general’s office and the domestic security agency,” the *New York Times* reported.

[Continued the Times:](#)

Mr. Zelensky’s office ordered that Ms. Venediktova, who had assumed a prominent and very public role in Ukraine’s efforts to prosecute Russian war crimes and atrocities, be removed from her position. Another decree did the same for Mr. Bakanov, citing “Article 47 of the Disciplinary Statute of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.” That pertains to “failure to perform service duties, which led to human casualties or other grave consequences.”

A total of 651 cases of high treason had been opened against law enforcement personnel, Mr. Zelensky said in his speech — and that more than 60 employees of the prosecutor’s office and the Security Service of Ukraine remained in occupied territory and were working against the state.

Bakanov, the *Times* reported, “was one of several comedy industry veterans to follow Mr. Zelensky into government.”

As for Venediktova, she failed to report property transactions on government disclosures.

### **Major Theft**

An official [who was cashiered](#) because of corruption in his department was Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov. Zelensky fired him because of what the *Times* called “financial improprieties” that involved “mishandling of military contracts.” Reznikov, apparently, wasn’t involved.

His firing in September [followed a purge](#) of 33 military recruitment officials involved in bribery. Two officials received as much as \$10,000 a piece to label men unfit for service.

In January last year, top defense officials were canned because [they were involved](#) in a “food corruption” scandal. The Defense Ministry was purchasing food at inflated prices.

In September, when *Time* magazine’s Simon Shuster traveled to Ukraine with Zelensky after the Ukrainian president concluded another panhandling trip to Washington, the [writer recounted](#) a conversation with a top official:

Amid all the pressure to root out corruption, I assumed, perhaps naively, that officials in Ukraine would think twice before taking a bribe or pocketing state funds. But when I made



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this point to a top presidential adviser in early October, he asked me to turn off my audio recorder so he could speak more freely. “Simon, you’re mistaken,” he says. “People are stealing like there’s no tomorrow.”

How much American tax money has been stolen will likely never be known.

### **Corruption ... and Murder, Too**

Yet the corruption in Ukraine isn’t the only crime that should worry Americans.

As [The New American reported](#) two weeks ago, the government murdered American commentator Gonzalo Lira by medical neglect.

The corrupt regime arrested and jailed Lira for his commentary about the war with Russia. As a forthcoming print edition of *TNA* explains, when he was attempting to escape the country, Lira wrote on X that he was tortured unmercifully in prison.

He contracted double pneumonia and died there in early January.

The fanatically pro-Zelensky Biden administration did nothing to help Lira.



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