



Pekka Kallioniemi @P_Kallioniemi

Feb 24, 2025 · 26 tweets · [P_Kallioniemi/status/1894004956165771655](#)

In today's Vatnik Soup, I'll introduce Russia's main narratives and explain how they are being spread online by Russian operatives and MAGA Republicans. After three years of war, Russia still relies on old narratives, now amplified by the Trump administration.

1/25



Throughout the years – or even decades – Russia's narratives against the West have remained largely the same. Many of them date back to the Cold War era, when the KGB and CIA were bitter enemies. But since then, the media landscape has drastically changed.

2/25

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 38U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT
29 October 1984

The Great Superpower Spy War

KGB vs. CIA



KGB center in Moscow's Dzerzhinski Square.

Money, blackmail, sex—no holds are barred. Question: Who is winning this battle between Soviet and American "moles"?

With the arrest of the first FBI agent ever accused as a Soviet spy, the public is getting a rare look at a high-stakes war being waged by two old adversaries—the espionage agencies of America and the Soviet Union.

Fought with sex, money, blackmail and even violence, this spy war has a goal that goes far beyond theft of plans for a new gun or an advanced piece of technology. The stakes are the most closely held secrets of the intelligence services whose operations are crucial to national security.

Amid a deepening chill between the superpowers, the prospect of penetration is an ever present concern. Both sides are waging a relentless campaign to plant operatives within one another's spy services. For America, the chief target is Moscow's Committee for State Security—the KGB. For the Kremlin, it is the Central Intelligence Agency.

In this shadow world of lies, deception, double crosses and double agents, no one can say for certain which side holds the upper hand. Both powers can lay claim to major victories, but both have suffered costly and embarrassing defeats.

For the U.S., the latest setback came from an unlikely quarter—the Federal Bureau of Investigation, an agency that has long boasted a blemish-free record. Its spyproof image was shattered in October with the arrest of Richard W. Miller, 47, a 20-year FBI veteran accused of acting as an agent for the Soviet Union in the bureau's Los Angeles office.

The charge against Miller: Peddling secrets to a Soviet émigré named Svetlana Ogorodnikova, 34, a self-proclaimed KGB major who allegedly lured him into a personal relationship, then offered money for classified documents. The government claims the debt-strapped agent, married and the father of eight children, sought \$65,000 from the KGB.

Although the actual damage is unclear, Miller admits to giving Moscow a 25-page classified document that officials say would provide the KGB with a detailed picture of U.S. intelligence activities, techniques and requirements. The document did not, however, spell out names of active agents or details of current operations.

In the never ending spy war, both sides have found willing double agents. A KGB "mole" spent years working inside Britain's code-breaking center, diverting supersecret U.S. intelligence data to Moscow. America had a man inside Polish intelligence, blowing the cover on Soviet spy operations in the U.S. as recently as 1983.



KGB boss Chebrikov

CIA Director William Casey boasts that his agency last year helped give the KGB the worst setback in its history, aiding in expulsion of some 135 Soviet spies worldwide. Yet some critics in a position to know fear that U.S. services—particularly the CIA—are being placed at a disadvantage in the competition with their Soviet rivals.

"Today, the CIA is reluctant to mix it up with the KGB," asserts a knowledgeable U.S. official. "It's a dicey game. Lots of things can

go wrong. They are not out there in every nook and cranny trying to roll up the KGB."

Moscow's Quest for "Moles"

The prospect of a Soviet mole's burrowing into top U.S. intelligence echelons has haunted America ever since the defection of H. A. R. "Kim" Philby, one of Britain's most senior intelligence officials, to Russia some 20 years ago. U.S. jitters worsened when Heinz Felfe, a senior West German counterspy, surfaced as a KGB plant in the '50s.

The CIA itself was thrown into turmoil in the late 1960s and early 1970s by counterspy James Angleton's suspicions—which he never proved and which many ridiculed—that a KGB operative had penetrated the upper reaches of his agency. Angleton left the CIA in 1975.

The Kremlin devotes vast resources to infiltrating other spy services. Thousands work for the KGB, under the command of Marshal Viktor Chebrikov. Still more are employed by the military-intelligence arm known as GRU. They are supported by East European spy agencies.

By itself, the KGB is said to have 10,000 espionage officers assigned strictly to foreign spying—including 500 in the U.S. on diplomatic missions. Says a senior FBI official wryly: "We are blessed with the best agents the KGB has to offer. They are smooth and Westernized. They cultivate relationships with everyone from clerks to company presidents."

The clearest penetration of the CIA came to light in late 1980 with the arrest of David Henry Barnett, who remains the only member of the CIA's officer ranks ever to be publicly unmasked as a KGB operative.

After working under cover for the agency in Indonesia through the 1960s, Barnett, now serving 18 years in prison, resigned in 1970 to start a private business in Jakarta. In a few years, his venture collapsed and financial losses mounted.

In 1976, Barnett—\$100,000 in debt—turned to the KGB for help. In Vienna and Jakarta, he delivered American defense information, including data about a secret CIA operation, to the KGB. He disclosed the names of Indone-

UP FRONT

Did NATO Promise Not to Enlarge? Gorbachev Says “No”

Steven Pifer · Thursday, November 6, 2014



It is abundantly evident that Russian President Vladimir Putin is no fan of NATO. Indeed, he displays a pronounced—almost obsessive—antipathy toward the Alliance. He claims that NATO took advantage of Russian weakness after the collapse of the Soviet Union to enlarge to its east, in violation of promises allegedly made to Moscow by Western leaders. But no such promises were made—a point now confirmed by someone who was definitely in a position to know: Mikhail Gorbachev, then president of the Soviet Union.

PRESIDENT PUTIN'S NATO NARRATIVE

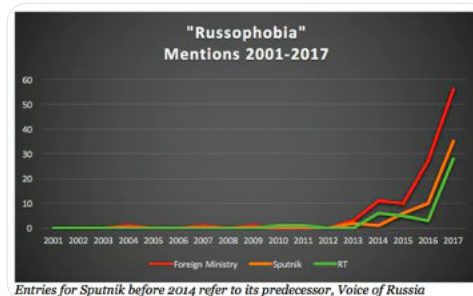
The West's supposed violation of a pledge not to enlarge NATO has long figured as a key element in Putin's narrative about (and against) the Alliance. In his bombastic [February 2007 speech to the Munich Security Conference](#), he said:



Russian propaganda and disinformation revolves around four main themes:

- 1) Russia is the victim,
- 2) Historical revisionism,
- 3) The “decadent West” is collapsing,
- 4) The CIA and/or “evil Anglo-Saxons” are behind every revolution & anti-Kremlin activity.

