Vatnik Soup @vatniksoup

Nov 12, 2026 · 17 tweets · vatniksoup/status/2120818224073777336

In today's Vatnik Soup, our guest chef @Martinlaineolen shows how Pearson Sharp, a correspondent for pro-Trump TV channel One America News (OAN or OANN), collaborated with a Russian intelligence asset to produce pro-Russian propaganda for MAGA audiences.

1/17



The evidence comes from hacked files belonging to John Mark Dougan, a former US Marine turned Russian asset. The hack confirms that he carried out tasks for FSB and GRU officers.

The Insider has already published a great piece on this:

2/17



Johnny on the spot: A hack of ex-Marine-turned-defector John Dougan's m…
The Insider has obtained access to an archive of hacked correspondence belonging to John Mark Dougan, a former U.S. sheriff's deputy who fled to Russia and…

https://theins.press/en/inv/299417

Dougan wanted to destroy Ukrainians. The GRU had to calm him down: he should be a "cyber soldier".

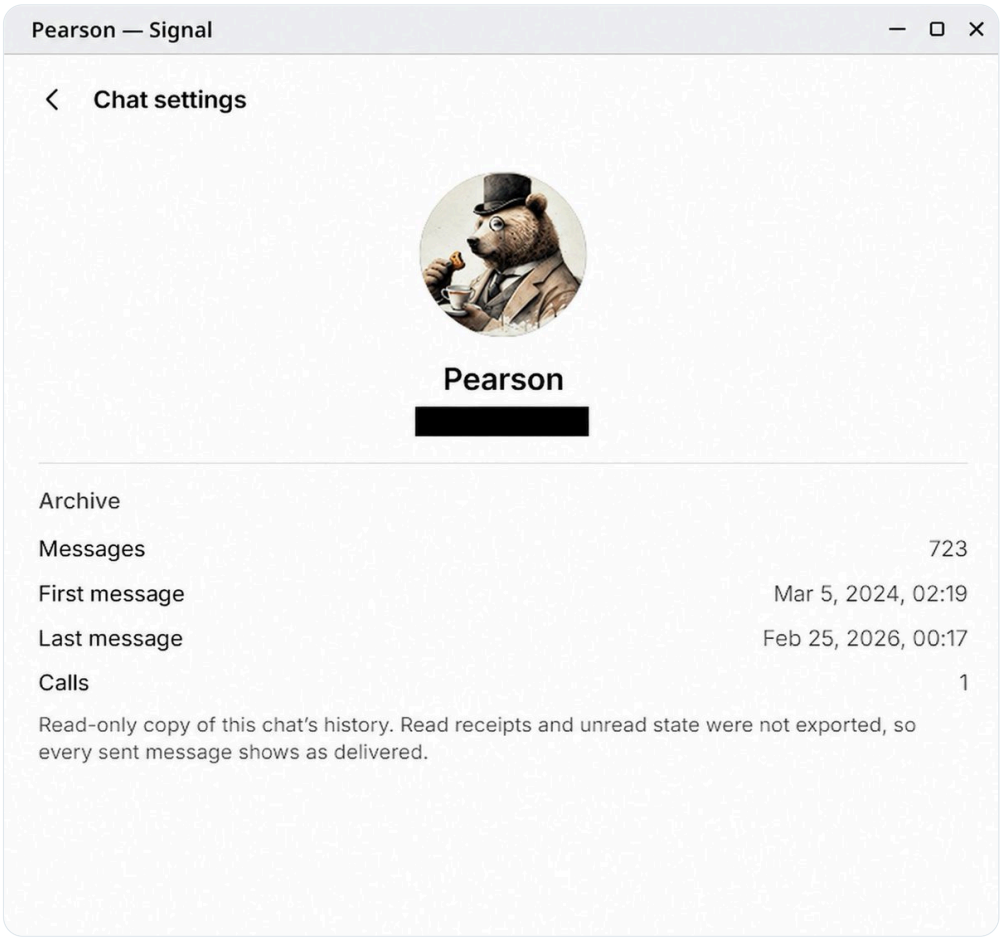
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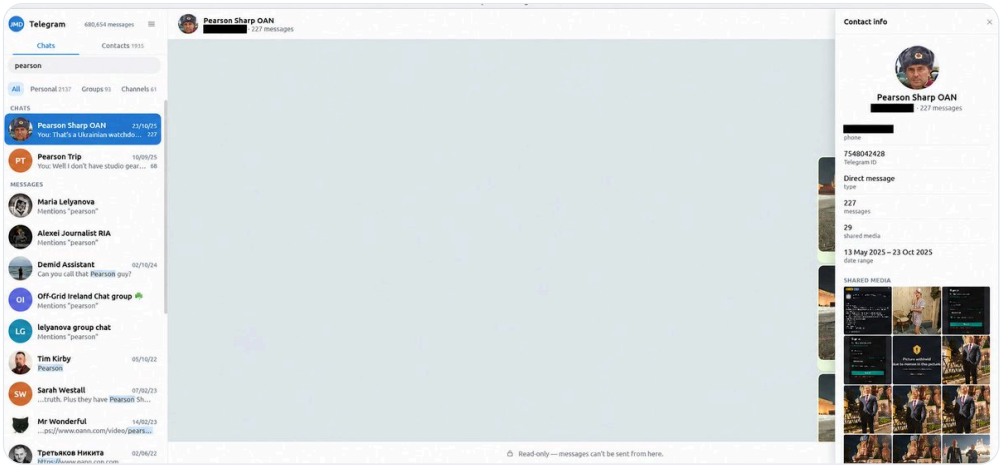
> "Guys, I'm leaving tomorrow, with or without your help. I'll get to Donetsk even if I have to crawl across the border river. And I'm going to take part unless I die. If they won't take me as a Javelin instructor, I'll find an AK-74 somewhere and go to the front where I'm needed. I'm not waiting around like a frightened mouse for the conflict to end."
>
> When Khoroshenky tried to calm him down, explaining that Dougan needed to be a "cyber soldier," the American responded: "I need to help fight the Ukrainians. I've seen what they did to our beautiful Russian boys, and I want to destroy as many as possible. It's wrong that I'm in Moscow."
>
> Source: The Insider · theins.press/en/inv/299417

Dougan's ties to the GRU and its disinformation project Storm-1516 have been known for years. But his hacked chats show that he had a close relationship with OAN "foreign correspondent" Pearson Sharp.

