



White House Cites Intel Claiming Putin Being “Misled” By His Own Generals On War’s Progress

Description

Update(1640ET): The White House has made the unexpected and unusual claim Wednesday that Russia’s military is currently misleading its commander-in-chief Vladimir Putin about the true state of the battlefield and Russian forces’ advance inside Ukraine. A White House spokesperson said the US has information that points to Putin being “misled” by his generals.

“We believe that Putin is being misinformed by his advisors about how badly the Russian military is performing, and how the Russian economy is being crippled by sanctions because his senior advisors are too afraid to tell him the truth,” White House Communications Director Kate Bedingfield [told a press briefing](#).

“We have information that Putin felt misled by the Russian military. There is now persistent tension between Putin and the (Ministry of Defence), stemming from Putin’s mistrust in MOD leadership,” the US official asserted further. An earlier in the day CNN report coupled the ‘misinformation’ that Putin may be getting also with the extent of sanctions impact on the Russian economy. The [report said](#):

The US believes that Russian President Vladimir Putin is being **“misinformed” by his advisors about how badly the Russian military is performing in Ukraine and the impact of sanctions on Russia’s economy**, a US official tells CNN.

...The official said the assessment is based on declassified US intelligence findings.

WH Comms. Director Kate Bedingfield asked about releasing the report on Putin’s tension with advisers:

Reporter: “I’m wondering if this is partially just an effort to embarrass Vladimir Putin?”

Bedingfield: “Our aim is to show that this has been a strategic blunder.”
pic.twitter.com/u0sCnsqYbE

— The Recount (@therecount) [March 30, 2022](#)

This has reportedly led to a rift between Putin and his top defense staff – who feel [“afraid”](#). CNN added this almost hard to believe line as well:

The official said Putin did not know his military was “using and losing conscripts in Ukraine, showing a clear breakdown in the flow of accurate information to the Russian president.”

MORE: US intel finds [“#Putin](#) didn’t even know his military was using & losing conscripts in [#Ukraine”](#) per a US official

US sees “a clear breakdown in the flow of accurate information to the Russian President” per the official

— Jeff Seldin (@jseldin) [March 30, 2022](#)

The Pentagon backed the White House assessment, saying the following in its [afternoon briefing](#):

Russian President Vladimir Putin has **“not been fully informed by his Ministry of Defense at every turn”** throughout the course of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby said during a briefing at the Pentagon on Wednesday.

Kirby did not offer any details that led to this assessment.

Kirby said the US does not have “access to every bit of information that” Putin has been given or “every conversation that he’s had,” but he said he concurs with the “basic finding” of press reporting that Putin has not been fully informed by his Defense Ministry of the situation in Ukraine.

The Pentagon statement by Kirby seemed more in the realm of guesswork based on ‘open source’ intel and the media. Recent Western media reporting has alleged Russian casualty figures which are far more than what the Kremlin has publicly reported. For example a [Daily Mail](#) headline this week said 17,000 Russian troop deaths – but crucially the figure appears sourced entirely to *Ukrainian officials*.

Speculation abounds as to how the Kremlin arrived at the decision to apparently limit the scope of operations to focus on liberating the Donbas...

Major shift (or rift?) in Russian goals.
Instead of “denazification” of UKRAINE (as was declared by Putin), Shoigu says that the main goal is “liberation” of DONBAS.

pic.twitter.com/7kyC4vLGJI

— Denis Kazakiewicz (@Den_2042) [March 29, 2022](#)

It's entirely possible that this latest White House claim of a "rift" within Kremlin command could also be based on Ukrainian sourcing, making it dubious at best. Given the wartime situation and what would obviously be secretive communications between Putin and his staff that this would entail, it would seem next to impossible to gain a real picture of what's going on in terms of daily interactions and internal Kremlin reports and assessments of just how things are going with the "special operation" in Ukraine.

Perhaps it's but a self-serving White House narrative to explain why sanctions and international isolation have yet to deter Russia's operations? It's important to remember that **this is not the first time claims of a "rift" have been weaponized for propaganda purposes...**

If US is saying this, my guess is it's disinformation designed to drive a rift between Putin and one of his top generals. Taking one of his top people out, or creating a level of paranoia that eventually leads to a real coup. <https://t.co/P3f9lhkwsj>

— Steve Faktor (@ideafactory) [March 6, 2022](#)

Meanwhile, there's ample evidence to suggest that Putin is indeed fully aware of the nature of the economic war against his country, and the extent of potential damage – but also the coming blowback on the West and Washington itself...

This is the real war. pic.twitter.com/TG8JCD1MyQ

— banthebbc (@banthebbc) [March 27, 2022](#)

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Update(0943): State media is reporting that Russia's lead negotiator after coming off Tuesday's "constructive" talks in Istanbul is saying that "**Kiev has essentially agreed**" to Moscow's key demands of not joining NATO or allowing foreign bases and troops on its soil.

