



**Vatnik Soup** @vatniksoup

Oct 19, 2026 · 25 tweets · [vatniksoup/status/2112127059283836996](https://twitter.com/vatniksoup/status/2112127059283836996)

In today's Vatnik Soup, we introduce Iuliia Mendel, a Ukrainian journalist and press secretary. She's best known for serving as Zelenskyy's spokesperson during the early years of his presidency and then, years later, turning into a Kremlin-aligned, fierce critic of him.

1/25



Born in 1986 in Zaporizhzhia (Zaporizhzhia Oblast), officially registered in Henichesk (Kherson Oblast), Iuliia grew up in Kherson (Kherson Oblast) — yes, that Kherson, where Russia now hunts and murders civilians for fun in a “human safari”.

2/25

The **human safari** is a Russian campaign of deliberate **terrorism** against civilians in **Kherson**, Ukraine. Russian military units, since May 2024, utilize **drones** fitted with **hand grenades** and other explosives to purposefully target Ukrainian civilians during the ongoing **Russian invasion of Ukraine**.<sup>[1]</sup> According to a **UN** human rights commission report from October 2025, at least 200 civilians have been killed and over 2,000 have been wounded by Russian-operated drones in Kherson.<sup>[2]</sup>

Due to these actions, a UN report concluded there was a high probability that the **Russian Armed Forces** was guilty of murder, **forced transfer**, **terror**, attacks on civilians and outrages upon personal dignity which amount to **war crimes** and **crimes against humanity**.<sup>[3]</sup> A **Human Rights Watch** (HRW) report concurred and found Russian armed forces guilty of attacks on civilians, murder and terror as war crimes and crimes against humanity.<sup>[4]</sup>

The term "human safari" was first used in publication by journalist **Zarina Zabrisky** in a *Kyiv Post* article. The Russian practice of deliberately killing Ukrainian civilians using drones has since received broad coverage by media. Footage of the attacks is often shared and celebrated on Russian social media channels, with research published by Zabrisky finding that many drones used in the attacks had been obtained through fundraisers organized by Russian civilians.

### Human safari

Part of **Russian invasion of Ukraine**



|                     |                                                                 |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Location</b>     | <b>Kherson, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine</b>                         |
| <b>Date</b>         | May 2024 – present                                              |
| <b>Target</b>       | Ukrainian civilians                                             |
| <b>Deaths</b>       | 200 civilians (per UN estimate, October 2025)                   |
| <b>Injured</b>      | 2,000 civilians (per UN estimate, October 2025)                 |
| <b>Perpetrators</b> | Russia                                                          |
| <b>Motive</b>       | <b>Anti-Ukrainian sentiment, Russian irredentism, terrorism</b> |



**OCHA Ukraine** ✓ @OCHA\_Ukraine · May 14

Today, delivering aid to people in severe need of assistance and under constant attack in #Kherson, a clearly marked @UN vehicle was struck by a drone.

Over 200 civilians, mostly older people, remain there.

...



**Readers added context**

They forget to mention that Russia did the attack.

Russia shared the drone video online

[x.com/i/status/20552...](https://x.com/i/status/20552...)

The Kyiv Independent asked Mendel how the Russian military, which commits such atrocities as "human safari" in her native Kherson Oblast, could be trusted to adhere to any peace deal.

In reply, she only said that the "human safari" is "one of the most disgusting things in the war" and that it should be stopped "whether there is a peace deal or not" without addressing the issue of holding Russia accountable.



A bus that was shot at while driving from Malokakhovka, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine, in a photo posted on Feb. 13, 2026. (@khersonolesky/Telegram)



iuliia\_mendel • Follow

iuliia\_mendel 195 w  
A house of my grandparents where I spent first years of life. This is the room where I was drawing pictures and watching old black and white TV set.  
[#RussiaisATerroristState](#) [#NeverForget](#) [#NeverAgain](#)



aron\_d\_vald 195 w  
🙄🙄🙄🙄🙄  
Like Reply

thibault.white 195 w  
Terrorists will pay for all their crimes  
Like Reply

a.j.\_flick 195 w  
🙄

244 33  
18 December 2022

Mendel studied philology at Taras Shevchenko National University, Kyiv. Before entering politics, she worked as a journalist and contributor for various Ukrainian and international media, including the New York Times and Politico.

3/25



In June 2019, after Zelenskyy won the Ukrainian presidential election in a landslide, Mendel was appointed as his press secretary. She won the job in an open competition with 4,000 applicants and quickly became one of the most visible faces of his administration.

4/25



Her tenure was marked by controversy, awkward public incidents and communication blunders that made headlines in Ukraine, such as mentioning a “President of Canada”, confusing Latvia and Lithuania or physically pushing a journalist away from Zelenskyy.

5/25





PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE | VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYI  
 Official online representation

НОВИНИ ▾ ХОТО ▾ ВІДЕО ▾ ДОКУМЕНТИ ▾ ПРЕЗИДЕНТ ▾ ОФІС ▾ ПРЕС

Останні новини Промови Вітання Офіс Президента Дружина Президента Всі новини

Home > Новини > Останні новини

## Volodymyr and Olena Zelensky presented embroidered shirts to the leaders of world powers for World Embroidery Day

May 21, 2020 - 08:59



For World Embroidery Day, the President and First Lady of Ukraine sent traditional Ukrainian embroidered shirts as a gift to the leaders of the countries of the world. The presidents and first ladies of the United States of America, the Federal Republic of Germany, the French Republic, Canada, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Turkey and other countries received symbolic gifts that carry part of Ukrainian history and culture.

«On May 21, Ukraine celebrates Vyshyvanka Day –, a holiday designed to protect and honor the ancient traditions of our people. Vyshyvanka – is the original code of our ethnic group with charms and symbols encrypted in original ornaments. With a sincere heart, we would like to share with you a piece of Ukrainian history and authenticity», – Volodymyr and Olena Zelensky wrote in their cover letter.

Ironically, Mendel now complains that freedom of speech in Ukraine has been “greatly restricted”. But in 2019, when she was Zelenskyy’s press secretary, Index on Censorship recorded \*her\* as the source of press-freedom violations.