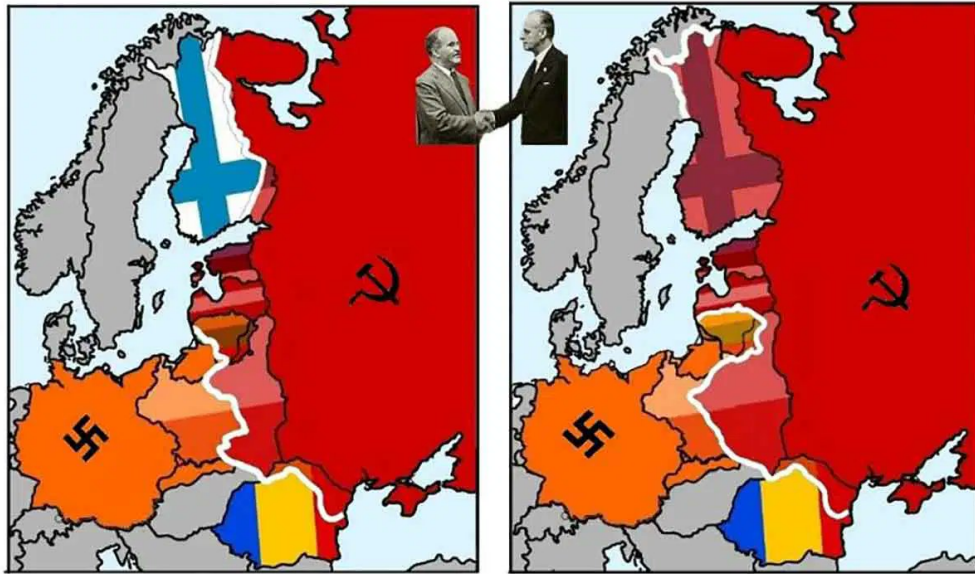
3/25



Molotov-Ribbentrop pact

German-Soviet plan to divide Eastern Europe

Real Part of: "non-aggression pact" **Planned**
Signed: 23.08.39



PRO-KREMLIN DISINFORMATION NARRATIVES ABOUT POPULAR PROTESTS

COLOUR REVOLUTION
ORCHESTRATED BY THE WEST

PROTESTERS WERE
PAID, INSTRUCTED BY
THE WEST

RUSSOPHOBIC
PROVOCATION /
ATTEMPT TO SPOIL
RELATIONS
WITH RUSSIA

CIA AND OTHER SECRET
SERVICES ARE BEHIND IT

UKRAINIAN PLOT

NAZIS /
FASCISTS ARE
INVOLVED

VALUES UNDER
THREAT



UKRAINE WAR

Putin blames West for 'most dangerous' decade since World War II

Russian leader shows no regrets on Ukraine, says U.S. must treat rivals as equals



Russian President Vladimir Putin delivers a speech during the 19th annual meeting of the Valdai Discussion Club in Moscow on Oct. 27. (Sputnik via Reuters)

Today, Russia's information warfare has 3 main goals:

- 1) End all aid to Ukraine,
- 2) Change leadership in Kyiv,
- 3) Lift Russia sanctions

Right now, the Kremlin's disinformation mainly focuses on demonizing Ukraine's leadership, especially President Zelenskyy.

4/25

Since the Trump administration is actively aligning itself with the Kremlin, the MAGA movement and its leaders have been aggressively spreading these lies. The most prominent one, even echoed by Trump, is that Zelenskyy is a "dictator" who doesn't want peace.

5/25

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Trump attacks Zelenskyy as a 'dictator without elections' who duped US

The president's remarkable attack on the Ukrainian president is sure to deeply worry international allies and domestic supporters of an American-led global order.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (left) meets with President Donald Trump at Trump Tower on Sept. 27, 2024, in New York. | Julia Demaree Nihkinson/AP

By ELI STOKOLS, ERIC BAZAIL-EIMIL and PAUL MCLEARY
02/19/2025 11:14 AM EST
Updated: 02/19/2025 01:28 PM EST



First, Trump has demanded that Ukraine hold elections. This is impossible, as Ukraine is under martial law due to Russia's invasion, and its constitution prohibits elections during wartime. Also, how would people in occupied territories vote? Who would oversee the process?

Trump says calls for new elections in Ukraine come from his administration. ‘That’s not a Russia thing.’

1:09 am, February 19, 2025 · Source: CNN



In a press conference on Tuesday, Donald Trump said his administration, not Russian negotiators, is pushing Ukraine to hold elections to test Volodymyr Zelensky's legitimacy as president. "When they want a seat at the table, you could say the people have to... wouldn't the people of Ukraine have to say, like, 'You know, it's been a long time since we've had an election.' That's not a Russia thing. That's something coming from me and coming from many other countries also," the U.S. president told reporters.

Ukraine's constitution bars elections during martial law, making presidential vote impossible

fb/mid/ew © 20.02.2025, 13:22



Holding an election in a war-torn country, with large areas under occupation, poses formidable challenges. Photo by Brendan Hoffman/Getty Images

NEWS FEED, VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY, UKRAINE, ELECTIONS IN UKRAINE, WAR, RUSSIA

'Do international observers want to be placed in Pokrovsk?' – Zelensky criticizes calls for elections following Trump's comments

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by Dmytro Basmat • February 23, 2025 8:13 PM • 2 min read



President Volodymyr Zelensky gives a press conference during the forum 'Ukraine. Year 2025' on February 23, 2025 in Kyiv, Ukraine. (Ivan Antypenko/Suspilne Ukraine/JSC "UA:PBC"/Global Images Ukraine via Getty Images)

Russia pushing Ukraine elections to attempt installing a puppet government

Asked by [ITV News](#) about Russian claims that Ukraine should hold elections and that his presidency is illegitimate, Zelenskyy responded: *"Who says it – Russians?"* When the journalist confirmed, he stated:

"Well, first of all, I'd like to say that you're right here – the election topic is being pushed by the Russkies, and obviously, they need their person [in power in Ukraine], just anyone who is theirs."

He argued that Russia wants to control Ukraine institutionally, as it did in the past, preventing it from developing independently or joining the European Union. According to Zelenskyy, Moscow seeks to keep Ukraine as a *"raw materials appendage"* by exploiting its economy while suppressing its language and culture.

Suspending martial law would dismantle the army

Zelenskyy warned that if Ukraine suspends martial law to hold elections, it will be unable to maintain its wartime-sized army legally. He stated:

"If we suspend martial law, we will lose the army, and the Russkies will be happy – it's a matter of combat readiness, morale, and everything else. You lose that, and legally, you can no longer maintain such an army. That's a fact."

Second, Trump and his allies have criticized media censorship in Ukraine. In reality, Ukraine shut down outlets owned by Viktor Medvedchuk – Russia's top choice to lead a puppet government if Kyiv fell. His channels were 100% Russian propaganda.

Another Ukraine: a disinformation platform run by an exiled Ukrainian oligarch in Russia

INFORMATION WARS EUROPE

Viktor Medvedchuk, a Ukrainian oligarch who is close to Vladimir Putin, found refuge in Russia after leaving Ukraine, where he faces treason charges. He runs a Russian-language portal pushing Kremlin narratives on Ukraine and the war, but his latest foray into disinformation has run into its own challenges.

Issued on: 29/02/2024 - 20:58 | 7 min

By: Etienne BOUCHE

Video by: Leela JACINTO Follow X



A central figure in pro-Kremlin networks in Ukraine, Viktor Medvedchuk is today a refugee in Russia after being included in a prisoner exchange. © France Médias Monde graphics studio

TODAY'S

French surgeon
faces court in
abuse trial

FRANCE

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Ukraine when j
Moscow, FM s

LIVE EUROPE

US agencies p
Musk, telling w
his email

AMERICAS

Hamis says n

This article is more than 2 years old

Russia trades Azov fighters for Putin ally in biggest prisoner swap of Ukraine war

Moscow releases 215 prisoners in exchange for former Ukrainian MP Viktor Medvedchuk and others

● [Russia-Ukraine war - latest updates](#)

Shaun Walker *in Kyiv*

Thu 22 Sep 2022 15.23 CEST

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Russia trades Azov fighters for Putin ally in biggest prisoner swap of Ukraine war - video report

NEWS FEED

Media: Medvedchuk's pro-Russian movement opens branch in Serbia

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by Nate Ostiller and The Kyiv Independent news desk · December 7, 2023 6:02 PM · 2 min read



Ukrainian oligarch Viktor Medvedchuk, who was handed over to Russia as part of a prisoner swap, is seen in Kyiv's Appeal Court during a hearing on May 21, 2021. The lawmaker, who counts Russian dictator Vladimir Putin among his personal friends, said the charges against him were politically motivated and punishment for his stance. (Sergei Supinsky/AFP via Getty Images)

[NEWS FEED](#), [UKRAINE](#), [VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY](#)

Russia issued ultimatum to Ukraine in 2022 to replace Zelensky with Medvedchuk, president says

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by Boldizsar Gyori · January 22, 2025 2:41 PM · 2 min read



Viktor Medvedchuk at the session of the Verkhovna Rada in Kyiv, Ukraine, Jan. 14, 2020. (Sergii Kharchenko/NurPhoto via Getty Images)

Third, many Trump associates have condemned the banning of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP). The Russian Orthodox Church, led by KGB agent Vladimir Gundyayev, functions as an extension of Russian intelligence agencies.