They exchanged hundreds of messages on Telegram and Signal in 2024–2026.

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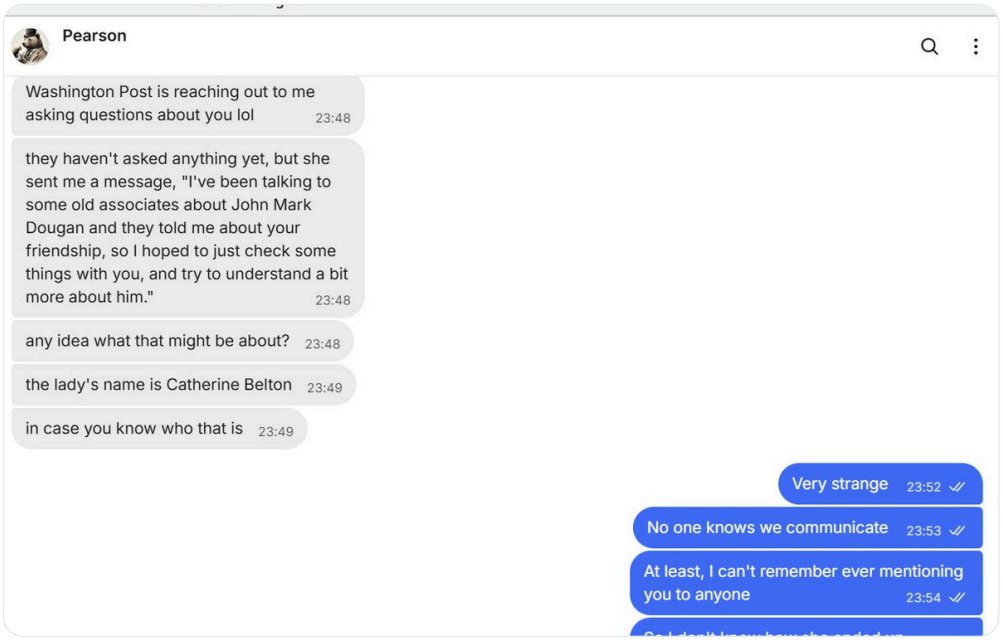


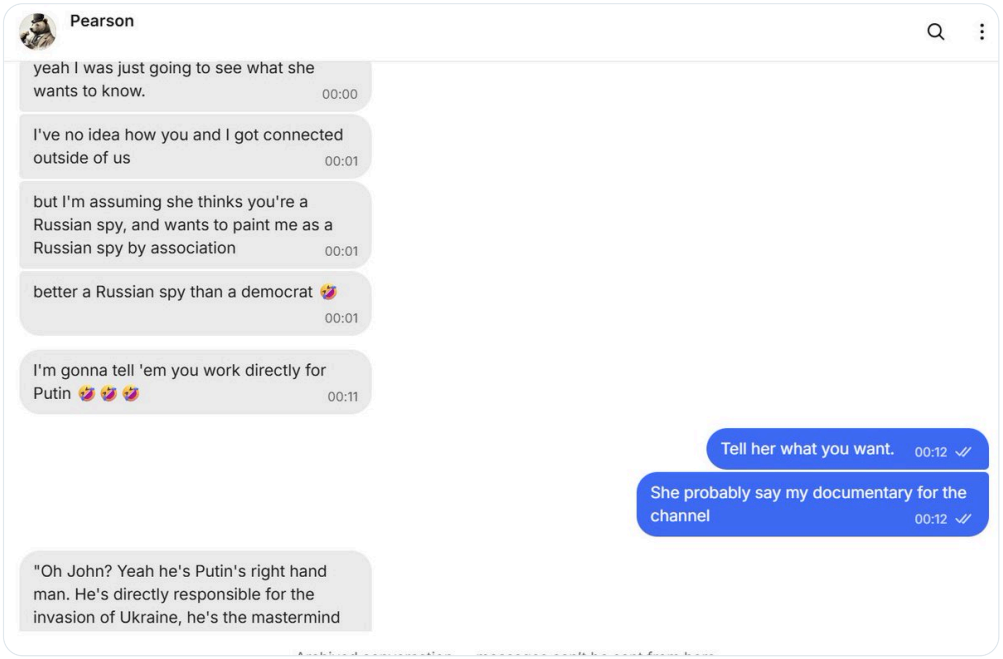


Sharp knew about Dougan's background: they discussed allegations about his ties to Russian intelligence.

"Better a Russian spy than a Democrat", Pearson told Dougan as they discussed an upcoming WaPo article about Dougan's ties to the GRU, Russian military intelligence.

Classic MAGA attitude.


Pearson
Washington Post is reaching out to me asking questions about you lol 23:48
they haven't asked anything yet, but she sent me a message, "I've been talking to some old associates about John Mark Dougan and they told me about your friendship, so I hoped to just check some things with you, and try to understand a bit more about him." 23:48
any idea what that might be about? 23:48
the lady's name is Catherine Belton 23:49
in case you know who that is 23:49
Very strange 23:52
No one knows we communicate 23:53
At least, I can't remember ever mentioning you to anyone 23:54