UKRAINE

## Ukrainian Journalists' Union Demands Apology From Presidential Office

By RFE/RL

September 29, 2019 13:26 CET



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy's press secretary Yulia Mendel (file photo)

Ukraine's main union of journalists has called on the presidential office and its spokeswoman to issue a formal apology to journalists from Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) and to alter their treatment of journalists.

The National Union of Journalists of Ukraine (NUJU) on September 28 specifically mentioned presidential spokeswoman Yulia Mendel who has been shown this month shoving or pulling aside journalists who approach President Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

NEWS

## Ukraine: Press freedom violations September 2019

There were 10 incidents in Ukraine in September 2019 recorded by Index's monitoring project.

Index on Censorship

15 Oct 2019

[Ukraine](#) / [Ukraine Incident Reports](#)



*President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's spokesperson, Yulia Mendel, shoves reporter Serhiy Andrushko to prevent him from asking questions*

## Journalists pushed and shoved by president's press secretary

26 September 2019 – Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and UA:Pershyi correspondent, Serhiy Andrushko, was repeatedly pushed back by presidential press secretary Yulia Mendel, as he tried to approach the Head of the President's Office and President Zelenskiy to ask them questions.

A video of the incident shows Mendel repeatedly shoving Serhiy Andrushko as he tries to approach the two men. The Head of the President's Office, Andriy Bohdan, approaching the journalist and told him: "I do not communicate with representatives of the media, which deceive society and don't adhere to journalistic standards. This is my final point."

RFE/RL's Kyiv correspondent Christopher Miller said he had encountered Mendel's confrontational approach at a conference in Kyiv on 13 September. According to Miller, Mendel shoved him aside while he was talking to Zelenskiy at the conference.

On September 28 the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine demanded apology from Presidential Office for Mendel's behaviour. "The press secretary of the president has no right to physically interfere in the work of journalists," the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine head Serhiy Tomilenko said on Facebook.

**Link(s):** <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=external&v=389325218429171>

<https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2019/09/27/7227517/>

<https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2019/09/27/7227495/>

<https://www.facebook.com/mixailotkach/posts/2426832120719629>

<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/schemes/30184985.html>

<https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-journalist-union-demands-apology-from-presidential-office/30189675.html>

**Categories:** Physical Assault/Injury, Blocked Access

**Source of violation:** Government/State Agency/Public official(s)/Political party



President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's spokesperson, Yulia Mendel, shoves reporter Serhiy Andrushko to prevent him from asking questions

**POLITICS**

## Ukraine overtakes US, 6 EU countries in Press Freedom Index

April 30, 2026 1:10 pm • 3 min read

by Chris Powers



A press vest is seen at the site where a Lancet drone launched by Russian troops hit the Parallel gas station in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kramatorsk, Donetsk Oblast, on Oct. 23, 2025. (Jose Colon/Anadolu via Getty Images)

Ukraine and Moldova scored above the United States and several EU countries in the latest Press Freedom Index released on April 30 by Reporters Without Borders.

Both countries improved their score amid a worsening global outlook for media.

Despite the ranking, the Ukrainian government has been criticized by the EU for [failing to abolish](#) the TV Marathon, which was created in 2022 by merging all major news channels into one wartime channel under state leadership. The EU has also urged Ukraine to adopt legislation to fight the influence of vested interests on the media, ensure a competitive media market and introduce an independent regulator.

The Ukrainian authorities have also been accused of [cracking down](#) on opposition media and [failing](#) to investigate the assassinations of journalists.

In their [analysis](#) of the 2026 index, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) said that Ukraine's improved score — a climb of seven places to 55th worldwide — "stands out as a relative exception."

Mendel resigned as presidential press secretary in July 2021. Even after leaving her position, she still agreed with the restrictions on pro-Russian media, calling them entirely reasonable and justified (video: December 9, 2021 interview).



EXCLUSIVE

## Zelensky's spokesperson Mendel leaves post

by Oleksiy Sorokin | April 30, 2021, 5:14 pm



Yulia Mendel will leave her post as President Volodymyr Zelensky's spokesperson, Ukrainian media reported on April 30.

Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Zelensky's Chief of Staff Andriy Yermak, said that Mendel will keep her post "temporarily," until the president's office finalizes changes to its communication strategy.



<https://twitter.com/i/web/status/2112127193610412483>

While still Zelenskyy's press secretary, Mendel unveiled her book "Each of Us Is President". She praised Zelenskyy's electoral "revolution" and contrasted it with Maidan's "dirty tents" and "unhygienic cold nights" — a dismissive description of the Revolution of Dignity. Ukrainians were outraged, with historian Radko Mokryk commenting that it was during those

“unhygienic and cold nights” that he met “the best people of the country”.

8/25

<https://x.com/vatniksoup/status/1635211581868085250>



## ПОЛІТИКА

## «Без брудних наметів, розтрощеного Майдану». Юлія Мендель викликала бурхливу реакцію соцмереж

14 липня 2021, 17:18



Колишня речниця президента України Юлія Мендель видала книгу «Кожен із нас – президент»

## Юлія Мартиненко

Колишня речниця президента України Юлія Мендель видала книгу «Кожен із нас – президент», яка **з'явиться у продажі 19 липня**. Однак окремі фрагменти книжки є у вільному доступі. Зокрема, на своїй сторінці у фейсбуці Юлія Мендель опублікувала уривок про те, чому Порошенко більше не стане президентом, а в колонці у виданні «Українська правда» з'явився фрагмент про мовне питання та ідентичність українців. Користувачі соцмереж встигли їх оцінити.

Люди обурені ставленням колишньої речниці президента до подій на Майдані, про який вона пише: «Розгромні, рекордні 73% у другому турі теж у суті своїй були революцією. Лишень прийнятною для більшості населення: без брудних наметів, розтрощеного Майдану, негігієнічних і холодних ночей з ризиком бути побитим, знесеним водометами чи обприсканим газом, без усієї цієї революційної «романтики» минулих століть, але з чітким, жорстким і емоційним виразом тодішній владі».

«Не знаю, як пані Мендель, а особисто я під час «негігієнічних і холодних ночей» на Майдані зустрів найкращих людей своєї країни. Оті дискусії «на бочках» на морозі в мінус 20 градусів, з чорними руками і запахом палених шин, коли справді дрижаки хапали від холоду – це крутіше і важливіше, ніж академічні дискусії в найкращих університетах світу», – пише історик Радко Мокрик.