Tucker Carlson  
@TuckerCarlson



Ep. 34 Of all of Biden's crimes, backing the Ukrainian government as it throws priests in jail may be the most revealing.



TUCKER ON X

12:59 AM · Oct 27, 2023 · **55.5M** Views



Subscribe ...

The FBI suspected an employee of the Russian Orthodox Church of recruiting agents for Russian intelligence services in the United States

The US Federal Bureau of Investigation suspected Dmitry Petrovsky, an employee of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department of External Church Relations, of working for Russian intelligence.

The FBI believes that Petrovsky, under the cover of the Russian Orthodox Church, was engaged in recruiting agents for Russian intelligence services among priests and parishioners of the Russian Orthodox Church and other Orthodox churches in the United States.

In May 2021, Petrovsky was searched upon entering the United States. Files related to Russian intelligence were found on his computer. Among the documents found were dossiers on well-known Orthodox priests in the US with details of biographies of their family members. The FBI believed that such information was necessary for Petrovsky to blackmail these people during the recruitment process.

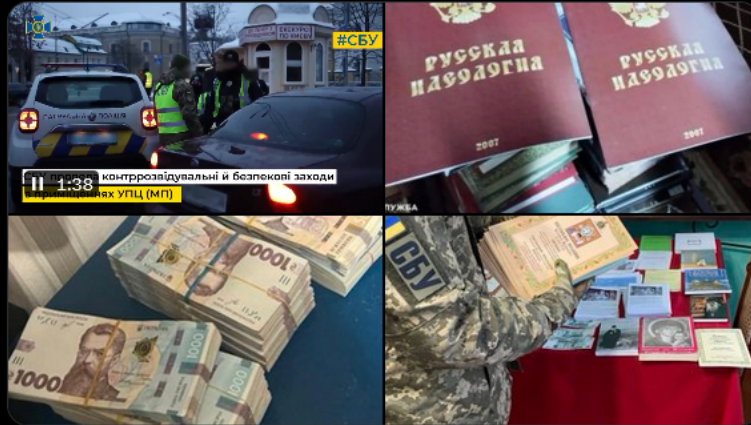
One of the files found was marked "confidential." The FBI cited it in full in its warning. Thus, according to the agency, this document contained a description of the areas of cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Russian special services - SVR, GRU and FSB.



5:22 PM · Sep 20, 2023 · 641.8K Views

mai ke
@maike809588

The SBU found pro-Russian literature, millions of cash and "doubtful" citizens of Russia during security measures in the premises of the UOC-MP. In more detail: • pro-Russian literature used in teaching at the seminary and parochial schools, including for propaganda of the.



10:01 AM · Nov 23, 2022

The Kyiv Independent
@KyivIndependent

⚡ Priest of Moscow-linked church sentenced to 15 years for spying for Russia.

An abbot of the Kremlin-linked Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) has been sentenced to 15 years in prison for spying on the Ukrainian military for Russia, Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) reported on Oct. 25.

