



Manufactured Crisis: CIA Trained the Neo-Nazi Azov Battalion and Has Chosen Ukraine as Birthplace of New “Global White Supremacist” Terror Threat

Description

The eruption of war between Russia and Ukraine appears to have given the CIA the pretext to launch a long-planned insurgency in the country, one poised to spread far beyond Ukraine’s borders with major implications for Biden’s “War on Domestic Terror”

As the conflict between Ukraine and Russia continues to escalate and dominate the world’s attention, the increasing evidence that the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) is and has been working to create and arm an insurgency in the country has received considerably little attention considering its likely consequences.

This is particularly true given that former CIA officials and a former Secretary of State are now openly saying that the CIA is following the “models” of past CIA-backed insurgencies in Afghanistan and Syria for its plans in Ukraine. Given that those countries have been ravaged by war as a direct result of those insurgencies, this bodes poorly for Ukraine.

Yet, this insurgency is poised to have consequences that reach far beyond Ukraine. It increasingly appears that the CIA sees the insurgency it is creating as more than an opportunity to take its hybrid war against Russia ever closer to its borders. As this report will show, it appears the CIA is determined to manifest a prophecy propagated by its own ranks over the past two years.

This prediction from former and current intelligence officials dates from at least early 2020 and holds that a “transnational white supremacist network” with alleged ties to the Ukraine conflict will be the next global catastrophe to befall the world as the threat of Covid-19 recedes.

Per these “predictions”, this global network of white supremacists – allegedly with a group linked to the conflict in the Donbas region of Ukraine at its core – is to become the new Islamic State-style threat and will undoubtedly be used as the pretext to launch the still-dormant infrastructure set up last year by the US government under President Biden for [an Orwellian “War on Domestic Terror.”](#)

Given that this CIA-driven effort to build an insurgency in Ukraine began as far back as 2015 and that the groups it has trained (and continues to train) include those with overt Neo-Nazi connections, it

seems that this “coming Ukrainian insurgency,” as it has been recently called, is already here.

In that context, we are left with the unnerving possibility that this latest escalation of the Ukraine-Russia conflict has merely served as the opening act for the newest iteration of the seemingly endless “War on Terror.”

Insurgency Rising

Soon after Russia began military operations in Ukraine, *Foreign Affairs* – the media arm of the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) – published an article entitled “[The Coming Ukrainian Insurgency](#).”

The piece was authored by **Douglas London**, a self-described “retired Russian-speaking CIA operations officer who served in Central Asia and managed agency counterinsurgency operations.” He asserted in the article that “Putin will face a long, bloody insurgency that will spread across multiple borders” with the potential to create “widening unrest that could destabilize other countries in Russia’s orbit.”

Other notable statements made by London include his assertion that “the United States will invariably be a major and essential source of backing for a Ukrainian insurgency.”

He also states that “As the United States learned in Vietnam and Afghanistan, an insurgency that has reliable supply lines, ample reserves of fighters, and sanctuary over the border can sustain itself indefinitely, sap an occupying army’s will to fight, and exhaust political support for the occupation at home.”

London explicitly refers to models for this apparently imminent Ukrainian insurgency as the CIA-backed insurgencies in Afghanistan in the 1980s and the “moderate rebels” in Syria from 2011 to the present.

London isn’t alone in promoting these past CIA-backed insurgencies as a model for “covert” US aid to Ukraine. Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, whose State Department helped to create the “moderate rebel” insurgency in Syria and oversaw the US and NATO-backed destruction of Libya, [appeared on MSNBC](#) on February 28th to say essentially the same.

In her interview, **Clinton cited the CIA-backed insurgency in Afghanistan as “the model that people [in the US government] are now looking toward”** with respect to the situation in Ukraine. She also references the insurgency in Syria in similar fashion in the same interview. It is worth noting that Clinton’s former deputy chief of staff when she was Secretary of State, **Jake Sullivan**, is now Biden’s National Security Adviser.

The Afghanistan insurgency, initially backed by the US and CIA beginning in the late 1970s under the name Operation Cyclone, subsequently spawned the US empire’s supposedly mortal enemies – the Taliban and Al Qaeda – who would go on to fuel the post-9/11 “War on Terror.”

The US' campaign against the descendants of the insurgency it had once backed resulted in horrific destruction in Afghanistan and a litany of dead and war crimes, as well as **the longest (and thus most expensive) war and occupation in American military history. It also resulted in the bombings and destruction of several other countries along with the whittling down of civil liberties domestically.**

Similarly, in Syria, the US and CIA's backing of "moderate rebels" was and remains incredibly destructive to the country it supposedly wants to merely "liberate" from the rule of **Bashar al-Assad**. The US military continues to occupy critical areas of that country.