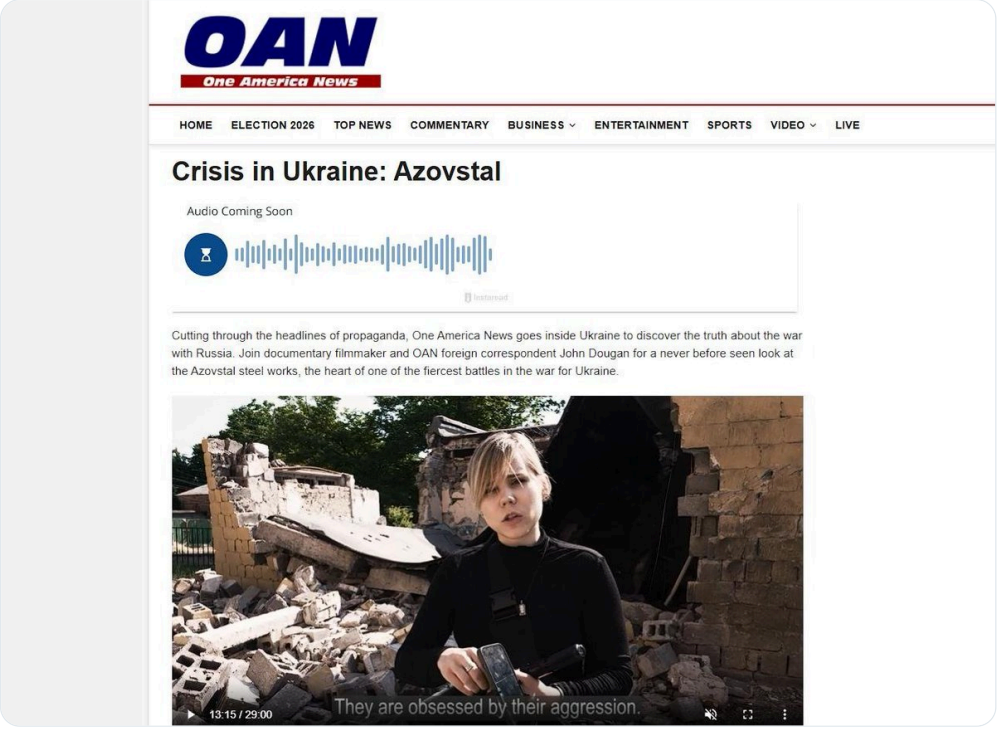

Pearson
yeah I was just going to see what she wants to know. 00:00
I've no idea how you and I got connected outside of us 00:01
but I'm assuming she thinks you're a Russian spy, and wants to paint me as a Russian spy by association 00:01
better a Russian spy than a democrat 00:01
I'm gonna tell 'em you work directly for Putin 00:11
Tell her what you want. 00:12
She probably say my documentary for the channel 00:12
"Oh John? Yeah he's Putin's right hand man. He's directly responsible for the invasion of Ukraine, he's the mastermind



Sharp gave Dougan (and Russian intelligence) access to American MAGA audiences through OAN.

For example, Sharp and OAN aired a Russian propaganda clip about Azovstal featuring Dougan and Darya Dugina.

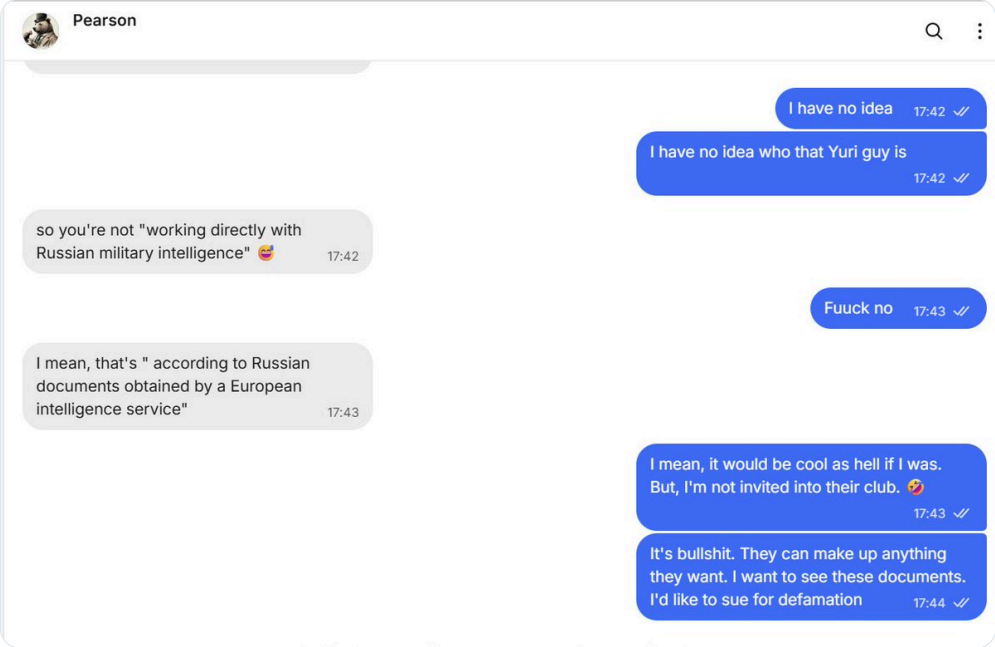
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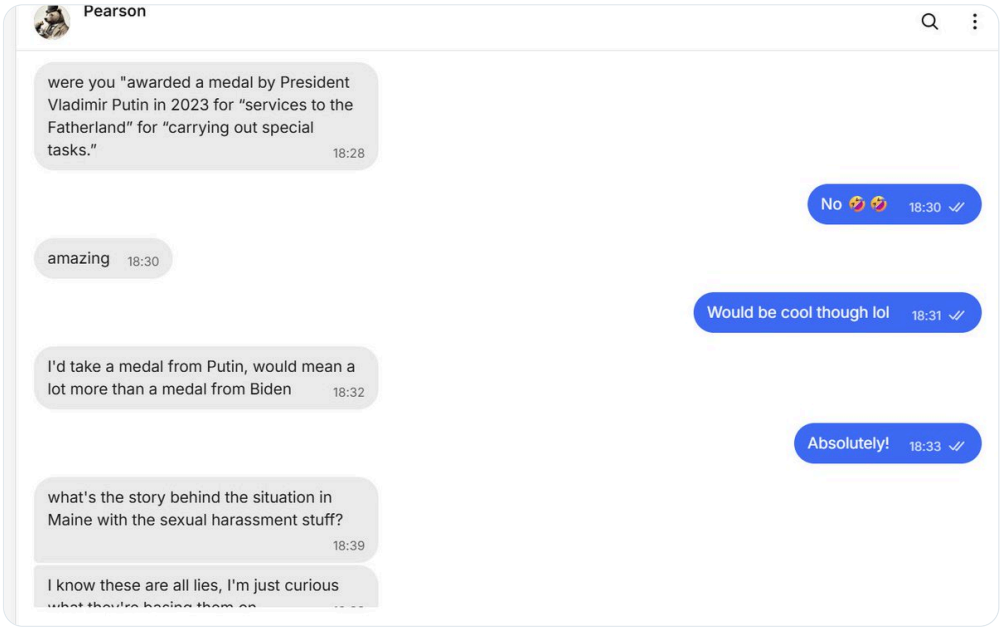


Dougan denied his intelligence ties, but the leak confirms them. He also denied receiving a medal from Vladimir Putin.