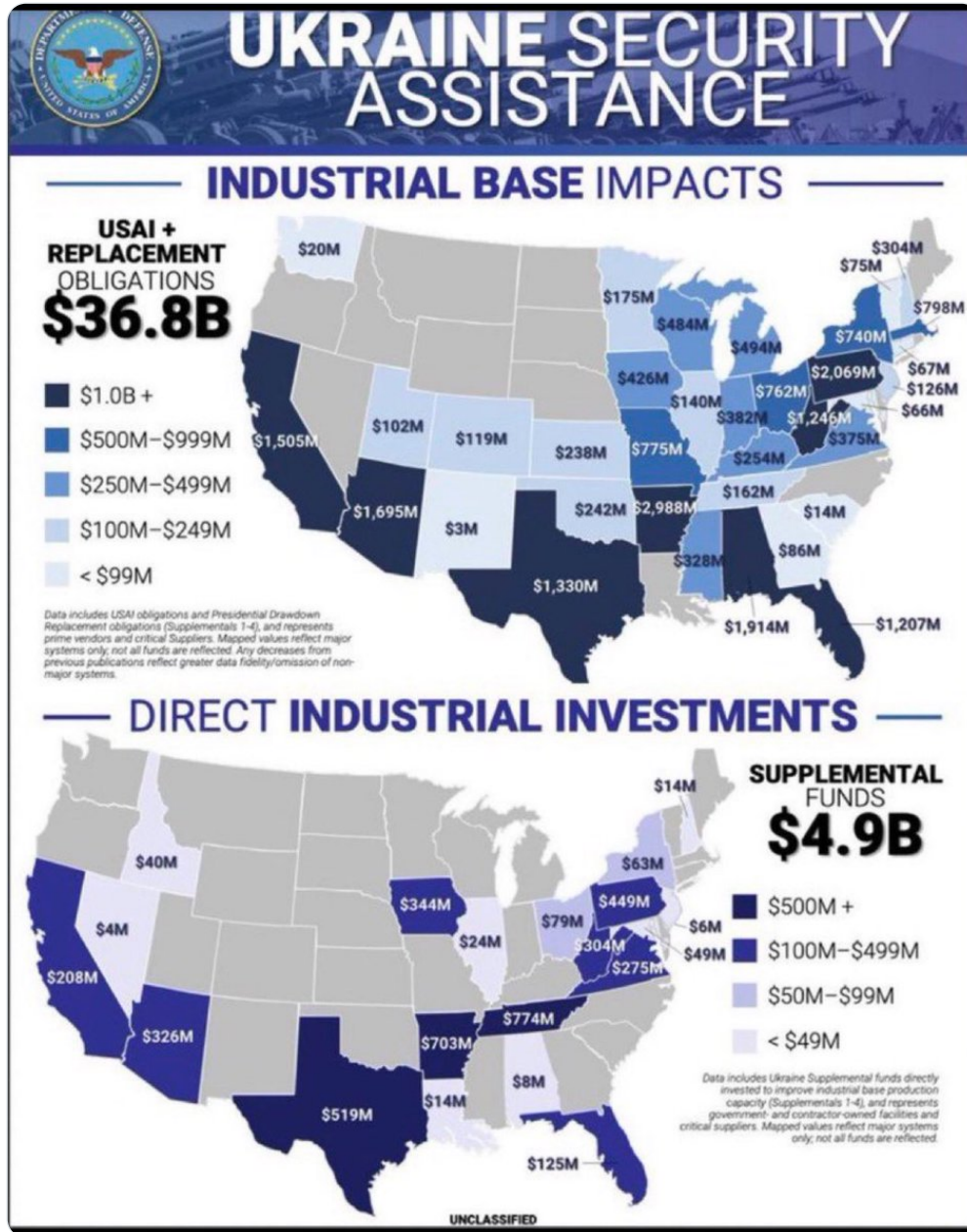
SBU



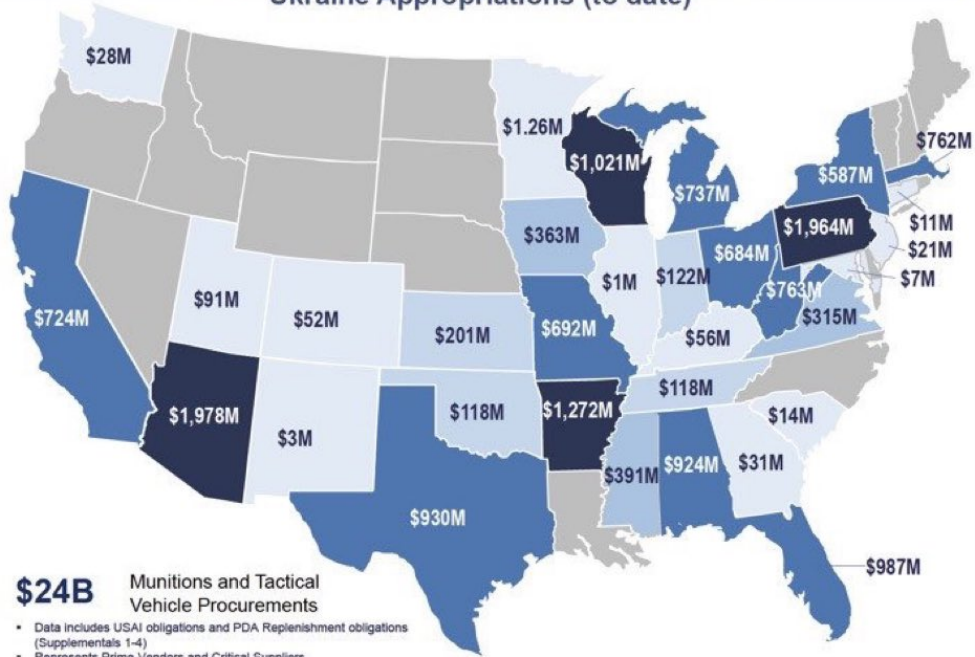
7:21 PM · Oct 25, 2023 · 143.7K Views

Fourth, Trump has inflated the amount of US aid sent to Ukraine while ignoring the fact that 90% of Ukraine-related spending stays in the country, creating thousands of jobs. His actions have hurt the US defense industry, causing defense stocks to plummet.

9/25



Economic Impact of FY22-23 Supplemental Ukraine Appropriations (to date)



Lockheed Martin



Подписаться

NYSE: LMT

Обзор

Сравнение

Финансовые данные

423,19 USD **-67,13 (-13,69 %) ↓ за месяц**

Закрыто: 14 февр., 18:54 GMT-5 • Отказ от обязательств

После закрытия сессии 423,50 **+0,31 (0,073 %)**

1Д

5ДН

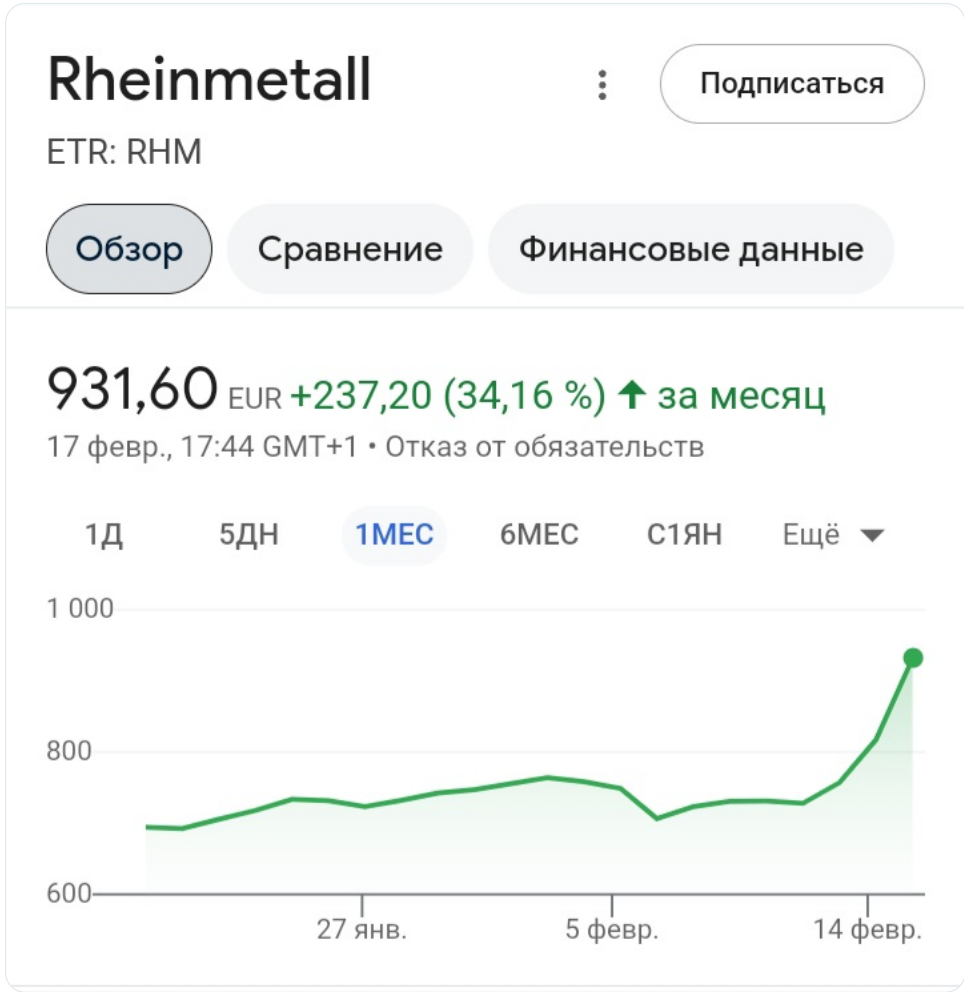
1МЕС

6МЕС

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Ещё ▼





Fifth, MAGA Republicans now accuse Zelenskyy of “murdering journalists,” referencing the case of Gonzalo Lira. Lira was a violent criminal propagandist who violated the Article 463-2 of Ukraine’s criminal code, and died of pneumonia after years of smoking two packs a day.

10/25



Specifically, SPRAVDI said that Lira had justified the Russian attack by falsely claiming the Ukrainian government was a neo-Nazi regime and denied "massacres of civilian Ukrainians by Russian invaders in Bucha and other cities." SPRAVDI added that Lira filmed himself insulting Ukrainian soldiers before publishing the footage on social media.

On April 3, 2022, Ukraine's Prosecutor General Iryna Venediktova said the bodies of 410 civilians had been recovered from [Bucha, a town on the outskirts of Kyiv](#), and neighboring settlements following the retreat of Russian troops. Taras Shapravskiy, speaker of the Bucha City Council, told *Newsweek*: "We have official data confirming the deaths of 422 civilians at the hands of the Russian occupiers."

Posting on X, formerly Twitter, in July, [Lira said he was "arrested for my YouTube videos,"](#) adding: "My crime was making videos critical of the West and their proxy regime in Kiev—and how they are destroying Ukraine."

