

The Washington Times – 17.02.2015

By Guy Taylor

Top GOP senators blast Obama admin's waffling on arming Ukraine military

Керівники Республіканської партії в сенаті спонукають Обаму до військового озброєння України

Два впливових республіканця в Сенаті Ліндсі Грехем та Джон МакКейн заявляють, що Білий дім має зайняти більш агресивну позицію по відношенню до війни, яка ведеться на сході України. За їхніми словами, США мають негайно надіслати військову техніку до України. З посиленням на постійні обстріли Дебальцевого сенатори говорять про недотримання сепаратистами досягнутих у Мінську домовленостей, що, власне, і спонукає їх до більш різких заяв у цьому контексті.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/feb/17/john-mccain-lindsey-graham-blast-obama-ukraine/>



Two influential Republican national security hawks in the Senate hammered the Obama administration's failure to take a more aggressive posture toward the war in eastern Ukraine Tuesday, asserting that the White House should "immediately" authorize the shipment of U.S. weapons to the Ukrainian military.

"The Chancellor of Germany and the President of France, with the support of the President of the United States, are legitimizing the dismemberment of a sovereign nation in Europe for the first time in seven decades," Sens. Lindsay Graham of South Carolina and John McCain of Arizona said in a joint statement.

"It is inexcusable to adhere to a failed cease-fire agreement as Russia and its Ukrainian proxies escalate their uncompromising siege of Debaltseve," the senators said, in reference to ongoing shelling of the eastern Ukrainian town by Moscow-backed separatists despite a cease-fire that was supposed to have gone into effect Sunday.

The two senators have fumed since last week, when news emerged that the cease-fire deal had been negotiated by the leaders of France, Germany, Russia and Ukraine, without any direct participation from Washington.

Obama administration officials have resisted that characterization, claiming that they maintained close contacts with all parties involved in the negotiation and supported its formulation Thursday. Observers from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have said the stoppage in fighting is mainly holding across eastern Ukraine, despite an escalation of clashes around Debaltseve — a key railway hub that the Russia-backed separatists say is outside the bounds of the agreed to cease-fire.

OSCE monitors have said the separatists won't allow them access to the town.

State Department spokeswoman Jennifer Psaki told reporters on Tuesday afternoon that she had not yet seen the statement from Mr. Graham and Mr. McCain. "But I can absolutely assure you that the secretary [of state], the president [and] every member of our national security team, remains committed to the exact opposite, which is respecting helping Ukraine and — and ensuring that their sovereignty, their territorial integrity, are respected," Mrs. Psaki said.

"We certainly believe that a diplomatic approach and a political approach is the right approach here, but the same options that were on the table or two weeks ago remain on the table," she said.

The options Mrs. Psaki referred to apparently include the possibility of shipping U.S. weaponry, including armor-piercing tanks to Ukraine's military. Congress gave the White House authority to being sending such weapons early this year, but the Obama administration has so far resisted out of concern that such a move would only escalate the war that has already killed more 5,000 people in eastern Ukraine over the past year.

"We'll continue to have internal discussions, as we've been having, about the appropriate assistance," Mrs. Psaki said Tuesday.

But the statement from Mr. Graham and Mr. McCain accused the administration of dangerously dragging its feet.

"Western leaders say there is no military solution to the conflict in Ukraine," the senators said. "Vladimir Putin clearly does not think so. He continues his aggression, and in the absence of greater Western support for Ukrainian forces, a Russian-imposed military solution is exactly what will continue to unfold in Ukraine, just as it has in parts of Georgia and Moldova.

"With more than 5,000 Ukrainians killed and many more wounded, it is long past time to provide defensive weapons to Ukraine and to impose additional sanctions and costs that can change Putin's behavior," they said. "President Obama should do so immediately, rather than hide behind a failed attempt to negotiate with an aggressor when conditions on the ground render diplomacy ineffective."