Pearson Sharp replied: “I'd take a medal from Putin, would mean a lot more than a medal from Biden”.

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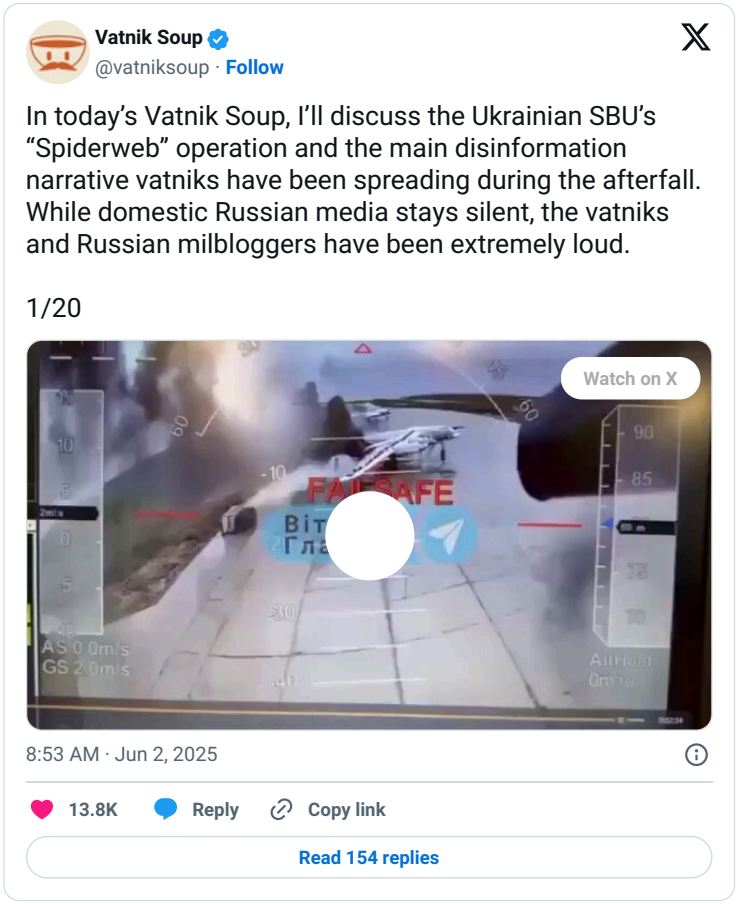


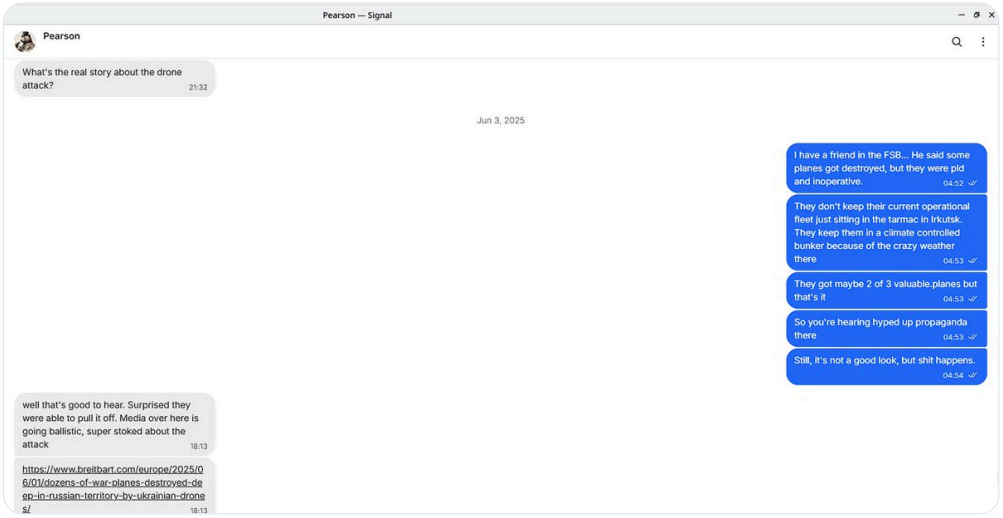


After the famous Ukrainian Spiderweb drone operation in June 2025, which destroyed dozens of Russian bombers, Dougan explained that it was not that bad, according to his friend in the FSB.

Sharp replied: “Well that's good to hear.”

8/17





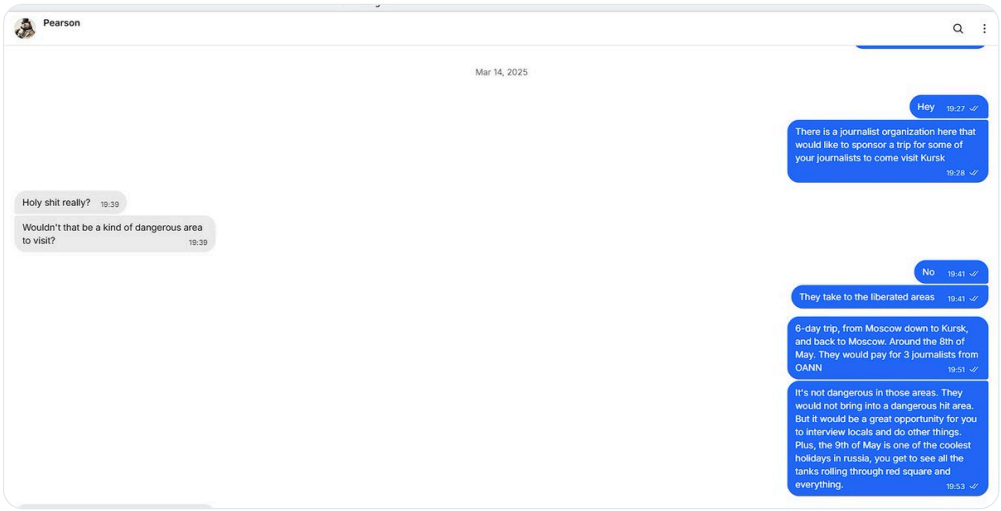
In March 2025, Dougan invites OAN to Russia.