Lira added that he was [tortured in prison](#) by other inmates, which saw him beaten and sleep-deprived, with his "arms twisted the wrong way around at the shoulder."

These allegations were strenuously denied by Sarah Ashton-Cirillo, a former American journalist who became a sergeant in the Ukrainian army, in an interview with *Business Insider*. Ashton-Cirillo said: "In an effort to gain sympathy, Gonzalo Lira made up allegations of abuse and torture. As someone who spoke to him shortly after he was returned to custody, it was clear that he was in good health and treated extremely fairly by the state security services."



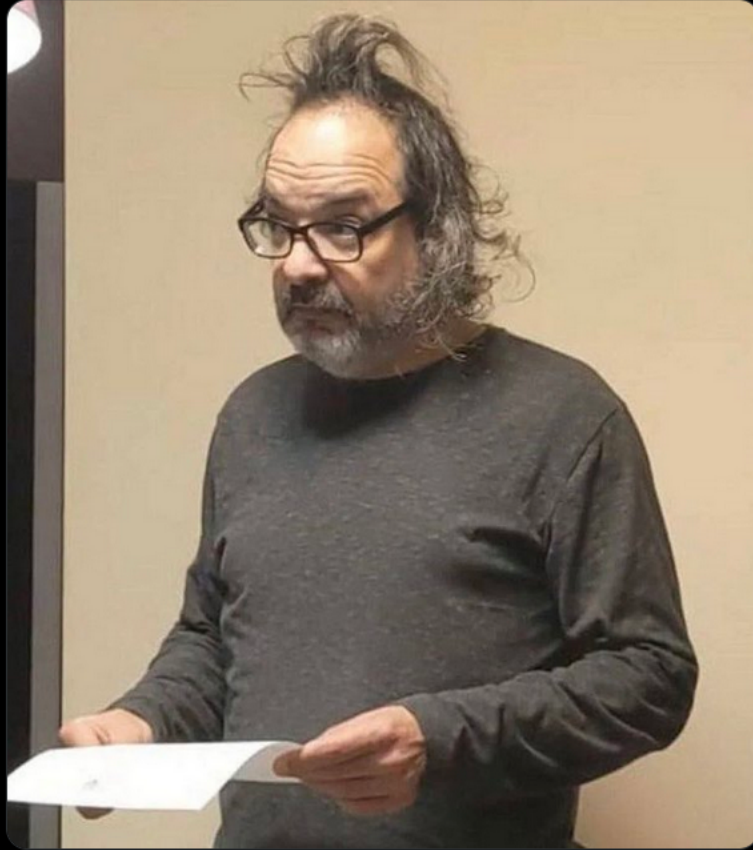
Roman Sheremeta



@rshereme



Gonzalo Lira was not a journalist and he was neither tortured nor murdered. He was a propagandist, "sex tour" coach and russian agent living in Ukraine. He died of pneumonia in prison because he was a chain smoker with terrible health.



9:59 PM · Jan 15, 2024 · 99.3K Views

they divorced. To date, the marriage relationship with the defendant has been terminated, there is no mutual understanding, family life has not developed due to the incompatibility of characters, in this regard there have been quarrels and conflicts. Upon the defendant's arrival, his aggressive behavior and imbalance leads to moral and physical violence against the plaintiff and children. Even after the marriage, she learned that the defendant had problems with the law, a criminal case for attempted rape. While living in Chile, there was also a case where the defendant severely beat his minor nephew, who suffers from autism. Preservation of marriage is not possible, in connection with which he asks to divorce. In addition, the plaintiff points out that from the end of 2016 to the present, she raises children on her own and takes care of them, with children

Other fake stories are circulating too, mainly spreading doom and gloom about Ukraine's situation. These have been thoroughly debunked by @TheStudyofWar in their Ukraine fact sheet:

Key Takeaways:

- Zelensky does not imminently risk losing all of Ukraine.
- Most Ukrainian cities have not been destroyed.
- Ukrainian law prohibits holding elections in wartime (unlike the US Constitution, which requires it).
- Ukraine has not suffered millions of losses.
- Europe provides about as much direct aid to Ukraine as the United States.
- European loans to Ukraine are backed by income from frozen Russian assets, not Ukraine.
- Ukraine did not misuse or lose half of the aid the United States has provided.
- Ukraine repeatedly invited Putin to negotiate in early 2022.

Tracking how these narratives infiltrate MAGA circles is easy – they mainly originate from two sources: Douglas Macgregor and Tucker Carlson. Macgregor is a former US military officer who, at some point, decided to start rooting for Russia.



12/25






Macgregor has been consistently wrong about Ukraine since day one of the full-scale invasion, yet people still take him seriously. Unsurprisingly, Russian state media frequently cite him:


13/25



 **Pekka Kallioniemi** 
@P_Kallioniemi · [Follow](#) 

In today's #vatnik soup I'll introduce an ex-US Army man who switched sides & is now working for the propaganda ministry of Russia. His name is Douglas Macgregor and he's one of the well-known commentators on the Russo-Ukrainian War, making predictions that never come true.

1/16



8:38 AM · Jan 2, 2023 

 6.3K  Reply  Copy link

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Most of you already know Tucker Carlson and probably remember how he was humiliated by Putin, or how he was astonished to find fresh bread in a French supermarket in Moscow. For years now, he's been busy laundering Russian lies into social media.





14/25



Many of the major lies now being spread by Trump and his associates originated from Tucker's show on X. For example, Bob Amsterdam, who has been pushing Russian

narratives and who was working for Russian oligarch Vadym Novynskyi, has appeared on Tucker's show twice.


15/25

 **Tucker Carlson**  
@TuckerCarlson  ...

Donald Trump just called Zelensky a dictator. Human rights lawyer Bob Amsterdam has worked in Ukraine for the past couple of years and confirms that if anything, that's an understatement.

(0:00) The Situation Is Dire
(3:28) Bob Amsterdam's Fight to Defend the Orthodox Church From Zelensky
(6:45) USAID's Fake Church Operation
(18:49) Mike Pompeo's Involvement
(24:16) Why Is the US Bending the Knee to Ukraine?
(29:21) Is Zelensky Totally Coked Out?
(30:00) The Push for Sanctions
(45:00) China's Role in Undermining the US
(48:16) The War's Impact on the Middle East
(53:28) Corporate Media Refuses to Cover This Story
(1:00:38) The Deep State's Attempt to Destroy Religion
(1:08:56) Why Aren't US Politicians Fighting for Freedom of Religion?
(1:13:08) The Dangerous Corporatism of Lawyers

Includes paid partnerships.