With these openly touted as "models" for the "coming Ukraine insurgency," what is to become of Ukraine, then?

If the history of CIA-backed insurgencies is any indicator, **it heralds significantly more destruction and more suffering for its people than the current Russian military campaign.**

Ukraine will become a failed state and a killing field. Those in the West cheering on their governments' support for the Ukrainian side of the conflict would do well to realize this, particularly in the United States, as it will only lead to the escalation of yet another deadly proxy war.

However, in addition to the above, we must also consider the very unsettling reality that this Ukrainian insurgency began to be formed by the CIA at least several months, if not several years, prior to Russia's currently ongoing military campaign in Ukraine. [Yahoo! News reported](#) in January that **the CIA has been overseeing a covert training program for Ukrainian intelligence operatives and special ops forces since 2015.**

Their report explicitly quotes one former CIA official with knowledge of the program as saying that the CIA has been "training an insurgency" and has been conducting this training at an undisclosed US military base. This training of Ukrainian "insurgents" was supported by the Obama, Trump, and now Biden administrations, with the latter two expanding its operations.

While the CIA denied to Yahoo! that it was training an insurgency, [a New York Times report](#) also published in January stated that the US is considering support for an insurgency in Ukraine if Russia invades.

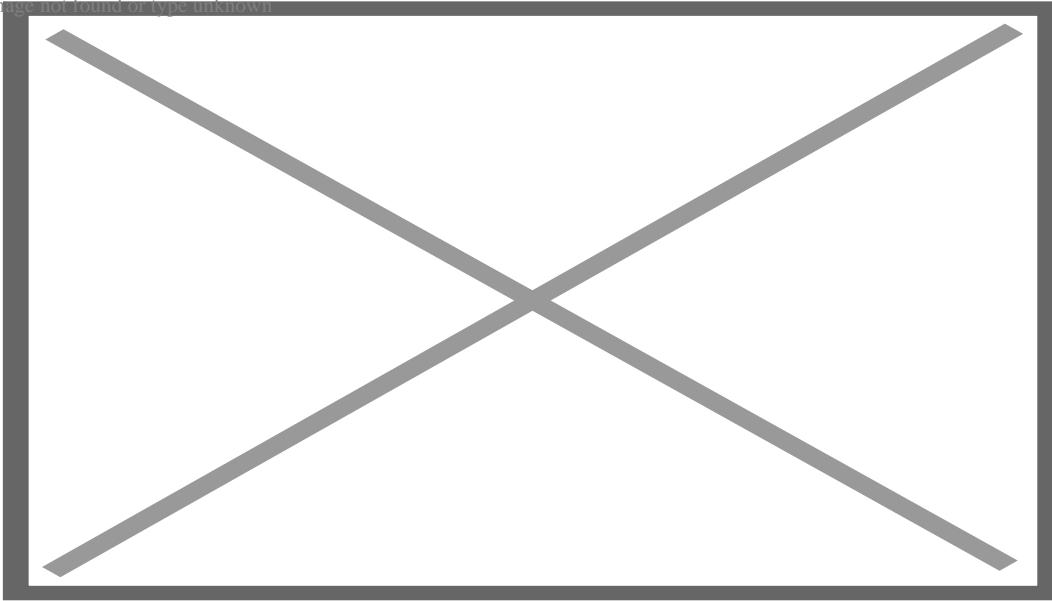
Given that the CIA, at that time and prior to this year, has been warning of an imminent Russian invasion of Ukraine up until the current escalation of hostilities took place, **it is worth asking if the US government and the CIA helped "pull the trigger" by intentionally crossing Russia's "red lines"** with respect to NATO encroachment in Ukraine and post-2014 Ukraine's acquisition of nuclear weapons when it became clear that the CIA's repeated predictions about an "imminent" invasion failed to materialize.

Russia's red lines with Ukraine have been stated clearly – and [violated repeatedly](#) by the US – for years. Notably, the US' efforts to provide lethal aid to Ukraine [have coincided](#) with the winding down of its lethal support to Syrian "rebels", suggesting that the US war and intelligence apparatus has long seen Ukraine as the "next" on its list of proxy wars.

However, more recently, the CIA's warnings of an imminent invasion of Ukraine were scoffed at, not only by many American analysts, but also apparently by both the Russian and Ukrainian governments themselves.