## POLITICS

## «Without dirty tents, crushed Maidan». Julia Mendel caused a violent reaction from social networks

July 14, 2021, 5:18 p.m



The former spokeswoman of the President of Ukraine, Yulia Mendel, published the book «Each of us – is a president»

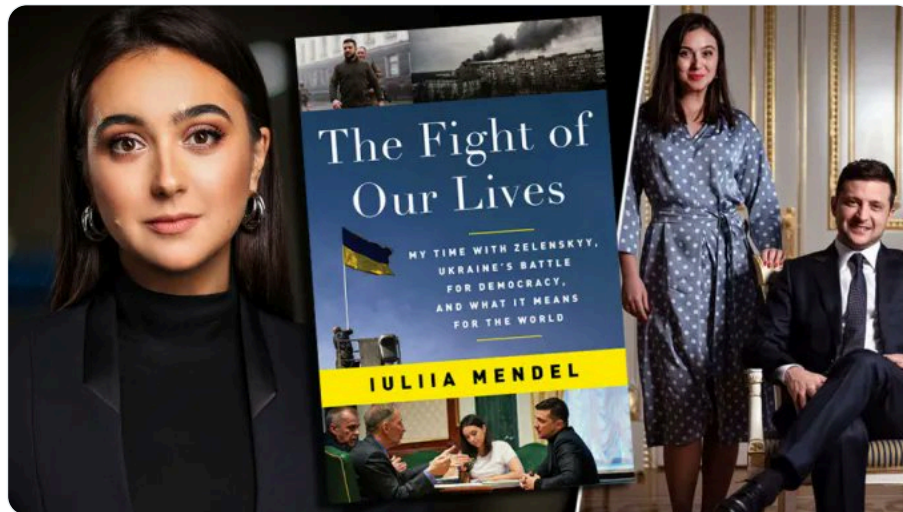
**Yulia Martynenko**

Kyulia Mendel, the official spokeswoman of the President of Ukraine, published the book «Each of us – president», which **will go on sale in 19 July**. However, individual fragments of the book are freely available. In particular, on his **Yulia Mendel's Facebook page** she published an excerpt on why Poroshenko will no longer become president, but **in the column in the publication «Ukrainian truth»** a fragment appeared about the language issue and the identity of Ukrainians. Users of social networks managed to evaluate them.

People are outraged by the attitude of the former spokeswoman of the president to the events on the Maidan, about which she writes: «The crushing, record 73% in the second round was also essentially a revolution. Only acceptable for the majority of the population: without dirty tents, a crushed Maidan, unhygienic and cold nights with the risk of being beaten, demolished by water cannons or sprayed with gas, without all this revolutionary «romance» of past centuries, but with a clear, harsh and emotional sentence to the then authorities».

«I don't know about Ms. Mendel, but personally, during «unhygienic and cold nights» on the Maidan, I met the best people of my country. Those discussions «on barrels» in the cold at minus 20 degrees, with black hands and the smell of burnt tires, when really shivers grabbed from the cold – is cooler and more important than academic discussions at the best universities in the world», – **writes** historian Radko Mokryk.

Iuliia's second book, The Fight of Our Lives, published in September 2022, again gave a mostly positive picture of Zelenskyy: an imperfect leader, but one who stood up to Russia and defended Ukraine.



Mendel fully entered the vatnik propaganda network with her Tucker Carlson interview of May 11. A few days earlier, at the Moscow May 9 parade — generously permitted by Zelenskyy — everyone saw how weak Russia is. Iuliia pushed the opposite: Russia is strong and Ukraine must surrender.

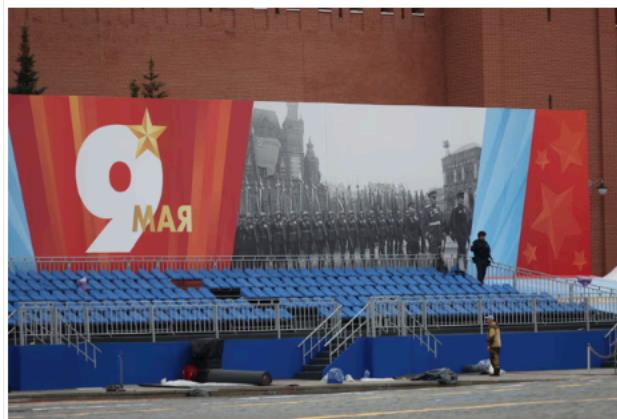
Tucker Carlson is openly “rooting for Russia”.

10/25

<https://x.com/vatniksoup/status/1975254526568636444>

## Ukraine war briefing: Zelenskyy ‘hereby decrees’ Moscow can hold Victory Day parade

Ukraine president says ‘Red Square shall be excluded’ from any attacks, while Kyiv, Moscow and Trump proclaim three-day ceasefire. What we know on day 1,536



📷 An empty grandstand on Red Square before Moscow's Victory Day parade. Photograph: Getty Images

- Volodymyr Zelenskyy has **issued a decree “allowing” Russia’s Victory Day military parade to proceed** and ensuring no weapons are aimed at Red Square. It came after Ukraine and Russia confirmed a **ceasefire would take effect from 9 to 11 May**. In what may have been a **partly tongue-in-cheek** announcement, Zelenskyy’s proclamation said: “I hereby decree: to permit the holding of a parade in the city of Moscow (Russian Federation) on May 9, 2026.”

## Russia's winning streak in Ukraine is over

UPDATED MAY 14, 2026 ▾

By  **Ivana Kottasová**, Daria Tarasova-Markina



Members of the 93rd Kholodnyi Yar Separate Mechanized Brigade of the Ukrainian ... ▾

After more than four years on the Ukrainian front lines, officer Kyrylo Bondarenko is finally sensing a shift. “We can see and feel how the mood among the Russian troops on the front line is changing. They are exhausted,” Bondarenko told CNN.

“We have managed to turn the tide,” Bondarenko, who serves in the Ukrainian unmanned aerial systems unit Lazar’s Group and is currently fighting near Zaporizhzhia, told CNN.

He’s not alone in feeling this.

Last month, Ukraine managed to liberate more land than Russia seized – the first time Moscow suffered a net loss of territory since Ukraine’s August 2024 incursion into the southern Russian Kursk region, according to analysis from the Institute for the Study of War (ISW), a US-based conflict monitor.