"Ukrainian negotiators have **essentially agreed to Russia's principle security demands of rejecting NATO membership** and regarding the presence of foreign military bases on its territory," the Kremlin's chief negotiator Vladimir Medinsky has [said](#). In the statement he noted further that Ukraine has "stated willingness to meet core Russian demands." He said further while speaking to Rossiya-24 broadcaster on Wednesday:

"Yesterday, for the first time...the authorities in Kiev have declared their readiness to negotiate with Russia. They handed us on paper the principles of a possible future agreement, which provides for: **a rejection of entry into NATO, fixing Ukraine's bloc-free status, a renunciation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction**

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At the same time on Wednesday there appears to be more positive signals coming from the Ukrainian side, with its negotiator Mykhailo Podolyak saying that while a peace deal with Russia is in the works, it would only be put up for a national referendum after Russia withdraws all troops to their pre-invasion Feb.23rd positions. But this is a huge *if* – given it’s impossible to predict anything in terms of the on-the-ground battle or the Russian military’s intent.

“We have seen the Russians begin to draw away from Kyiv. But we have little confidence at this stage that it marks some significant shift or a meaningful retreat,” a US official told us.
<https://t.co/eoP9ayDm3u>

— James Politi (@JamesPoliti) [March 29, 2022](#)

But for now, there indeed appears a long road ahead before a full and final ceasefire can be realized, given the continuing battlefield situation:

- UKRAINE DEFENCE MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON SAYS RUSSIAN FORCES ARE PREPARING TO RESUME OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS
- UKRAINE DEFENCE MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON – RUSSIA’S MAIN EFFORTS ARE FOCUSED ON ENCIRCLING UKRAINIAN TROOPS IN THE EAST OF UKRAINE

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Russian attacks and shelling have reportedly continued near Kiev and the Chernihiv, following Tuesday’s Kremlin declaration that it would draw down some units in these areas coming off negotiations with Ukraine in Istanbul, something met with skepticism by NATO and the Pentagon.

The Kremlin further cited “**no breakthroughs**” **from the talks** after a draft ceasefire deal was said to be on the table, and amid generally positive international headlines and market reaction. A statement said additionally that “**much work remains**”. The US had called observed troop removals near Kiev a tactical redeployment and not in truth de-escalation.

According to *Bloomberg* citing [a Russian source](#): “**De-escalation does not mean a cease-fire or complete withdrawal of troops from around Kyiv**, said a person close to the Kremlin.” The report says further, “Moscow’s likely war goals now are to take two eastern provinces, together with a **land corridor from the Russian border to the Crimean peninsula**, which Russia annexed in 2014, the person said.”



Fire at industrial fuel storage company in Lutsk, via Fox News

Speaking of Crimea, the Ukrainian delegation for the first time offered to speak about this in negotiations, but in a further complication for any final ceasefire, the Russians have shut the door on this as a key bargaining element.

“Crimea is part of the Russian Federation. And in line with our constitution we cannot discuss the future of the territory of the Russian Federation, the future of Russian regions. This is out of the question,” Kremlin spokesman Peskov clarified Wednesday.

“It is positive that the Ukrainian side has at least begun to formulate concretely and put down on paper what it proposes,” Peskov [described](#) of Tuesday’s Turkey-sponsored negotiations. “As for the rest, we cannot yet state anything promising, **no breakthroughs. Lots of work ahead.**”

Meanwhile, on the ground it doesn’t appear any major changes in Russian military posture have been effected, with the major northern city of Chernihiv coming under **“colossal attack”** overnight and into Wednesday, according to the words of the mayor, as [CNN details](#):

His words came as it emerged that the city was “under fire” from Russian airstrikes while shelling continued through the night, according to Viacheslav Chaus, head of the Chernihiv regional administration.

In an interview with New Day’s John Berman, the city’s mayor Vladyslav Atroshenko hit out at Russia’s claim on Tuesday that it planned to “drastically reduce” its military assault on Chernihiv and the Ukrainian capital Kyiv.

The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine has also confirmed that it’s witnessing what it called a “regrouping” and not a withdrawal.

Russian UAV footage showing Russian strikes on Ukrainian tanks and artillery, presumably with Krasnopol rounds. <https://t.co/m3WfVsDScm> pic.twitter.com/1BS71Q2emU

— Rob Lee (@RALee85) [March 29, 2022](#)

“According to some indications, the Russian enemy is regrouping units to focus its main efforts on the east. At the same time, the so-called ‘withdrawal of troops’ is probably a rotation of individual units and **aims to mislead**” [the military said](#) in a Facebook post.

And more, pertaining to ongoing fighting [around Kiev](#):

*“After their statements yesterday **nothing has changed at all**,” Maryan Zablotskyy, a member of the Ukrainian parliament who got his wife and child out of Kyiv, told Fox News Digital. “Fighting [continued] all through the night around Kyiv.”*

“They are forced to retreat from different areas around Kyiv,” Zablotskyy noted, “but only if they are successfully pushed back.”

1/ Big Arrow War—a primer. For all those scratching their heads in confusion, or dusting off their dress uniforms for the Ukrainian victory parade in Kiev, over the news about Russia’s “strategic shift”, you might want to re-familiarize yourself with basic military concepts.

— Scott Ritter (@RealScottRitter) [March 29, 2022](#)

Additionally Bloomberg has cited a Moscow-based military analyst and consultant, Evgeny Minchenko, who points out, **“I think there was very serious misunderstanding of what both sides said in Istanbul after the talks.”** He added: “So far I just heard is that there will be less action near Kyiv and Chernihiv, because the Russian army is concentrating its resources against the Ukrainian army in Donbas.”

by Tyler Durden

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