It is alleged that this all changed, at least from the Russian perspective, following Ukrainian **President Volodymyr Zelensky's** [claim at the Munich Security Conference](#) that **his government would seek to make Ukraine a nuclear power in violation of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum. Surely, Zelensky and his supporters in Washington DC and Langley, Virginia would have known that such an extreme claim from Zelensky would elicit a response from Russia.**

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U.S. allies in Ukraine, with NATO, Azov Battalion and neo-Nazi flags. Photo by [russia-insider.com](#)

One need only consider the reverberations that follow any country announcing its intentions to become a nuclear power on the world stage. Russian leadership has since made the case that they felt compelled to act militarily after Ukraine, which has been regularly attacking separatists along its border with Russia with embedded paramilitary units that have called for the [“extermination”](#) of ethnic Russians who live in those regions, announced plans to acquire nukes.

In addition, given Ukraine's growing ties to NATO and its desire to integrate itself into that alliance, these theoretical nuclear weapons would be NATO-controlled nukes on Russia's border. Zelensky, the US, and their other allied parties surely knew that this intention, particularly its admission in public, would push an already tense situation to the next level.

Of course, this statement from Zelensky followed [a US-led airlift of weapons](#) to Ukraine early last month, weeks before the current Russian military campaign. US lethal aid to Ukraine [has previously been described](#) as being tantamount to a “declaration of war” on Russia by the US, per members of Russia's Ministry of Defense as far back as 2017.

It is worth considering that these red lines and the potential to cross them was discussed by Zelensky and representatives of Ukraine's intelligence services when they [met with the head of the CIA](#), William

Burns, in January. The CIA, at that time, was already claiming a Russian invasion of Ukraine was imminent. Given the events described above, could it be possible that the CIA wanted to bring about the insurgency they have been preparing for, potentially since 2015?

Would they have done so by pushing their allies in Ukraine's government to manifest the conditions necessary to begin that insurgency, i.e. prompting them to cross Russia's "red lines" to elicit the reaction needed to launch a pre-planned insurgency? With the CIA also training Ukraine's intelligence operatives for nearly seven years, the possibility is certainly one to consider.

If this theory is more than plausible and close to the truth of how we got here, we are left with more questions, mainly – Why would the CIA look to launch this insurgency in Ukraine and why now? The apparent answer may surprise you.

Manufacturing the Narrative and the Threat

In May 2020, Politico published an article entitled [“Experts Knew a Pandemic Was Coming. Here’s What They’re Worried About Next.”](#)

The article was written by Garrett Graff, former editor of Politico, a professor at Georgetown's Journalism and Public Relations program, and director of cyber initiatives at The Aspen Institute – a “non-partisan” think tank funded largely by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Carnegie Corporation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Graff's introduction to the piece states the following:

“Every year, the intelligence community releases the [Worldwide Threat Assessment](#) — a distillation of worrisome global trends, risks, problem spots and emerging perils.

But this year, the public hearing on the assessment, usually held in January or February, was [canceled](#), evidently because intelligence leaders, who usually testify in a rare open hearing together, were worried their comments would aggravate President Donald Trump. And the government has not yet publicly released a 2020 threat report.”

In 2020, the CIA did not release a “worldwide” threat assessment for the first time since it first began annually releasing them decades ago. This [article published by Politico](#) was intended by Graff to serve as a **“Domestic Threat Assessment”** in the absence of the CIA's Worldwide Threat Assessment and is styled as a “list of the most significant events that might impact the United States” in the short, medium and long terms.

Graff created this Threat Assessment document after interviewing “more than a dozen thought leaders,” many of whom were “current and former national security and intelligence officials.” A few months later, the Department of Homeland Security, for the first time since its creation in 2003, would publish its own [“Homeland” Threat Assessment](#) in October of that year.

As I noted at the time, this signalled **a major shift within the US national security/intelligence apparatus away from “foreign terror”, its ostensible focus since 9/11, to “domestic terror.”**

Just months after this Homeland Threat Assessment was published, [the war on domestic terror](#) would be launched in the wake of the events of January 6th, which itself was apparently foreseen by then-DHS official Elizabeth Neumann.

In early 2020, Neumann had presciently stated:

“It feels like we are at the doorstep of another 9/11 — maybe not something that catastrophic in terms of the visual or the numbers — but that we can see it building, and we don’t quite know how to stop it.”