You're one of the few people who

1:19:21

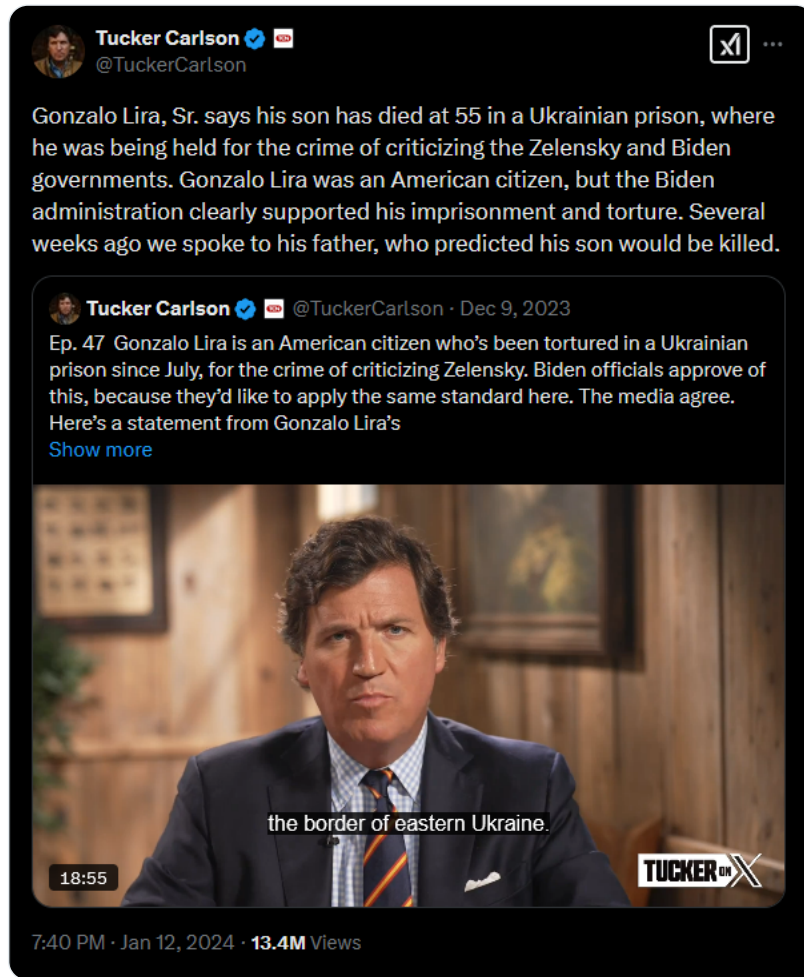
12:15 AM · Feb 20, 2025 · 3.5M Views




UOC-MP = Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (Pro-Kremlin)
ROC = Russian Orthodox Church (connected to UOC-MP, the Kremlin and the Russian intelligence)

Vadym Novynskyi = Russian oligarch, priest of the ROC
Robert Amsterdam = Lawyer hired by Novynskyi to defend UOC-MP



Tucker and Macgregor serve as “canaries in the coal mine” for Russian propaganda – when they start pushing a narrative, expect it to reach Trump and his inner circle within 6 to 12 months. Russian state media RT has also called for promoting Tucker’s content.

16/25




Tucker Carlson   @TuckerCarlson  ...

Gonzalo Lira, Sr. says his son has died at 55 in a Ukrainian prison, where he was being held for the crime of criticizing the Zelensky and Biden governments. Gonzalo Lira was an American citizen, but the Biden administration clearly supported his imprisonment and torture. Several weeks ago we spoke to his father, who predicted his son would be killed.

Tucker Carlson   @TuckerCarlson · Dec 9, 2023

Ep. 47 Gonzalo Lira is an American citizen who's been tortured in a Ukrainian prison since July, for the crime of criticizing Zelensky. Biden officials approve of this, because they'd like to apply the same standard here. The media agree. Here's a statement from Gonzalo Lira's [Show more](#)

the border of eastern Ukraine.

18:55 

7:40 PM · Jan 12, 2024 · 13.4M Views

Pekka Kallioniemi   @P_Kallioniemi  ...

In Nov, 2022, he said that there are 540 000 Russian troops stationed at the outskirts of Ukraine preparing for a major, "war ending" offensive. 1000 rocket artillery systems and at least 1500 tanks. I guess these troops are still waiting for the right time for the attack.

13/16



0:25

10:38 AM · Jan 2, 2023 · 53.5K Views

Pekka Kallioniemi   @P_Kallioniemi  ...

Three days after the invasion begun, he predicted that "If they don't surrender in the next 24 hours, I suspect Russia will ultimately annihilate them."

He also said that "US should stay out of the conflict" and "avoid sending any aid to Ukrainian forces".

9/16



 **▶ DOUG MACGREGOR | RETIRED ARMY COLONEL**
BIDEN ADMIN: INVASION WILL HAPPEN TONIGHT

10:38 AM · Jan 2, 2023 · 79.4K Views

There are other sources of Russian disinformation, too. AI-generated fake news sites have been spreading lies for years. One of the masterminds behind these networks is an American

living in Moscow, John Mark Dougan:

17/25

 **Pekka Kallioniemi** 
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In today's [#vatniksoup](#), I'll introduce an American propagandist, Florida Man and ex-cop, John "Badwolf" Mark Dougan ([@RealBadWolf](#)). He's best-known for his battle against the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, and for his propaganda work for the Kremlin.

1/21



10:52 AM · Apr 19, 2023 


 2.7K  Reply  Copy link

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NEWS

Russia reportedly paid a former Florida cop to pump out anti-Harris deepfakes and disinformation



/ John Mark Dougan, a retired sheriff's deputy, reportedly created fake news sites with funding from the Russian military.

by [Gabby Del Valle](#)
Oct 24, 2024, 11:01 PM GMT-3



    [Comments \(9 New\)](#)

Image: Cath Virginia / The Verge; Getty Image

THE WORLD > From the World > Evropa >

How did pro-Russian 'yacht' propaganda affect the US debate over aid to Ukraine?



1 year ago



A Bugatti car, a first lady and the fake stories aimed at Americans

3 July 2024

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Paul Myers, Olga Robinson, Shayan Sardarizadeh and Mike Wendling
BBC Verify and BBC News



John Mark Dougan, an American ex-cop, now lives in Moscow and runs a network of AI-powered fake news sites

A network of Russia-based websites masquerading as local American newspapers is pumping out fake stories as part of an AI-powered operation that is increasingly targeting the US election, a BBC investigation can reveal.

A recent US Department of Justice indictment (sadly, probably the last one we'll see for a while for this type of activities) revealed that the Kremlin funnels money to social media influencers who then spread Russian propaganda for profit.



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PRESS RELEASE

Two RT Employees Indicted for Covertly Funding and Directing U.S. Company that Published Thousands of Videos in Furtherance of Russian Interests

Wednesday, September 4, 2024

For Immediate Release



Carsten Reisinger/Shutterstock @watchTENET/YouTube (Licensed)

Media start-up from Benny Johnson, Tim Pool, and Dave Rubin was secret Russian influence campaign, indictment alleges

Famous pro-Trump commentators may have been unwittingly duped.



David Covucci

Tech

Posted on Sep 4, 2024

Updated on Sep 4, 2024, 6:01 pm CDT

For example, the indictment said Afanasyeva told the company to blame Ukraine for a March terrorist attack on a Moscow concert hall, even though ISIS had claimed responsibility. The company's founder said one of the contributors was "happy to cover it."

Afanasyeva also allegedly requested that the company post a video of "a well-known U.S. political commentator visiting a grocery store in Russia" – likely a reference to former Fox News host Tucker Carlson, who traveled to Moscow in February. According to the indictment, a producer at the company told one of the founders "it just feels like overt shilling" but was told to "put it out there."



MEDIA

Tucker Carlson, the fired Fox News star, makes bid for relevance with Putin interview

Afanasyeva also urged the influencers to share the company's videos on their own channels and got annoyed when she didn't think they were promoting them enough, according to the indictment.

The Russians allegedly grew frustrated that the influencers focused too much on promoting their own social media brands, rather than Tenet Media. "At least one share per day. Not one share per week," one of the RT employees ordered. To add more pressure, the RT employee invented a second fake persona that echoed the same demands in the influencers' group chat. Later, arguments formed about whether to post a video of Tucker Carlson visiting a Russian grocery store, where he marveled at coin-operated carts as if they were an advanced form of technology. "They want me to publish this," Pool wrote in an internal chat. But "it just feels like overt shilling."