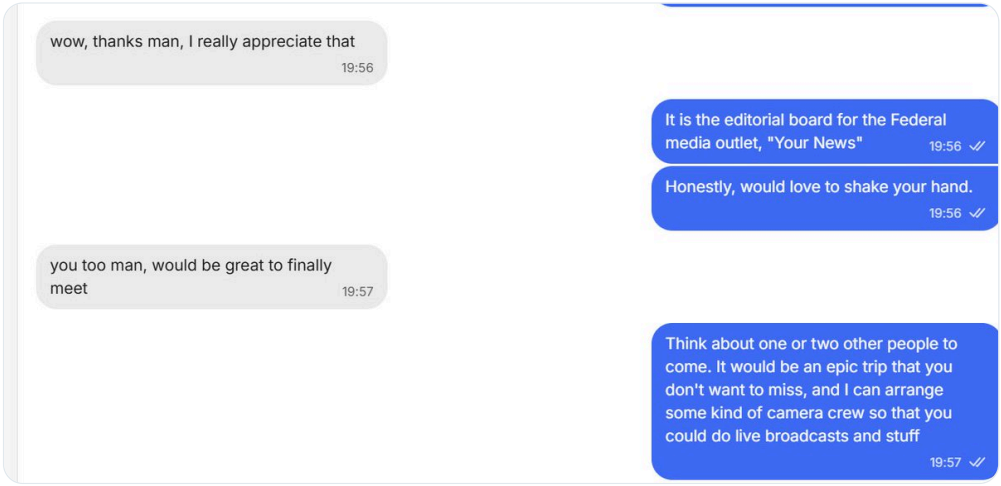
Dougan: "There is a journalist organization here that would like to sponsor a trip […] to come visit Kursk"

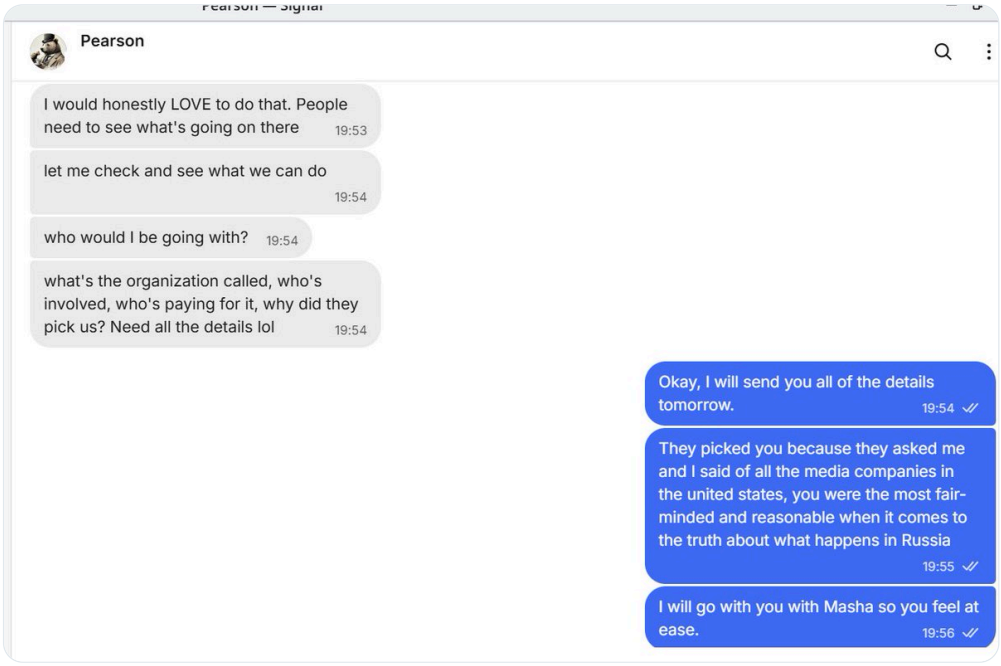
"Holy shit really?"

"They would pay for 3 journalists from OANN"

"I would honestly LOVE to do that."


Pearson
Mar 14, 2025
Hey 19:27
There is a journalist organization here that would like to sponsor a trip for some of your journalists to come visit Kursk 19:28
Holy shit really? 19:39
Wouldn't that be a kind of dangerous area to visit? 19:39
No 19:41
They take to the liberated areas 19:41
6-day trip, from Moscow down to Kursk, and back to Moscow. Around the 8th of May. They would pay for 3 journalists from OANN 19:51
It's not dangerous in those areas. They would not bring into a dangerous hit area. But it would be a great opportunity for you to interview locals and do other things. Plus, the 9th of May is one of the coolest holidays in russia, you get to see all the tanks rolling through red square and everything. 19:53


wow, thanks man, I really appreciate that 19:56
It is the editorial board for the Federal media outlet, "Your News" 19:56
Honestly, would love to shake your hand. 19:56
you too man, would be great to finally meet 19:57
Think about one or two other people to come. It would be an epic trip that you don't want to miss, and I can arrange some kind of camera crew so that you could do live broadcasts and stuff 19:57



Dougan promises Sharp a meeting with Sergei Lavrov.

Sharp name-drops Trump's former nominee for attorney general, Matt Gaetz, who covered Pearson's Russia trip on OAN.

"He [Gaetz] said Lavrov would be the number one reason to go."

10/17



Vatnik Soup
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In today's #vatniksoup I'll introduce an American politician, lawyer and Florida Man, Matt Gaetz (@mattgaetz). He's best-known as the US representative for the Republican Party, being a close ally of Donald Trump, and for voting against any aid for Ukraine.