Indeed, when January 6th 2021 took place, no real effort was made by Capitol Police or other law enforcement officials present to stop the so-called “riot”, with plenty of footage from the event instead showing law enforcement waving the supposed “insurrectionists” into the Capitol building.

This, however, did not stop top politicians and national security officials from **labelling January 6th as the “another 9/11”** that Neumann had apparently predicted. Notably, the DHS’ first-ever Homeland Threat Assessment, Neumann’s warning, and the subsequent official narrative regarding the events of January 6th were all heavily focused on the threat of “white supremacist terror attacks” on the US homeland.

Returning to the May 2020 Politico article – Graff notes that many supposed pandemic “[experts](#)“, which – per Graff – includes Bill Gates and US intelligence officials James Clapper and Dan Coats, had “projected the spread of a novel virus and the economic impacts it would bring” as well as “details about the specific challenges” the US would face during the initial phase of the Covid-19 crisis. Graff then asks “What other catastrophes are coming that we aren’t planning for?”

According to the “thought leaders” he consulted for this piece, which included several current and former intelligence officials, the most immediate “near-term threat” likely to disrupt life in the US and beyond following Covid was **“the Globalization of White Supremacy.”** In discussing this imminent threat, Graff wrote:

“‘Terrorism’ today conjures images of ISIS fighters and suicide bombers. But if you ask national security officials about the top near-term terrorism threat on their radar, they almost universally point to the rising problem of white nationalist violence and the insidious way that groups that formerly existed locally have been knitting themselves together into a global web of white supremacism.

In recent weeks, the State Department — for the first time — formally [designated](#) a white supremacist organization, the Russian Imperial Movement, as a terrorist organization, in part because it’s trying to train and seed adherents around the globe, inspiring them to carry out terror attacks ...” (emphasis added)

Graff then adds that

“There are serious — and explicit — warnings about this coming from U.S. government and foreign officials that eerily echo the warnings that came about for al Qaeda before 9/11.”

He then quotes FBI Director Christopher Wray as stating:

“It’s not just the ease and the speed with which these attacks can happen, but the connectivity that the

attacks generate. One unstable, disaffected actor hunkered down, alone, in his mom's basement in one corner of the country, getting further fired up by similar people half a world away. That increases the complexity of domestic terrorism cases we have in a way that is really challenging."

This quote from Wray was first published in a piece Graff had written a month prior to publishing his Politico piece. The focus of that interview centered around domestic terrorism in the US, with extensive discussion about the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing and the Russian Imperial Movement.

In that article, [published in Wired](#), the State Department's coordinator for counterterrorism, Nathan Sales, characterized that movement as

"a terrorist group that provides paramilitary-style training to neo-Nazis and white supremacists, and it plays a prominent role in trying to rally like-minded Europeans and Americans into a common front against their perceived enemies."

This Russian Imperial Movement, or RIM, [advocates for](#) the re-establishment of the pre-1917 Russian empire, which would exert influence over all territory inhabited by ethnic Russians. Their ideology is described as white supremacist, monarchist, ultra-nationalist, pro-Russian Orthodox, and anti-Semitic. They are not considered neo-Nazi, but have worked to build ties with other, far-right groups with neo-Nazi connections.

RIM was allegedly responsible for training a bomber whose acts resulted in no deaths in Sweden from 2016-2017. The bomber, Victor Melin, was not an active RIM member but was reportedly trained by them, and he conducted 2 of his 3 bombings with an individual completely unaffiliated with RIM. Melin was, however, a member of the Nordic Resistance Movement at the time.

A few years later, in April 2020, RIM became the first "white supremacist" group to be labeled a Specially Designated Global Terrorist Entity (SDGT) by the US, despite not being tied to an act of terror since 2017 and despite those previous acts resulting in no deaths. The acts of terror [cited as justification](#) by then Secretary of State Mike Pompeo were those perpetrated by Melin.

However, the Nordic Resistance Movement, of which Melin was an active member at the time of the bombings, did not receive the SDGT label, even though it is significantly larger in terms of membership and reach than RIM. The decision to label RIM this way was considered "[unprecedented](#)" at the time.

It has since been claimed that the group now numbers in the "several thousand" worldwide, though [little publicly available evidence exists](#) to support this statistic and that statistic notably only emerged roughly a month after the US terror designation and originated from a US-based institute. There are also no statistics available on the number of individuals they have allegedly trained via their paramilitary arm, known as the Imperial Legion.