Russia and the Trump administration are also focusing on attacking America's former allies in Europe while manipulating US elections through social media. Russia's goal is to polarize Western societies and fuel internal division.

Politics

Romanian foreign minister accuses Musk of election interference

The minister's reaction comes after Bloomberg reported that the Trump administration was pressuring Romania to accept Georgescu's candidacy.



NEWS > POLITICS

Musk will face consequences for interfering in German election, says front-runner Merz

The next German government's response could be political, legal, or possibly target Musk's gigafactory near Berlin, center-right leader says in interview.


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Danish Intelligence: Russia forged letter to spark Trump's Greenland purchase bid

A Russian disinformation operation involving a forged diplomatic letter may have triggered Donald Trump's ongoing interest in purchasing Greenland, revealing Moscow's strategy to create divisions within NATO's Arctic presence.

BY  OLENA MUKHINA · 13/01/2025 · © 2 MINUTE READ



Greenland, an autonomous territory of the Kingdom of Denmark. Credit: UkrInform

PET, the Danish intelligence agency, claims that in 2019, Russian operatives forged a letter from Greenland's then-Foreign Minister Ane Lone Bagger to provoke US President-elect Donald Trump into expressing interest in purchasing Greenland when he served his first presidency term, BILD has reported.

NEWS > POLITICS

Putin's bot army tries to swing German election

A Kremlin-backed campaign is trying to influence voters ahead of Feb. 23 poll, according to government report obtained by POLITICO.

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At the same time, people like Elon Musk and JD Vance complain that the EU is “censoring” social media by enforcing content regulations. Vance has even suggested that the US could pull off of NATO if the EU started regulating Elon’s X.

NEWS > TECHNOLOGY

Musk, Meta fuel far-right attack against EU tech 'censorship'

Far-right lawmakers feel empowered to step up their attacks against EU social media rules.

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In Munich, Vance accuses European politicians of censoring free speech

By Nandita Bose and Doina Chiacu

February 14, 2025 11:47 PM GMT+2 · Updated 10 days ago



POLITICS

JD Vance suggested the US's support for NATO could be pulled if Europe tries to regulate Elon Musk's X as free speech debate rumbles on

Rebecca Rommen Sep 21, 2024, 9:24 PM EEST

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Vance made the comments on the "Shawn Ryan Show." Chip Somodevilla

- JD Vance suggested the US may reconsider NATO support if the EU tries to regulate Elon Musk's X.
- Vance seemed to reference a letter from Thierry Breton to Musk.
- Vance made the comments during an appearance on the "Shawn Ryan Show."

The US has no moral high ground on this issue—Trump and his allies have persecuted journalists, fired critics, and run the world's largest prison industrial complex, with 1,8 million people incarcerated. Also, their "freedom of speech" only seems to extend to social media.

POLITICS

Elon Musk Calls for 60 Minutes Journalists to Get a 'Long Prison Sentence'

Musk, a senior adviser in Trump's White House, targeted the long-running CBS News broadcast in an X post on Feb. 16

By **Kimberlee Speakman** | Published on February 18, 2025 01:03PM EST



8 COMMENTS



A photo of Elon Musk and '60 Minutes' correspondent Bill Whitaker. PHOTO: KENNY HOLSTON/THE NEW YORK TIMES/11276477P/AFP VIA GETTY; EUGENE GOLOGURSKY/GETTY

Business / Media

The White House bans the AP indefinitely over the use of 'Gulf of Mexico'

By **Brian Stelter**, CNN

3 minute read · Updated 1:54 PM EST, Fri February 14, 2025



A "Gulf of America" sign behind US President Donald Trump during a swearing-in ceremony for Tulsi Gabbard, US director of National Intelligence, not pictured, in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, DC on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. Jim Lo Scalzo/EPA/Bloomberg/Getty Images

Trump sues Des Moines Register, vows to pursue more defamation claims

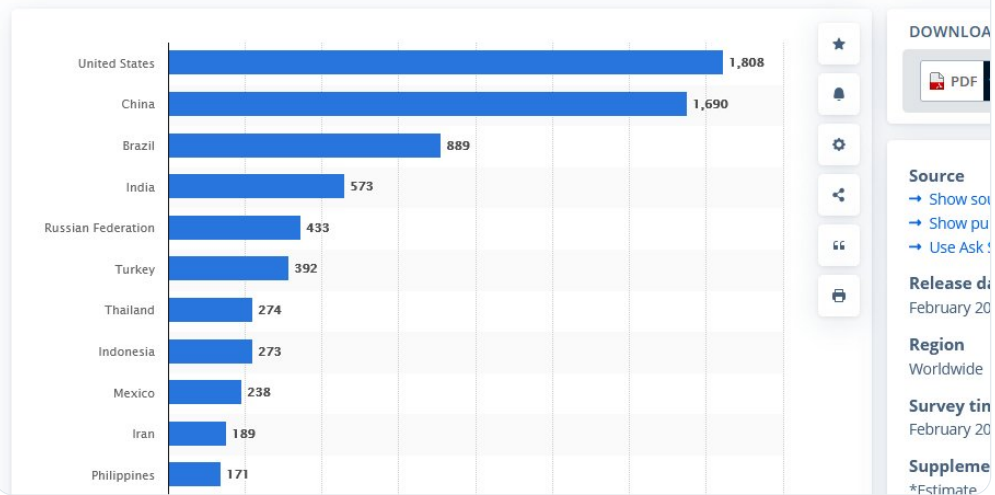
By Helen Coster and Jack Queen

December 18, 2024 4:43 AM GMT+2 · Updated 2 months ago

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Countries with the largest number of prisoners as of February 2025 (in 1,000s)



And if censorship is so bad, why isn't the US criticizing Russia? Putin's regime has banned nearly all independent media, blocked Western social platforms, and imprisons anyone who criticizes the war. They won't even call Russia the aggressor of the Russo-Ukrainian War.

Trump to abandon Russia war crimes prosecution

Washington signals end to pursuit of Putin as third anniversary of Ukraine invasion looms



Firefighters stand in the remains of an apartment block in Kharkiv following Russian missile strike in 2022. Credit: Sergey Bobok/AFP



Joe Barnes

21 February 2025 6:02pm GMT

The US has signalled that it could leave an international effort to prosecute Russia for invading Ukraine, The Telegraph can reveal.

US envoys refused to label Russia as an “aggressor” at a meeting of a “core group” of countries preparing a Nuremberg-style tribunal to try Vladimir Putin for his war crimes, according to Western officials.

Washington is similarly refusing to co-sponsor a United Nations statement that supports Ukraine’s territorial integrity and demands Moscow to withdraw its forces from the war-torn nation.

Mr Trump’s administration has also refused to sign off a planned G7 statement calling Russia the “aggressor” in the war with Ukraine to mark the third anniversary of the conflict on Monday.

The US president has blamed Ukraine for starting the war, branded Volodymyr Zelensky a “dictator” and pushed for Russia to be invited back to the alliance of industrialised nations.

European officials fear Mr Trump’s flattery of Putin could lead to the Russian despot being let off the hook for his invasion as part of any peace settlement.

Father of girl who drew anti-war picture freed from Russia jail

16 October 2024

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Nathan Williams
BBC News



Masha's school contacted the police, her father said, after the then 12-year-old drew this picture

A man who was detained in Russia after his daughter drew an anti-war picture - in a case that generated global headlines - has been released from a penal colony.