That narrative has always been flawed, given how slow and incredibly costly the Russian advances have been since the initial full-scale invasion of 2022, but it has caused some damage to Ukraine's cause. At times, even US President Donald Trump has appeared to buy into it, declaring Russia to be winning the war and famously telling Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky last year that he did not "have the cards."

"The entire premise of Putin's negotiating tactic is using this cognitive warfare to convince the West that there's no point in supporting Ukraine and that they should just push Ukraine to cede now to all of Russia's demands," Christina Harward, the Russia deputy team lead at ISW, told CNN.

"This is really poking holes in that entire narrative," she added.

Ukraine's Defense Minister Mykhailo Fedorov said Tuesday that the past few months were "record-breaking" in terms of Kyiv's successes along the front line.

"We have eliminated 35,000 Russians in both April and March... Russia lacks the forces to continue offensive operations. The Ukrainian army is exhausting the Russians," he said.

Western officials have said, citing intelligence data, that Russian casualty rates stand at around 30,000 to 35,000 a month.

## Mid-range drone strikes

Ukraine's recent successes can largely be attributed to its current drone superiority. After focusing much of its efforts on short-range attacks on Russian positions along the front line, and long-range strikes reaching far into Russia's territory, Ukraine has recently stepped up its mid-range strikes, targeting Russia's logistics.

## ***A Less Muscular Victory Day Parade Shows Putin's Growing Vulnerability***

The event, shrunken because of security fears, adds to a sense that Moscow and other Russian cities can no longer be insulated from the war.

**Russian State TV Shows Smaller Military Parade Amid Fears of  
Ukrainian Strike**



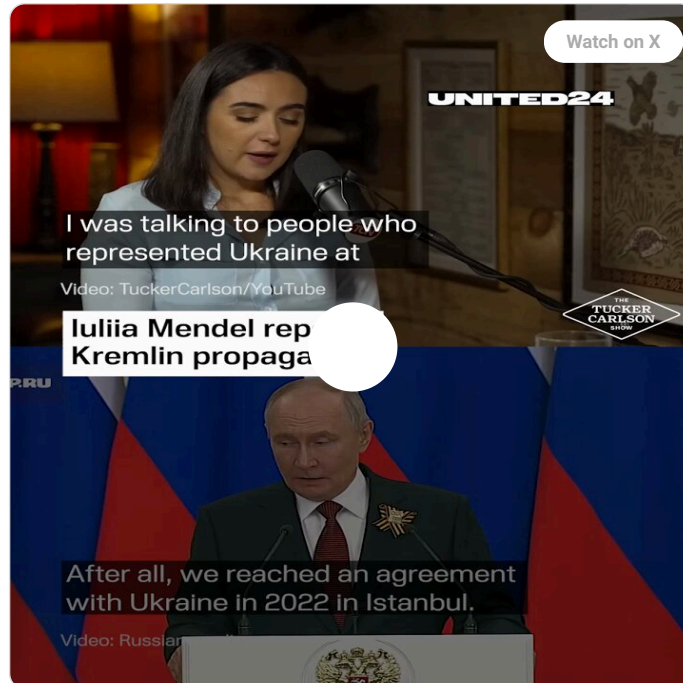
In the interview itself, expect the usual false narratives and irrelevant smears. Mendel also completely twists the daily minute of silence to honour victims of the war or the constitutional prohibition on elections while martial law is in effect.



**UNITED24 Media**   
@United24media · [Follow](#)



Replying to @United24media and @IuliiaMendel



8:52 PM · Sep 11, 2026



103



Reply



Copy link

[Read 2 replies](#)



<https://twitter.com/i/web/status/2112127278373294272>



People stop their cars to observe a one-minute silence daily at 9:00 a.m. to honor soldiers killed in the Russia-Ukraine war, in Kyiv, Ukraine, on May 9, 2026. (Diego Fedele / Getty Images)

Mendel's portrayal of life in Ukraine also didn't fully correspond to the reality of what's happening on the ground. She told Carlson that "everything is banned" now in Ukraine and claims that "all the cars need to stop at 9 a.m. on the roads to listen to the hymn," calling it "a really strange agenda" and saying it "looks surreal."

In reality, she's referring to the daily minute of silence at 9 a.m., when people across the country voluntarily pause to honor those killed by Russia.

After a law was signed this spring to formalize the established wartime tradition, disinformation about it quickly spread online. In truth, the law only requires authorities to announce when the minute of silence begins and ends — there are no penalties stipulated for not participating.

Mendel's main message has been that Ukrainians are desperate for peace and that Ukraine needs to be ready to [surrender some of its territory](#) and accept a peace deal.

Where a People's Deputy of Ukraine, as having been elected from a political party (an electoral bloc of political parties), fails to join the parliamentary faction within the same political party (the same electoral bloc of political parties) or in such a faction, his or her authority shall be early terminated on the basis of law upon the decision of the highest steering body of the respective political party (electoral bloc of political parties) from the date of adoption of such decision.

#### Article 82

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine works in sessions.

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is competent on the condition that no less than two-thirds of its constitutional composition has been elected.

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine assembles for its first session no later than on the thirtieth day after the official announcement of the election results.

The first meeting of the newly elected Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine is opened by the eldest People's Deputy of Ukraine.

#### Article 83

Regular sessions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine commence on the first Tuesday of February and on the first Tuesday of September each year.

Special sessions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, with the stipulation of their agenda, are convoked by the Chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, on the demand of the President of Ukraine or on the demand of no fewer People's Deputies of Ukraine than one-third of the constitutional composition of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

In the event that the President of Ukraine declares, by proclaiming a decree, a state of martial law or of emergency upon the whole territory of Ukraine in some areas of the State, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine shall assemble within two days without convocation.

In the event that the term of authority of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine expires while a state of martial law or of emergency is in effect, its powers are extended until the day when the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine elected after the cancellation of the state of martial law or of emergency convenes its first meeting of the first session.

Rules on the conduct of work of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine shall be laid down in the Constitution of Ukraine and the Rules of Procedure of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

According to election results and on the basis of a common ground achieved between various political positions, a coalition of parliamentary factions shall be formed in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to include a majority of People's Deputies of Ukraine of the constitutional composition of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

A coalition of parliamentary factions in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine shall be formed within one month from the date of the first meeting of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to be held following regular or special elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, or within one month from the date when activities of a coalition of parliamentary factions in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine were terminated.