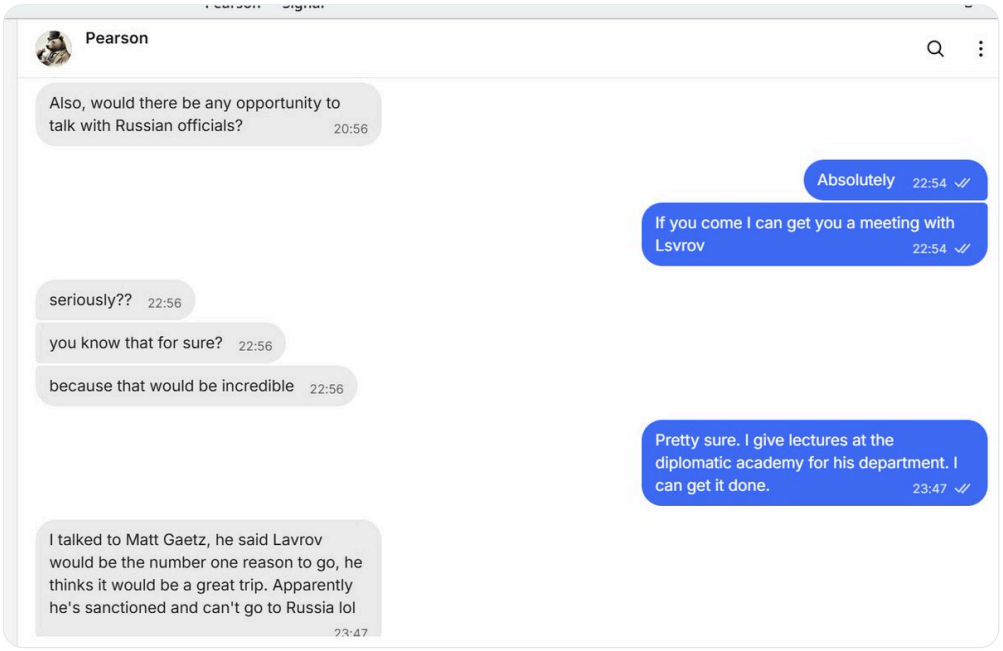
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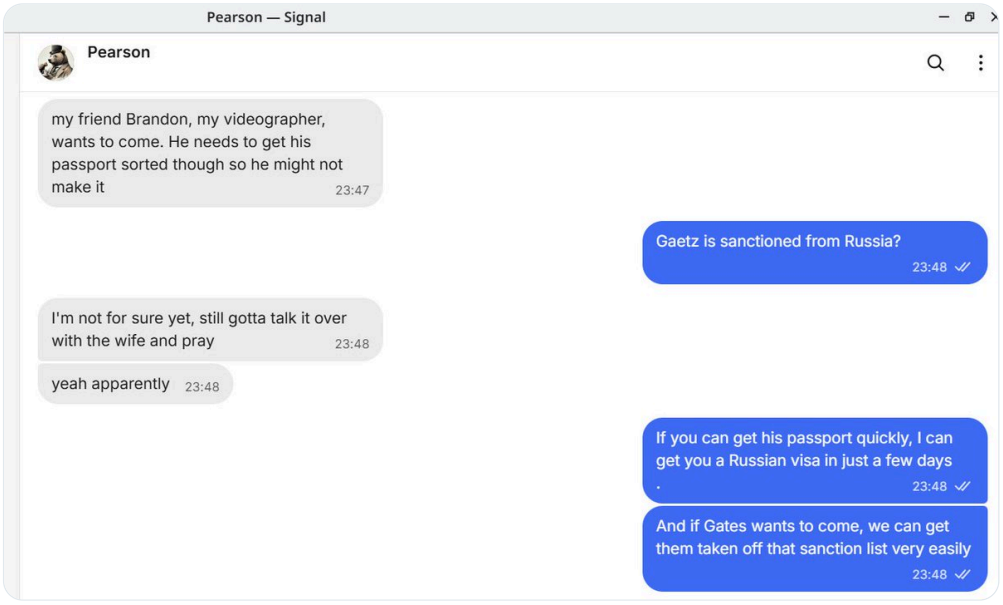


10:52 AM · Mar 8, 2023

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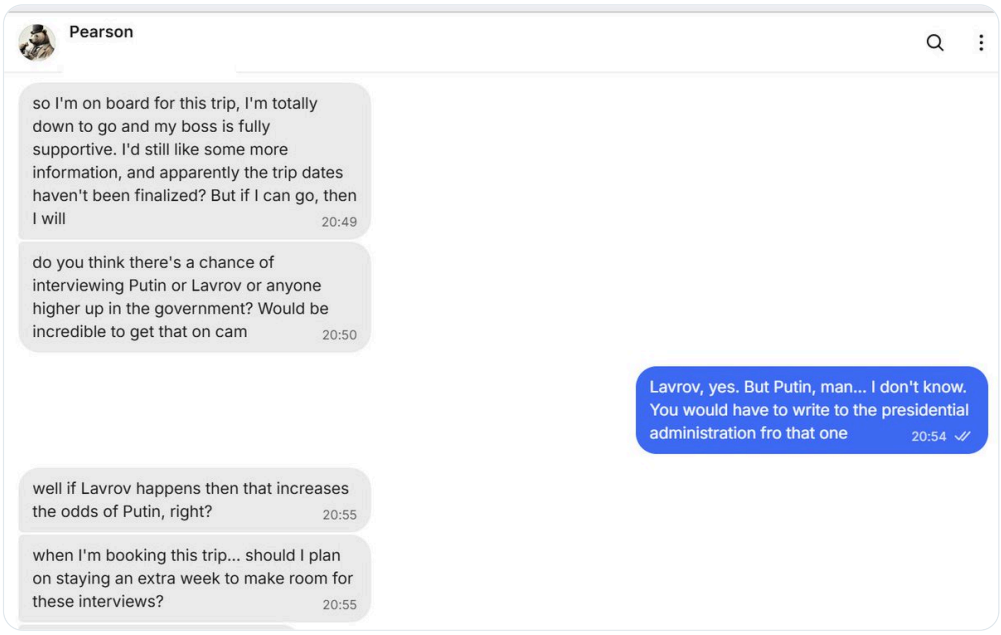