Per the US government, RIM's reach is global and extends to the US. However, its US ties [are based on](#) dubious allegations of a relationship with Atomwaffen Division's Russian affiliate and a "personal relationship" with the 2017 "Unite the Right" rally organizer Matthew Heimbach. However, this again is based on the allegations (not direct evidence) that Heimbach received funds from RIM.

Heimbach's group, the Traditionalist Workers' Party, has been inactive since 2018, two years before the US SDGT designation for RIM. It is also alleged that RIM offered to train other "Unite the Right"

figures, though RIM and the “white supremacists” who supposedly received this offer deny the reports. Furthermore, there remains no evidence of any US citizen ever participating in paramilitary training with RIM.

This contradicts Nathan Sales’ [April 2020 claim](#) that RIM plays “a prominent role in trying to rally like-minded Europeans and Americans into a common front against their perceived enemies.” Despite the lack of evidence left-leaning, non-partisan, and right-leaning think tanks have continued to use RIM as proof of a [“large, interconnected, transnational network”](#) of violent white supremacists.

It seems odd that a group that is apparently small and very limited in terms of its presence in the US and that is responsible for no deadly terror attacks would earn the honor of becoming the first US-designed, white supremacist Specially Designated Global Terrorist Entity. This is especially true when the acts cited as justification for the SDGT designation were committed by a member of a different, larger group, a group that did not receive this designation at the time or in the years since.

However, in the context of current events in Ukraine, the 2020 designation of RIM begins to make more sense, at least from the US national security perspective.

RIM is alleged to support separatists in Ukraine’s Donetsk and Luhansk regions since 2014 and has been described by the US as “anti-Ukrainian.” These regions are at the center of the current conflict and its most recent escalation last month.

The US government and pro-Western think tanks list RIM’s [“first attack”](#) as its involvement in the conflict in eastern Ukraine. [According to](#) Stanford University’s Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC), the number of fighters sent by or trained by RIM in Eastern Ukraine is unknown, though one report states RIM sent “groups of five to six fighters” from Russia to Eastern Ukraine in mid-June 2014.

RIM’s paramilitary arm, the Imperial Legion, has not been active in Ukraine since January 2016. However, some reports have asserted that “some individuals opted to stay and continue fighting.” Claims have also been made in more recent years that RIM members have fought in the Syrian conflict and in Libya on the side of General Haftar.

Following this “first attack,” Stanford’s CISAC [claims that](#), from 2015 to 2020, they have been “building a transnational network,” though as previously noted – their success in that endeavor is based on reports of dubious authenticity and/or significance, particularly in the United States.

However, their alleged role on the side of separatists in the Donbass has been used by US think tanks to argue that RIM advances Moscow’s policy goals, which they say include “seeking to fuel white supremacist extremism in Europe and the United States.”

Some think tanks in the US, like Just Security, [have used RIM](#) to argue that Russia’s government plays a major role in “transnational white supremacy” due to “a mutual affection between Western white supremacists and the Russian government.” They claim that because Russia “tolerates” RIM’s presence domestically, “the Kremlin facilitates the growth of right-wing extremism in Europe and the United States that exacerbates threats to the stability of democratic governments.”

However, what Just Security fails to mention is that RIM [has vocally opposed and protested against](#)

Putin's government, has been labeled an extremist group by the Russian government and has even had its offices raided by Russian police because of their opposition to Putin's leadership.

Notably, [Just Security's advisors](#) included former CIA deputy director and Event 201 participant, Avril Haines as well as former deputy chief of staff to Hillary Clinton at the State Department, Jake Sullivan. Haines and Sullivan now serve as Biden's Director of National Intelligence (i.e. the top intelligence official in the country) and Biden's National Security adviser, respectively.

The Dawn of "Domestic Terror"

As a result of the current escalation of events in Ukraine, it appears inevitable that the effort to use RIM to paint Russia as a driving force behind "transnational white supremacism" are due to resurface.

This effort appears to have as one of its goals the minimization of the role that neo-Nazi groups like the Azov Battalion, the Neo-Nazi paramilitary unit embedded within Ukraine's National Guard, are actively playing in the current hostilities.

In January of this year, [Jacobin published](#) an article about the CIA efforts to seed an insurgency in Ukraine, noting that

"everything we know points to the likelihood that [the groups being trained by the CIA] includes Neo-Nazis inspiring far-right terrorists across the world."

It cites a 2020 report from West Point which states that:

"A number of prominent individuals among far-right extremist groups in the United States and Europe have actively sought out relationships with representatives of the far-right in Ukraine, specifically the National Corps and its associated militia, the Azov Regiment."

