

Letters

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Give Ukraine the arms it needs to defeat Putin's invasion

This week, across Ukraine, homes and energy infrastructure have come under fire again ("Russia bombards Kyiv with kamikaze drones", Report, October 18).

Humiliated by his battlefield losses, Vladimir Putin is using the attack on the Crimean Bridge as a pretext for a longstanding plan to plunge Ukraine into the darkness and cold. And he will, should we fail to defend ourselves.

Don't think candlelit dinners in woollen socks. Think colossal catastrophe: no water, no sewage, thousands freezing in sub-zero temperatures, surgeons working in the

dark, military supply lines crippled. We can beat Putin but, with winter closing in fast, the clock is ticking.

Ukrainians have been waiting for the NASAMS air defence systems since May. One German system, IRIS-T SLM, has at long last arrived.

But it will hardly protect from the carpet-bombing, for which Putin specially employed Sergei Surovikin, the man who levelled Aleppo and Mariupol.

While Ukraine is still mostly using the Soviet-made S-300 anti-aircraft systems, nearly a thousand MIM-104 Patriot air defence systems are

languishing in the US. Plenty of NASAMS lie unused in Norway, as are various other anti-air and missile systems across the EU.

Nothing stops President Joe Biden from authorising a swift and steady supply of weapons needed by Ukraine to avoid annihilation.

The US Lend-Lease Act, which revives a second world war tool removing bureaucratic hurdles for the US to quickly send weapons to Ukraine and other eastern European countries with the promise of repayment later, came into force on October 1.

We are not asking our American and

European friends to take up arms, to die on the Ukrainian steppe, to militarise their economies or even change their lives much. We will fight this war with everything that we have, and we will fight it to the very end.

But if we fail to stop Putin's army, it is Polish, German, French and American soldiers who will be fighting on the banks of the Vistula, Oder and Somme.

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