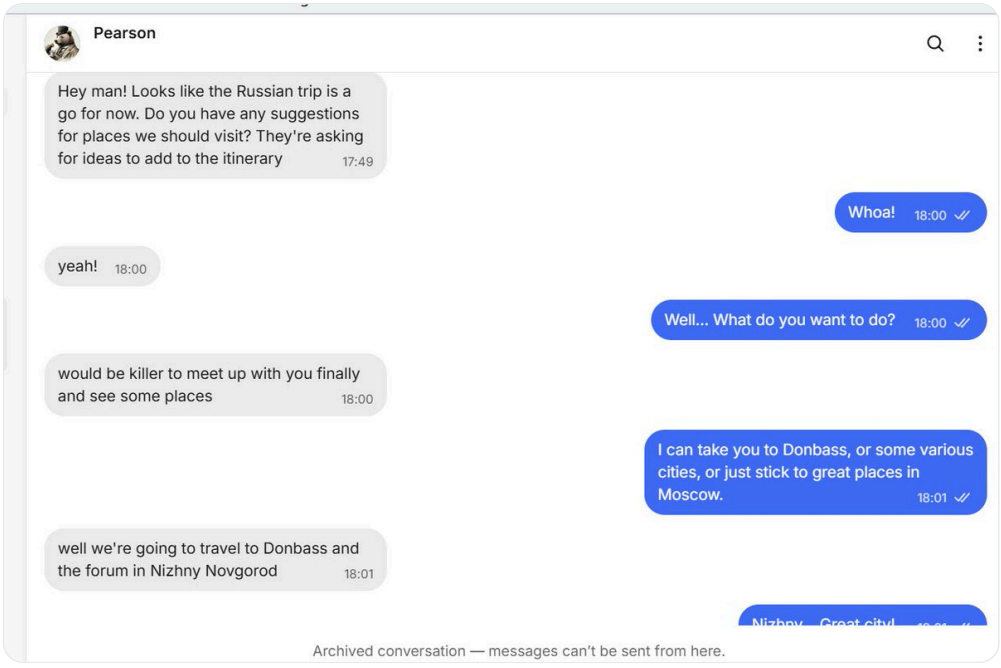


“My boss is fully supportive”, Pearson noted as he agreed to travel to Russia and the occupied territories (illegally).

He seems obsessed with interviewing dictator Putin in many messages.

“Do you think there's a chance of interviewing Putin or Lavrov or anyone higher up in the government?”


Pearson
so I'm on board for this trip, I'm totally down to go and my boss is fully supportive. I'd still like some more information, and apparently the trip dates haven't been finalized? But if I can go, then I will 20:49
do you think there's a chance of interviewing Putin or Lavrov or anyone higher up in the government? Would be incredible to get that on cam 20:50
Lavrov, yes. But Putin, man... I don't know. You would have to write to the presidential administration fro that one 20:54
well if Lavrov happens then that increases the odds of Putin, right? 20:55
when I'm booking this trip... should I plan on staying an extra week to make room for these interviews? 20:55


Pearson
Hey man! Looks like the Russian trip is a go for now. Do you have any suggestions for places we should visit? They're asking for ideas to add to the itinerary 17:49
Whoa! 18:00
yeah! 18:00
Well... What do you want to do? 18:00
would be killer to meet up with you finally and see some places 18:00
I can take you to Donbass, or some various cities, or just stick to great places in Moscow. 18:01
well we're going to travel to Donbass and the forum in Nizhny Novgorod 18:01
Archived conversation — messages can't be sent from here.

Criminal Code of Ukraine

▸ Special Part - Chapter XIV
▸ Article 332

UNTOC Articles

Smuggling of Migrants Protocol

Article 6 Criminalization

Original Text

Article 332. Illegal movement of persons across the state border of Ukraine

1. Illegal movement of persons across the state border of Ukraine, organisation of illegal transportation of persons across the state border of Ukraine, management of such actions or assistance in their commission by advice, instructions, provision of means or elimination of obstacles

shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of three to five years.

2. The same actions committed in a manner dangerous to life or health of a person who was illegally transported across the state border of Ukraine, or committed in respect of several persons, or repeatedly, or by a group of persons upon their prior conspiracy or by an official through abuse of office

shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of five to seven years with deprivation of the right to hold certain positions or engage in certain activities for a term of up to three years.

3. Any such actions as provided for by part 1 or 2 of this Article, where committed by an organised group or for mercenary reasons

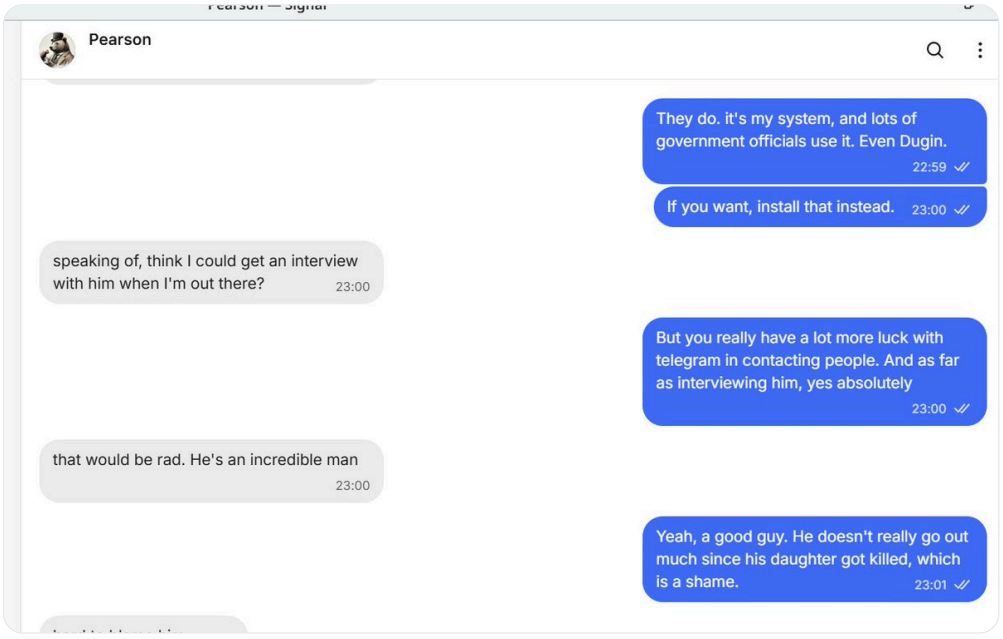
shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of seven to nine years with deprivation of the right to hold certain positions or engage in certain activities for a term of up to three years and forfeiture of property.

{Article 332 as revised by Law *No. 3186-VI of 05 April 2011; as amended by Law No. 1019-VIII of 18 February 2016}*

Dougan name-drops Aleksandr Dugin, the fascist-imperialist and a personal acquaintance of his.

“He's an incredible man”, Pearson says. He wants to interview Dugin too.