A coalition of parliamentary factions in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine submits to the President of Ukraine, in accordance with this Constitution, proposals concerning a candidature for the office of the Prime Minister of Ukraine and also, in accordance with this Constitution, submits proposals concerning candidatures for the membership of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

Framework for forming, organising, and terminating activities of a coalition of parliamentary factions in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine shall be established by the Constitution of Ukraine and the Rules of Procedure of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine.

на пост новообраного  
Президента України,  
обраного після скасування  
ВОЄННОГО СТАНУ.

U razi zakinchennya stroku povnovazhen'  
Prezydenta Ukrayiny pid chas diyi  
voyennoho stanu yoho povnovazhennya  
prodovzhuyut'sya do vstupu na post  
novoobranoho Prezydenta Ukrayiny,  
obranoho pislya skasuvannya voyennoho  
stanu.



In the event that the term of  
office of the President of Ukraine  
expires during martial law, his  
powers shall be extended until  
the newly elected President of  
Ukraine, elected after the lifting  
of martial law, takes office.



Mendel portrays Zelenskyy as corrupt and keeping the war going for his own benefit. Did she suddenly remember a completely different version of events than what she wrote in her books?



The Kyiv Independent   
@KyivIndependent · [Follow](#)



President Volodymyr Zelensky's former press secretary Iuliia Mendel gave an interview to Tucker Carlson, an American conservative political commentator.

In this video, the Kyiv Independent's Nastia Kasinchuk breaks down all the false claims that Mendel said in her one-and-a-half [Show more](#)



2:24 PM · May 13, 2026



3.4K



Reply



Copy link

[Read 366 replies](#)

K

Fighting against  
conspiracies  
and trolls

-We just see Putin as evil, but  
Zelensky is also evil.

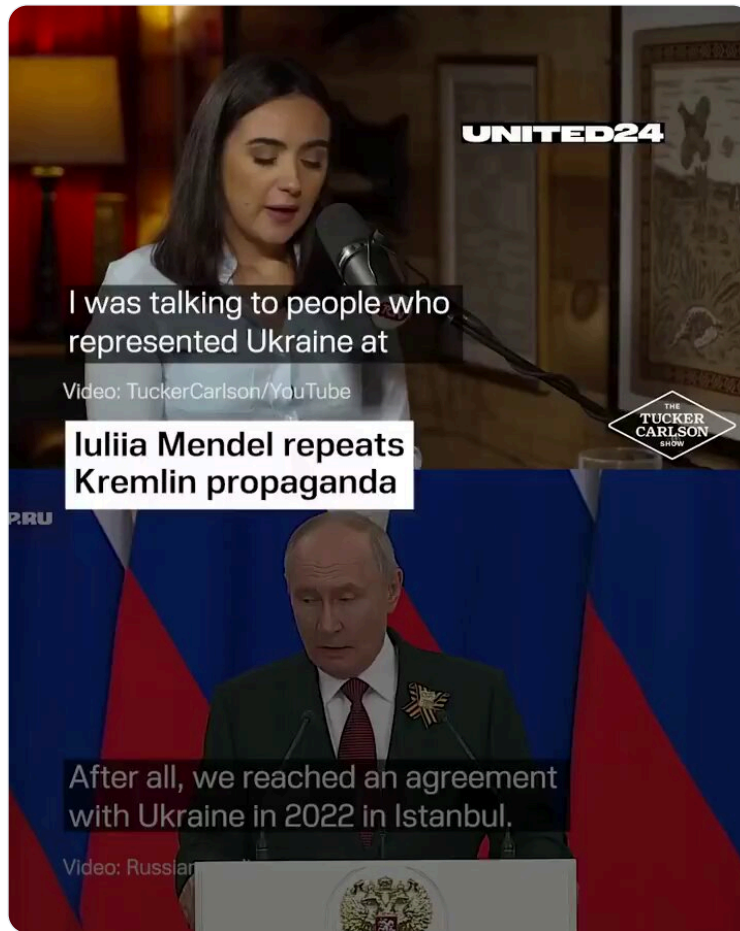
<https://twitter.com/i/web/status/2112127382253719912>



<https://twitter.com/i/web/status/2112127382253719912>



<https://twitter.com/i/web/status/2112127382253719912>



<https://twitter.com/i/web/status/2112127382253719912>

And Mendel did not end up on Tucker Carlson by accident: she approached him herself. She is "Writing a bold new exposé on the real story behind the scenes in Ukraine", and Tucker's show is a good means of self-promotion. But at whose expense? She lives abroad and has the nerve to claim to be making a "sacrifice", but she's not the one tortured to death under Russian occupation.

13/25

<https://x.com/vatniksoup/status/1938237244537479275>

## The War Demands More Sacrifice

Perhaps, mine can bring so much expected peace closer.



IULIIA MENDEL WEEKLY UPDATES

FEB 24, 2026



4



2



1

Share



Dear readers,

I want to sincerely thank you for following my blog over the years. I deeply value your dedication to staying informed about the news and developments from Ukraine, and I truly appreciate your feedback—even when it's critical.

That said, I realize that some of you may soon feel disappointed or even embarrassed by the steps I am about to take. I expect significant backlash, including the now-common accusations of being “pro-Russian.” (As a quick reminder: before November 2024, even those advocating for peace in our country were often branded as traitors.)

The mass distortion of reality and public consciousness fueled by wartime propaganda has reached dangerous extremes. It is costing my country dearly.

Despite the clear inconsistencies and manipulations surrounding President Zelenskyy, many still equate supporting his position with supporting Ukraine itself. This is fundamentally mistaken. Today, the only genuine way to stand for Ukraine is to urgently push for peace.

Our nation stands on the brink of extinction, masked by patriotic slogans and endless calls for “more resilience”—rhetoric amplified by Zelenskyy's army of “thousands of talking heads,” the very network he once asked his communication team (including me) to build back in 2019–2020. The war has given him exactly that apparatus. I fear he has become one of the greatest obstacles to ending this conflict.