It adds that

"US-based individuals have spoken or written about how the training available in Ukraine might assist them and others in their paramilitary-style activities at home."

Even the FBI, though more publicly concerned about RIM, [has been forced to admit](#) that US-based white supremacists have cultivated ties with the group, with the Bureau stating in a 2018 indictment that Azov "is believed to have participated in training and radicalizing United States-based white supremacy organizations." In contrast, there remains no proof of any concrete ties of a single US citizen to RIM.

With the CIA now backing an insurgency that prominent former CIA officials are claiming will "spread across multiple borders," the fact that the forces being trained and armed by the agency as part of this "coming insurgency" include Azov battalion is significant.

It seems that the CIA is determined to create yet another self-fulfilling prophecy by breeding the very network of "global white supremacy" that intelligence officials have claimed is the "next" big threat after the Covid-19 crisis wanes.

The injection of the group RIM into the narrative should also be of concern. It seems plausible, given

the pre-conflict terror designation for the group and its alleged past ties to the Ukraine conflict, that a CIA-trained Ukrainian insurgent, perhaps from a group like Azov or an equivalent, would willingly pose as a member of RIM, allowing RIM to be labeled as the “new Al Qaeda”, with its base of operations conveniently located in Russia and its presence there “tolerated” by Moscow.

It certainly would serve the now, rather pervasive narrative equating Putin with Adolf Hitler in the wake of Russia’s decision to launch its military campaign in Ukraine. It would also serve to launch, in earnest, the up-until-now largely dormant War on Domestic Terror, the infrastructure for which was [launched by the Biden administration just last year](#).

While January 6th was used to equate support for former President Donald Trump with neo-Nazism and white supremacy, recent articles that have followed Russia’s recent military campaign against Ukraine deliberately link this “Putin as Hitler” narrative with US Republicans. US conservatives have long been the focus of “domestic terror” fear-mongering over the past several years (They are also, incidentally, the majority of gun owners).

An editorial by Robert Reich published in [The Guardian](#) on March 1st claims “the world is frighteningly locked in a battle to the death between democracy and authoritarianism.” Reich goes on to state that Russia’s incursion into Ukraine “is a new cold war ... The biggest difference between the old cold war and the new one is that authoritarian neo-fascism is no longer just an external threat to America and Europe.

A version of it is also growing inside western Europe and the US. It has even taken over one of America’s major political parties. The Trump-led Republican party does not openly support Putin, but the Republican party’s animus toward democracy is expressed in ways familiar to Putin and other autocrats.” Other articles making similar claims have appeared in [The New York Times](#) and [The Intercept](#), among others, in just the past week.

On March 2, Salon followed Reich’s piece with [a similar editorial](#) entitled “How white supremacy fuels the Republican love affair with Vladimir Putin,” which concludes with the assertion that “today’s Republican Party is America’s and the world’s largest white supremacist and white identity organization” and “that “conservatism” and racism are now fully one and the same thing here in America.”

As this muddying of the waters regarding the relationship among Putin, the US Republican Party, and white supremacy escalates, we also have intelligence agencies in Europe and the US increasingly linking opposition to Covid measures, like lockdowns and vaccine mandates, to neo-Nazism, white supremacy and the far-right, frequently with little to no evidence.

This recently occurred with the Freedom Convoy in Canada and, more recently, German security agencies and officials [asserted just days ago](#) that they can no longer distinguish between “far-right radicals” and those who oppose vaccine mandates and Covid restrictions. However, these efforts to link opposition to Covid measures with “domestic terrorism” and the far-right go back to 2020.

In addition to these trends, it also seems inevitable that the “Russian misinformation” label, used and abused for the past several years so that any dissenting narrative was often labeled “Russian” in origin, is likely to make a comeback in this context and provide the justification for a zealous censorship campaign online and particularly on social media, where this “transnational white supremacist network”

is said to be dependent upon for its supposed success.

The coming “global white supremacist” terror threat, if we are to believe our unusually prescient intelligence officials, appears to be the “next thing” to befall the world as the Covid crisis wanes.

It also appears that the CIA has crowned itself the midwife and chosen Ukraine as the birthplace of this new “terror threat,” one which will create not only the next proxy war between US empire and its adversaries, but also the pretext to launch the “[War on Domestic Terror](#)” in North America and Europe.

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By Whitney Webb

Featured image: A news broadcast by German ZDF station showed soldiers of the Ukraine Azov Battalion with nazi symbols on their helmets. PHOTO BY FILES /ZDF station

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