

Ex-senator: US on the brink of war over Ukraine, Taiwan behavior

- By Al Mayadeen English
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Ex-Virginia lawmaker Richard Black condemns the US for nearing the brink of a war due to its policies towards Taiwan and Ukraine, for provocations and excessive arms supply, respectively.



- Former Virginia Republican lawmaker, Richard Black (AP)

Former Virginia State Senator Richard Black told *Sputnik* that elements within the US government have put the world on the edge of war due to reckless policy decisions with respect to the situations in Ukraine and Taiwan.

"There are elements of the American government that are quite irresponsible right now. And they do reckless things. They're doing them in Ukraine, and they're doing them with Taiwan. And they're being recklessly provocative," Black said.

"When a nation like the United States is reckless, when they gamble that they can do something that's provocative, then they depend on the sound judgment of the other country... and that's a very dangerous thing to do, because either side can make mistakes."

Black added that he shares former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's concerns that the US is on the edge of war with Russia and China over issues "we partly created ourselves," without any idea where this is going to end or even where it is supposed to lead to, while simultaneously gambling with the lives of American citizens by relying on the other side not miscalculating.

Kissinger even pointed out that there is no choice but to take Russian President Vladimir Putin's security concerns seriously, pointing out that it was a mistake for NATO to signal to Ukraine that it might eventually join the military alliance.

Pelosi trip a 'needless provocation'

US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi made her trip to Taiwan to undermine Washington's delicate One China policy, which the US has pursued since the presidency of Richard Nixon. Pelosi in August became the highest-ranking US official to visit Taiwan in 25 years. China condemned Pelosi's trip, which it regarded as a gesture of support for separatism, and launched large-scale military exercises in the vicinity of the island.

"It was not well received by the people of the United States," Black commented, as he found it "shameful" because Pelosi's trip was also meant to offend the people of China.

"So I hope that that type of thing will be a thing of the past and we can draw back from all of these needless provocations against the Chinese people."

"Over the next few years after China and the United States started working together, the United States recognized that there was one China and that the government was in Beijing. And we worked through the United Nations at the time," Black said.

"So we were recognizing that Beijing was a legitimate government of all of China. But at the same time, it was very delicate because Taiwan had very strong support by many conservatives in the United States. So, President Nixon had to balance those concerns that people didn't want Taiwan to be invaded or something," he said.

"There was kind of an understanding that developed that someday China would exert full sovereignty over Taiwan. But it wasn't urgent... China was very patient, and as long as they had that general understanding."

"The US started back some several years ago, running naval ships frequently through the Straits of Taiwan. And you know, I don't think China would have a problem with a naval vessel going through there from time to time. But when we started doing it very publicly as part of military maneuvers and things, it naturally bothers China," he said.

"Speaker Nancy Pelosi is coming to the end of her time as speaker. We have elections coming up in November. That will almost certainly shift control of the House of Representatives to the Republicans. My guess is that there will be a major shift of power to the Republicans," Black said.

"I suspect that her visit was prompted by personal motives. I don't know that for a fact. But I think she looks and she realizes she is going to leave office. And so you noticed she also went to Kiev, she met with [Ukrainian President Volodymyr] Zelenskyy. And so she seems to be trying to do whatever she can to provoke tensions both with Russia and China," he added.

Beijing considers Taiwan an unalienable part of its sovereign territory and opposes any official contact between the island and other countries. The US has

been supporting pro-independence forces in Taiwan and selling weapons to the island.

Beijing has repeatedly said the One China principle is a political foundation of China-US relations and that violations by Washington of its own obligations have been jeopardizing cooperation between the two countries, threatening peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.

The dark web of US weapons sent to Ukraine

Former Virginia State Senator Black brought up the matter of US arms supply to Ukraine while much of its funding for it will likely end up in Swiss bank accounts.

The US announced its most recent aid package of \$3 billion in security aid for Ukraine on Wednesday. "The United States had no justification for pouring arms into Ukraine or for getting involved," Black said.

"It's just an immense amount of money. Some of it will be in bank accounts owned by Ukrainian oligarchs. Some of it will be in bank accounts owned by the sons and the relatives of some US senators who will profit very handsomely," Black said.

Citing a *CBS News* report, he said a mere 30% of US weapons sent to Ukraine are actually making it to the front lines.

Moscow has repeatedly denounced the continuous flow of weapons to Ukraine from its Western allies, saying that it adds fuel to the fire. In April, Russia sent a note to NATO member states, condemning their military assistance to Ukraine. In July, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said foreign weapons supplied by the West to Ukraine ended up in illegal markets, not only in Europe but also in the war-torn Middle East.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov noted that any cargo containing weapons for Ukraine will become a legitimate target for Russia.

In addition to the recent financial aid, the latest US security package includes six additional NASAMS and munitions, laser-guided rocket systems, 245,000 artillery shells, and 65,000 mortar rounds.

Black concluded that the recklessness of this war is difficult to comprehend, with weapons going "all over the place," adding that the US had no justification for recklessly pouring weapons into Ukraine and US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi had no right to visit Taiwan to challenge Washington's delicate One-China policy.

US forces to train Ukrainians on US-provided artillery systems

The training will be held "within days" in a location outside of Ukraine.



- A Ukrainian soldier holding a Javelin anti-tank missile system during exercises in 2021.

US troops will soon begin training their Ukrainian forces on artillery systems provided by the US as part of an [\\$800 million lethal supplies package](#).

The training will be held "within days" in a location outside of Ukraine. Officials from the US Defense Department

stated that they would employ a "train the trainer" strategy.

On his account, Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby told reporters, on Monday, said that the [United States](#) announced that it would send 18 155mm towed howitzers to Ukraine.

Furthermore, the cannons will be supplied by Army and Marine Corps units. Officials from the Pentagon declined to identify the specific weapon systems, which are most likely the M-198 or the newer M-777 howitzers, both of which are towed 155mm guns.

Assuming the Ukrainians send troops who are already familiar with the fundamentals of field artillery, the training should only take a few days, according to US officials. According to Kirby, Ukrainian artillery generally employs 152mm cannons, which are slightly smaller than US systems.

It is worth mentioning that Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Oleg Syromolotov has recently stated that the US has supplied Kiev with [weapons worth \\$1.65 billion](#) over the last month and a half.

The diplomat went on to say that it is obvious that Kiev, which has no control over the militants' actions, will be unable to ensure the safe storage and non-proliferation of these weapons, which may then end up in the shadow markets of other countries.

This adds to the package of billions of dollars of arms and military equipment sent to Kiev since the war began, not to mention the military training provided to Ukrainian soldiers.

The US government has provided Ukraine with [\\$2.3 billion](#) in security assistance since President Joe Biden took office last January, including thousands of anti-tank and anti-aircraft missile systems.

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