## The former Zelensky loyalist who now wants Ukraine to surrender

Sanctioned by Ukraine for 'promoting Russian propaganda', Iuliia Mendel tells The Times that she is no Russian agent and a bad peace is better than a bad war



President Zelensky and Iuliia Mendel at a press conference in 2019

STR/NURPHOTO/GETTY IMAGES



**Marc Bennetts**

Thursday September 17 2026, 12.55pm BST, The Times

**S**he was once President Zelensky's fiercely loyal press secretary, standing by his side as he injected what she described as a "breath of fresh air" into Ukrainian politics.

Today, Iuliia Mendel is one of the Ukrainian leader's most prominent critics. Her social media accounts and interviews are full of unsubstantiated allegations of money laundering and drug use, while she has also criticised what she calls Zelensky's failure to "make peace" with Russia, even though President Putin has said the war in Ukraine will only end on Moscow's terms.

Needless to say, Russian state media had a field day with the anti-Zelensky Tucker Carlson interview. Ironically, Iuliia once wore an RT costume for Halloween, saying it was the "scariest" she could find.

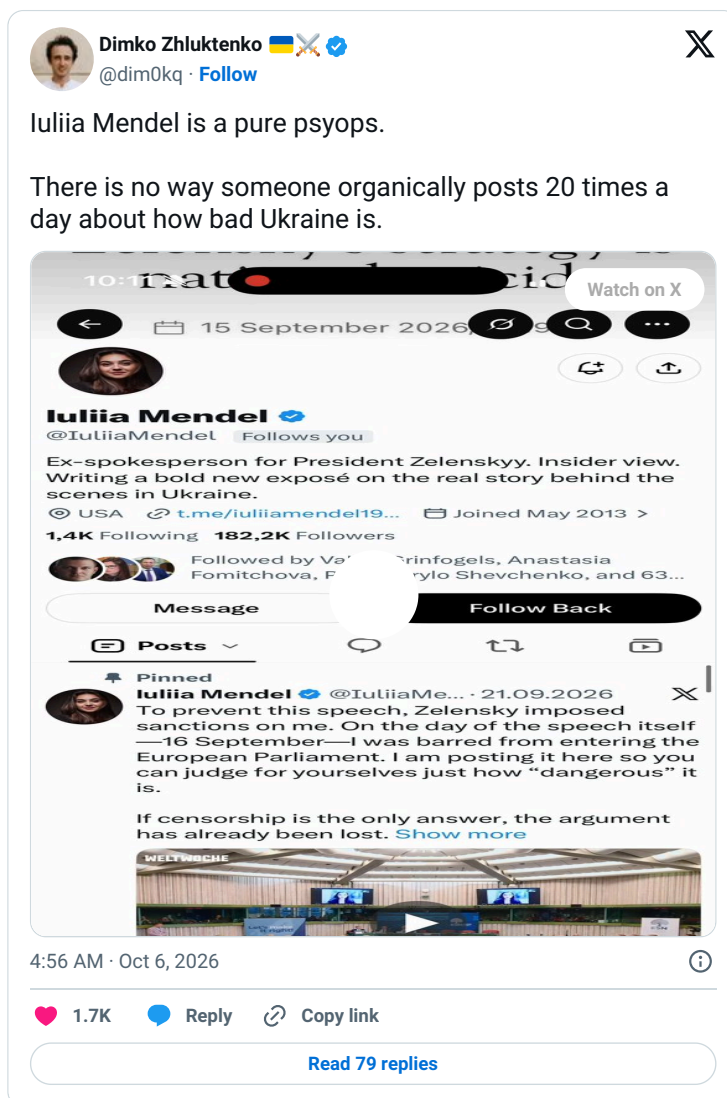






Since going full vatnik, she's posting non-stop against Ukraine, with Russian state media systematically picking up her every tweet and making a big story out of it within hours.

15/25



Peak absurdity is reached when Russian state media uses Mendel's interview as proof that... the Russian state has murdered even more Ukrainians than Ukraine claims, something which RT celebrates and Iuliia used to be critical of.

16/25

**RT**  
@RT\_com

...

Mendel exposes cover-up in TRUE number of Ukrainian deaths

'Dead soldiers with bullet in the head falsely labeled a heart attack'



0:04 / 0:41

5:46 AM · May 12, 2026 · 9,957 Views



**Iuliia Mendel** ✓  
@IuliiaMendel

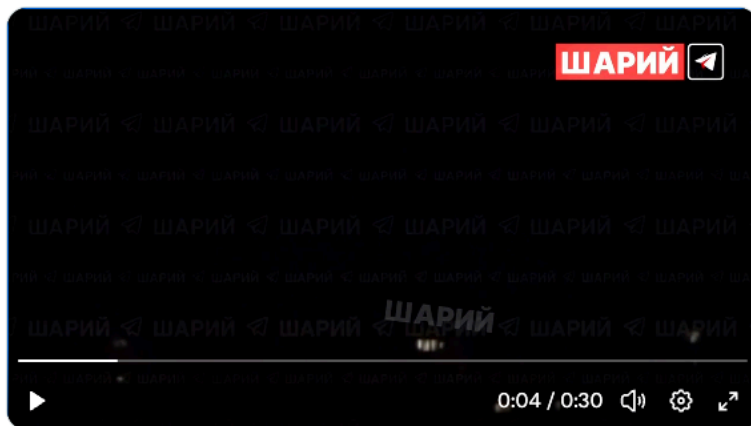
Beryslav, Kherson region, tonight. Russia is a TERRORIST STATE!!!



9:12 PM · Jan 29, 2023 · **149.5K** Views

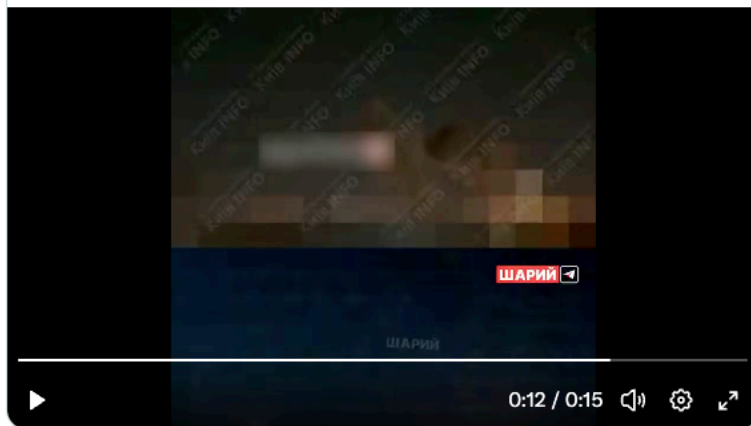


Kiev's NIGHT SKY GLOWS as MISSILES SLAM into city



RT Intl @RT\_on\_X · Aug 1

DEAFENING EXPLOSIONS SHAKE Kiev as FIERY CLOUDS fill skyline



1:22 AM · Aug 1, 2026 · 111.7K Views



Kiev SKYLINE GLOWS with HELLISH FIRES as MISSILE BARRAGE POUNDS TARGETS



11:50 PM · Aug 4, 2026 · 83.6K Views

But even her actual words are not enough for Russian propaganda, so they immediately made fake covers about her interview, which were then amplified through the usual vatnik networks in each country, something they do all the time.