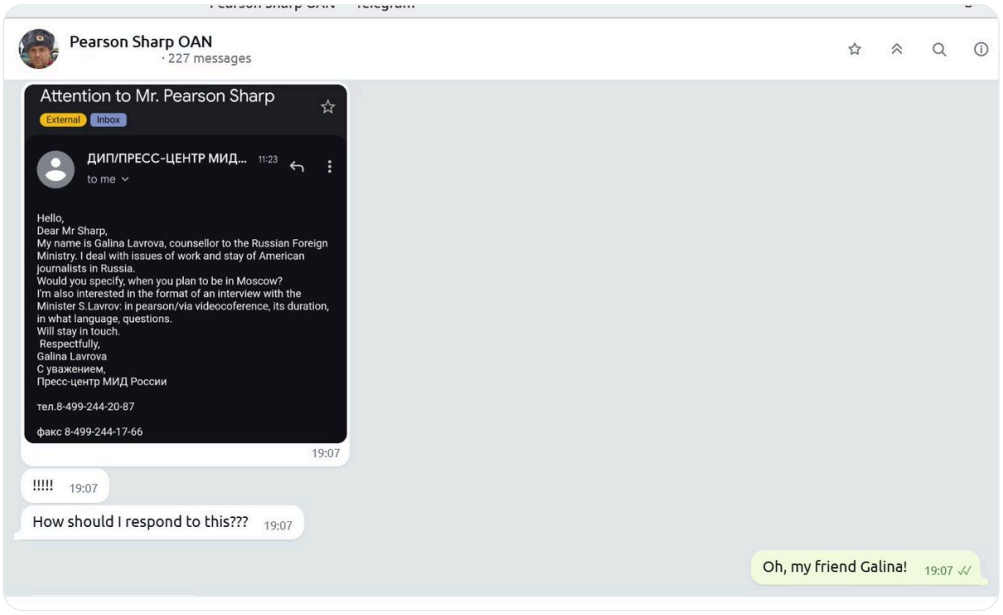
In September 2025, Pearson arrives in Moscow and plans to travel (illegally) to Russian-occupied Donbas.

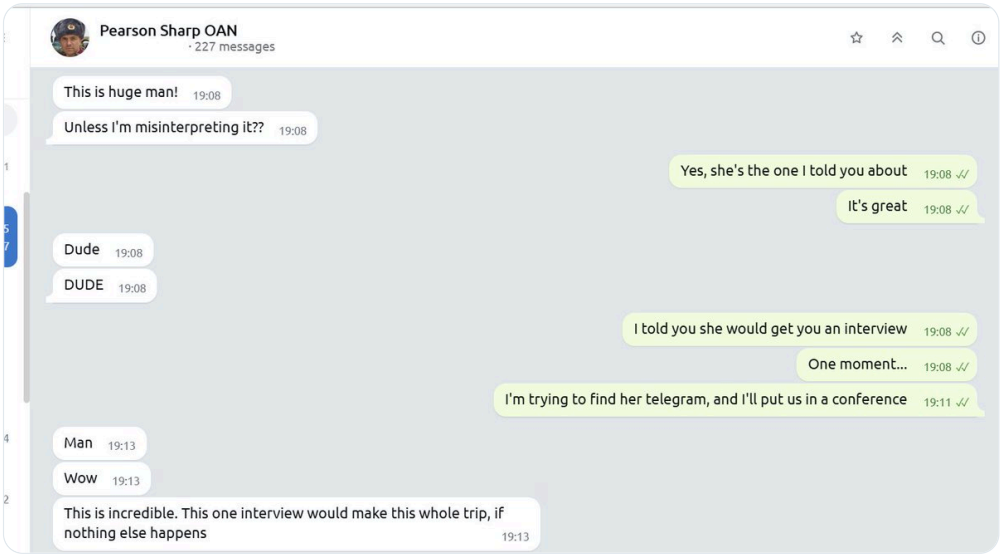
As he arrives, he shares that Lavrov is interested in the interview.

He gets very excited.

“This is huge man!”

13/17





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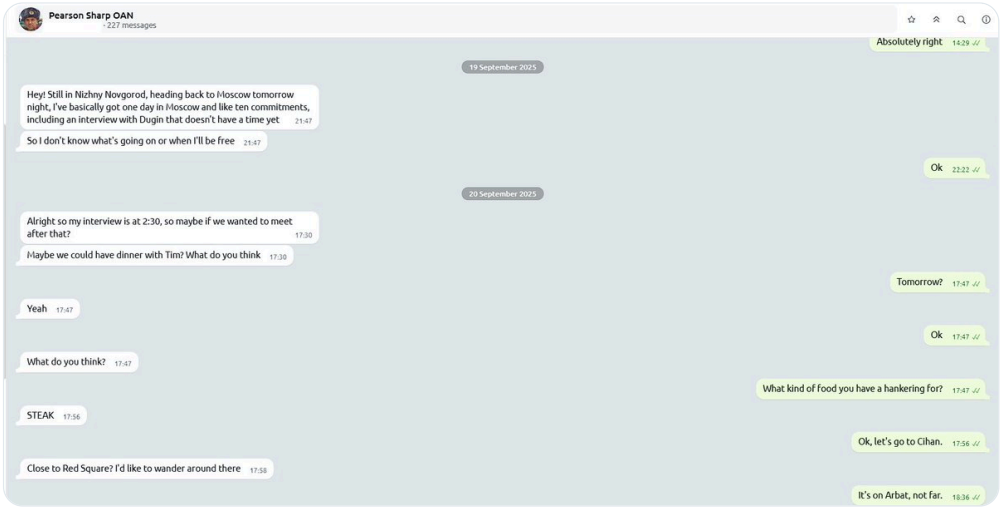
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Pearson also claimed to have secured an interview with Dugin. Just after that, he met up with Dougan, had a lovely dinner with the Russian intelligence asset and did a whole photo session in Moscow's Red Square.







The leaked correspondence exposes a MAGA journalist whose loyalty to Putin trumped any commitment to the truth. Sharp eagerly collaborated with a Russian intelligence asset and used his OAN platform to serve the Kremlin's propaganda machine.



Firsthand look inside Russia war frontlines w/ Pearson Sharp on The Matt Gaetz Show

Whenever you see some Western journalist doing reports from Russian-occupied territories, you can be sure Russian intelligence had a hand in it.

16/17



Analysis: How Russia uses Western reporters to launder propaganda

Russia's war propaganda has a broad array of tools – including enticing foreign reporters to help "launder" its narratives for international audiences. Pearson Sharp, a foreign correspondent for the…

https://kyivindependent.com/how-russia-uses-western-reporters-to-launder-propaganda/

The Kremlin spends billions on propaganda to manufacture passivity towards its invasions. Fact-based research to counter it is crucial, please support our work:

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Vatnik Soup: Your most comprehensive resource on pro-Kremlin disinformation and propaganda.

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