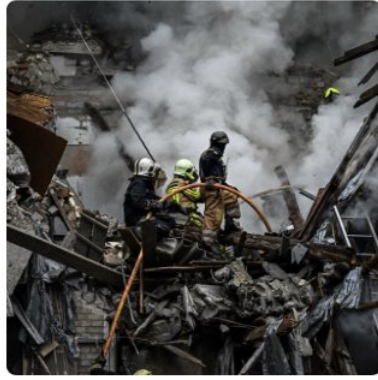
WORLD NEWS

Trump to abandon Russia war crimes prosecution

By Joe Barnes, Brussels
Correspondent

21 Feb 2025 • 8:02 pm

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GLOBAL HEALTH

Ukrainian female POWs tortured and paraded naked through the snow by Russian troops

By Verity Bowman

20 Feb 2025 • 8:02 am

[↑ Share](#) [🔖 Save](#)



Moscow Nurse Jailed 8 Years for Anti-War Posts

Oct. 3, 2024



Olga Menshikh.

SOTAvision

It looks like the Trump administration's endgame is to lift all sanctions on Russia & pursue economic cooperation, sidelining the EU in global decision-making while weakening transatlantic alliances. And loot Ukraine together with Russia while throwing them under the bus.

US secretary of state suggests EU may lift sanctions against Russia if peace is reached

IVANNA KOSTINA, ANASTASIA PROTZ — TUESDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2025, 16:15



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MARCO RUBIO. STOCK PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

Marco Rubio, US Secretary of State, noted that the resolution of the Russo-Ukrainian war must occur with the agreement of all parties. He also hinted that this could serve as grounds for the EU to lift sanctions against Russia.

Trump says Ukraine could have made a deal earlier

5 days ago

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Bernd Debusmann
in Palm Beach, Florida



BBC questions Trump on Ukraine not being invited to US-Russia talks

Donald Trump has taken aim at Ukraine after its President, Volodymyr Zelensky, said it was a "surprise" his country had not been invited to talks in Saudi Arabia on ending the war with Russia.

[NEWS FEED](#), [UKRAINE](#), [UNITED STATES](#), [MINERALS](#), [BUSINESS](#), [VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY](#)

Zelensky won't sign natural resource deal that 'will be paid by 10 generations of Ukrainians'

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by Dominic Culverwell and Kateryna Denisova · February 23, 2025 6:10 PM · 2 min read



Right now, the Trump administration is filled with Kremlin fans. Musk, RFK Jr., Tulsi and JD Vance all have their own Vatnik Soup entries (along with Trump) due to their tendency to spread the Kremlin's lies. They're supported by social media superspreaders like Tucker.

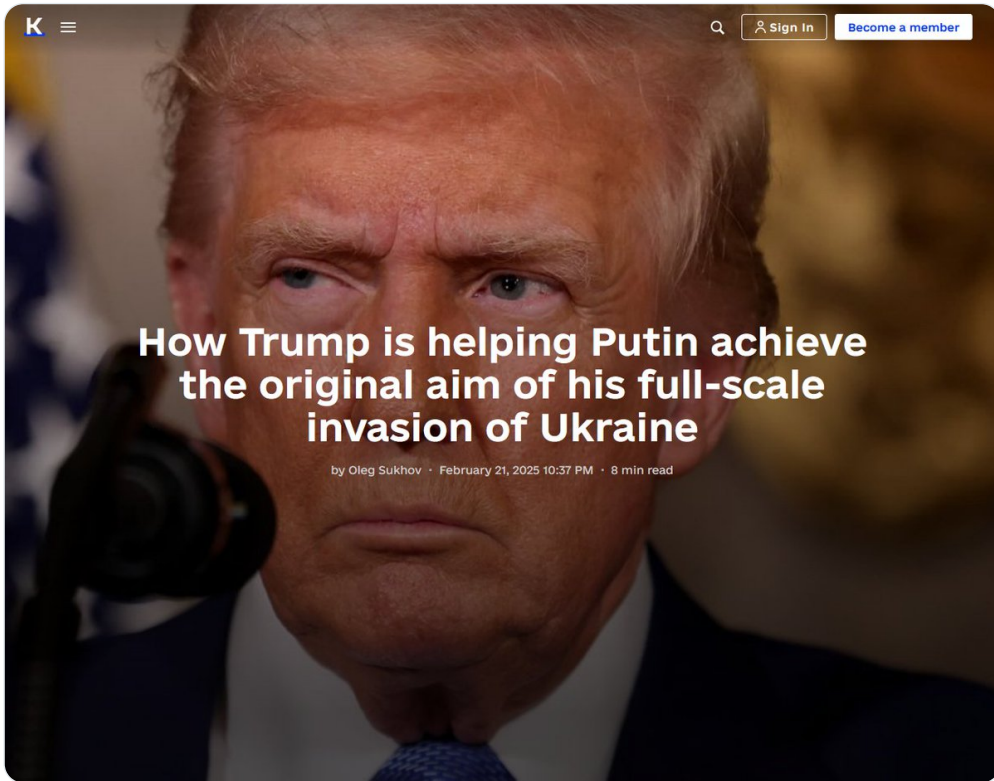


If Ukraine and Russia eventually reach a peace deal, the Kremlin's disinformation efforts won't stop – they will escalate, shifting their focus to destabilizing Europe with US support.

I hate repeating myself, but Europe REALLY needs to prepare for all this.

How Trump is helping Putin achieve the original aim of his full-scale invasion of Ukraine

by Oleg Sukhov · February 21, 2025 10:37 PM · 8 min read



Russia to increase propaganda spending to historic high of \$27 million per week

OLEKSIH ARTEMCHUK — MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2024, 14:34



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STOCK PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

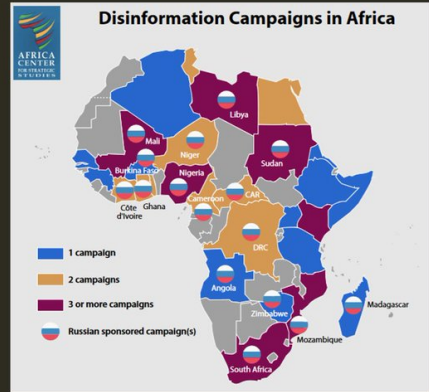
The draft budget for 2025 allocates RUB 137.2 billion (US\$1.42 billion) for state propaganda.

SCOPE

61% of Foreign Influence Efforts (FIEs) are conducted by Russia (Martin, Shapiro & Ilhardt, 2023)

According to Jeangène Vilmer et al. (2018), Russia was responsible for 80% of FIEs in Europe

Troll farms reached 140 million Americans a month on Facebook before the 2020 US presidential election



Martin D., Shapiro J., Ilhardt J. (2023). *Trends in Online Influence Efforts*. Empirical Studies of Conflict.

J.-B. Jeangène Vilmer, A. Escorcía, M. Guillaume, J. Herrera (2018). *Information Manipulation: A Challenge for Our Democracies*, report by the Policy Planning Staff (CAPS) of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Institute for Strategic Research (IRSEM) of the Ministry for the Armed Forces.

The 2nd edition of “Vatnik Soup — The Ultimate Guide to Russian Disinformation” is officially out!

You can order your copy here:

**THE ULTIMATE GUIDE
TO RUSSIAN DISINFORMATION**

Vatnik Soup — Kle•art

Do your friends believe Ukraine is full of neo-Nazis and secret biolabs? Do you feel overwhelmed by propaganda and lies every time you go online? Does your mom think Tucker Carlson sounds reasonable?...

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