Vatnik Soup en français   
@vatniksoup\_fr · [Follow](#)



Dans la [#vatniksoup](#) exclusive d'aujourd'hui, nous présentons une opération de propagande du Kremlin typique orchestrée à l'aide de sites entiers générés par IA, de vidéos deepfakes, de super-propagateurs sur les réseaux sociaux et de blanchiment de fausses informations. 1/30



8:44 PM · Jul 3, 2024



131



Reply



Copy link

[Read 4 replies](#)





Being used this transparently by the propaganda arm of a state murdering Ukrainians every day and rejoicing at bombing Ukrainian cities every day, did not give Mendel second thoughts.

Instead, she doubled down. In August, she gave another major interview to Le Journal du

Dimanche — part of Vincent Bolloré's French media empire, which he recently put at the service of Xenia Fedorova, previously head of... RT France.

18/25

<https://x.com/vatniksoup/status/2063196621337227683>



LE JDNEWS

LIVE LIBERTY OF EXPRESSION



WAR IN UKRAINE

# THE APPEAL TO SURSAUT

Why France must reunite with Russia and stop the escalation  
towards war, by Henri Guaino, Philippe de Villiers, Nicolas  
Dupont-Aignan and Luc Ferry

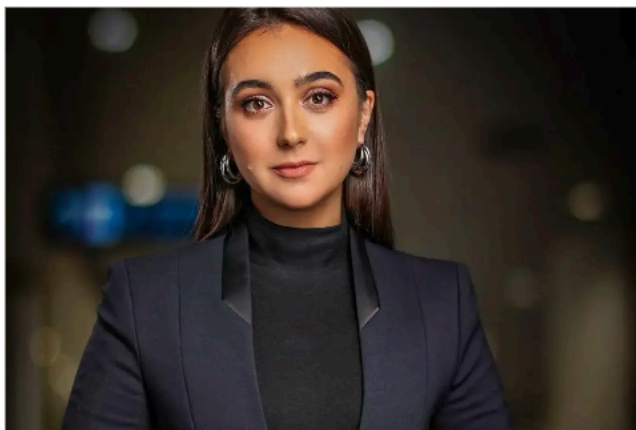
ABONNÉ INTERNATIONAL

## **EXCLUSIF. Corruption, dérive autoritaire : Iuliia Mendel, ex-porte-parole de Zelensky, se confie au JDD**

**DISSIDENTE.** Celle qui a été la voix du président ukrainien pendant deux ans l'accuse d'avoir fait du conflit le socle de sa survie politique.

Propos recueillis par Alexandre Mendel

02/08/2026 à 07:01



Iuliia Mendel. © VITALII RUDENKO



Facebook



Email



Whatsapp



Twitter

**Le JDD.** Vous avez été la porte-parole de Volodymyr Zelensky pendant deux ans. Quel regard portez-vous sur cette période et à quel moment avez-vous commencé à douter de lui ?

SUBSCRIBER INTERNATIONAL

## **EXCLUSIVE. Corruption, authoritarian drift: Iuliia Mendel, former spokesperson for Zelensky, confides in the JDD**

**DISSIDENT.** The one who was the voice of the Ukrainian president for two years accuses him of having made the conflict the basis of his political survival.

Comments collected by Alexander Mendel  
02/08/2026 at 07:01



Iuliia Mendel. © VITALII RUDENKO

 Facebook

 Email

 Whatsapp

 Twitter

**The JDD. You were Volodymyr Zelensky's spokesperson for two years. How do you view this period and when did you begin to doubt him?**

On September 16, Mendel headlined an AfD-organized event at the European Parliament.

Yes, that AfD, the party whose senior figures wave Russian flags and decorate their offices with Putin-fan merch and mugs bearing the logo of the Russian Army.



Vatnik Soup   
@vatniksoup · [Follow](#)



In today's Vatnik Soup, we introduce Hans-Thomas Tillschneider [@P\\_Plattform](#), a German AfD politician, Islamic-studies scholar & Putinverstehher.

He's best known for playing dumb over his Russian Army mug & for shaping the AfD program ahead of Sunday's Sachsen-Anhalt election.1/21



2:52 PM · Sep 4, 2026



1.4K



Reply



Copy link

[Read 19 replies](#)

Tino Chrupalla Roger Köppel Julija Mendel Prof. Dr. Hans Neuhoﬀ

# UKRAINE

## FRIEDEN WAGEN – DIPLOMATIE STATT ESCHALATION

16.09.26 | 18 Uhr  
Livestream auf [youtube.com/@die.weltwoche](https://youtube.com/@die.weltwoche)

  
**ESN** EUROPE OF  
SOVEREIGN  
NATIONS



The whole vatnik network supports her now. She denied being a Russian agent or receiving payment for her political appearances, but to be clear doing this for free does not make it any better. There are several possible reasons to go full vatnik and betray Ukraine; none of them are pretty.

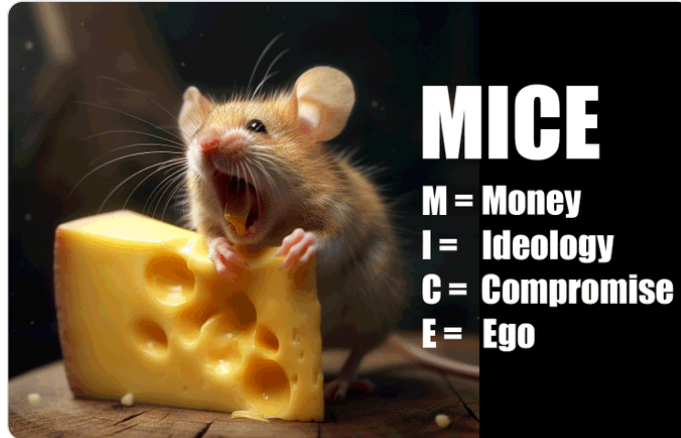


Vatnik Soup   
@vatniksoup · [Follow](#)



In today's [#vatniksoup](#), I'm going to talk about MICE. Not the rodent, but an acronym that originates from CIA recruitment strategy used in espionage. MICE explains the main motivators for covert and also overt action, and it stands for Money, Ideology, Compromise and Ego.

1/25



12:22 PM · May 21, 2023



1.9K



Reply



Copy link

[Read 49 replies](#)



## Fact check: Zelensky's former press secretary says she speaks for Ukrainians. Her claims tell a different story

September 18, 2026 5:09 PM • 7 min read



"What most people don't know is that there were...multiple legal interpretations of what is now simplistically reduced to the formula of 'cede land or not' — interpretations that could have helped Ukraine retain control with time," Mendel said.

Zelensky has publicly proposed [exactly such solutions](#), where the occupied territories would remain under Russian control temporarily before being regained via diplomacy.

---

Only 32% of Ukrainians would agree to a peace deal that would require Ukraine to withdraw completely from Donbas, even in exchange for Western security guarantees.

---

In fact, Mendel contradicts her own claims about Zelensky's "uncompromising" attitude later in her speech.

"Today he changes the terms of peace by the week: now it is accession to NATO, now the return of Crimea, now the borders of 1991, now membership of the European Union — as though all of this were achievable in a single stroke — now the refusal to concede Donbas," she said — effectively listing various points in which Ukraine softened its position, while Russia has not.

Notably, Mendel stopped short of urging Ukraine to make territorial concessions, suggesting she "would be signing (her) own treason charge and (her) own 15-year or life sentence."

Next to Zelensky, Mendel also hurls accusations at Western governments that only "wish to destroy Russia no matter how many Ukrainian lives it costs" and refuse to talk to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

This comment seems to ignore various initiatives by Ukraine's leading allies in Europe to [engage Russia diplomatically](#) — though, so far, without any progress toward a settlement as Moscow refuses to compromise on its demands.

Kherson, where Iuliia grew up, is now liberated — something she hoped for and then celebrated in 2022. Was that wrong? Would Iuliia rather live under Russian occupation, where journalists can end up tortured to death?



**Iuliia Mendel** ✓ @IuliiaMendel · Jan 29, 2023

Beryslav, Kherson region, tonight. Russia is a TERRORIST STATE!!!



Opinion

Iuliia Mendel

# My hometown, now occupied by Russia, is on the verge of a humanitarian disaster

March 4, 2022 More than 4 years ago



Ukrainians and refugees from other nationalities fleeing the war in Ukraine, who have just arrived are choosing clothes, shoes and toys from those brought to the border by people from all around Poland. (Kasia Strek for The Washington Post)

*Iuliia Mendel is a journalist and former press secretary for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky.*

World / Europe

## Body of Ukrainian journalist who died in Russian detention returned by Moscow with signs of torture and with missing organs

By Ivana Kottasová, Victoria Butenko and Daria Tarasova-Markina, CNN

🕒 3 minute read · Updated 9:35 AM EDT, Wed April 30, 2025



A colleague of Ukrainian journalist Victoria Roshchyna holds a photograph of her during an event in honor of her memory in Kyiv, on October 11, 2024. Anatoloo Stepanov/AFP/Getty Images

**(CNN)** — The body of a young Ukrainian woman who died in Russian captivity after being held incommunicado for months was returned to Ukraine showing signs of torture, Ukrainian prosecutors have said.

Kyiv said the remains of journalist Victoria Roshchyna, who went missing during a reporting trip, were returned as part of a body exchange between Ukraine and Russia in February.

Yuriy Belousov, who heads the war crimes department at the Ukrainian Prosecutor General's Office, said that forensic examination found "numerous signs of torture and ill-treatment... including abrasions and hemorrhages on various parts of the body, a broken



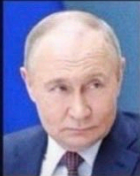
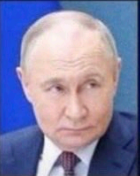
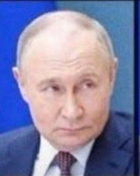
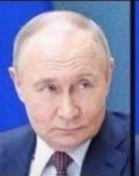
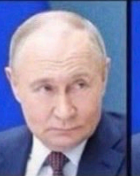
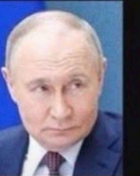
Russian propaganda portrays Zelenskyy as an incompetent, corrupt drug addict squandering Western aid on luxury cars and mansions. If that caricature were true, Moscow would hardly need to work so hard to sell it: they would just buy him. The reality is that Zelenskyy stands in the way of Russia occupying and looting more Ukrainian territory.

Whatever his flaws, he is no corrupt servant of Putin like Viktor Yanukovich was.

22/25

<https://x.com/vatniksoup/status/1893357277819666652>

# US Made Six Peace Proposals in 2025

| MAR                                                                               | MAY                                                                               | JUL                                                                               | JUL                                                                               | OCT                                                                                | NOV                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ✓ accepted                                                                        | ✓ accepted                                                                        | ✓ accepted                                                                        | ✓ accepted                                                                        | ✓ accepted                                                                         | ✓ accepted                                                                          |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ✗ rejected                                                                        | ✗ rejected                                                                        | ✗ rejected                                                                        | ✗ rejected                                                                        | ✗ rejected                                                                         | ✗ rejected                                                                          |

Does that mean Zelenskyy is perfect? Of course not. He has made mistakes, like any wartime leader under immense pressure. And one early mistake may very well have been hiring someone as devoid of ethics as Luliia Mendel, who's willing to sell out her own country in order to sell more copies of her gossip book.

23/25



Russia started this war. Putin could end it tomorrow, but instead, the Kremlin spends \$5 billion a year on propaganda to manufacture support for that war through BS narratives which are then spread by vatniks like Luliia Mendel.

24/25



Fact-based research to counter that propaganda is absolutely crucial — please support our work:

25/25



...