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Leaks Spelling the End for Ukraine

Ludwig F. Ch. Intelligence Sources have exposed Western disinformation about Ukraine winning the war. Now the heavy fighting moves to Washington, writes Joe Lauria.

Partial view of the Washington battleground. (Image, Kaiser, from Wikimedia Commons)

By **Joe Lauria**

Special to Consortium News

A Washington *Post* headline last week was a bombshell for someone who has only been reading about the Ukraine war in the Washington *Post* and other Western media: "U.S. doubts Ukraine counteroffensive will yield big gains, leaked document says."

The story admits that Western media audiences have been misled about the course of the war, that Ukrainian officials have been misleading and that Ukraine has been a pawn of Washington. It is generally that Ukraine is winning the war and is poised to launch an offensive that will lead to a final victory.

Instead, the second paragraph of the piece makes clear the leaked documents show the Ukrainian military is "overstretched and lacks the firepower" to launch a major offensive. The Biden administration's public statements about the vitality of Ukraine's military:

> In other words, U.S. officials have been lying about the state of the war to the public and to reporters who have faithfully reported their every word without a hint of skepticism.
>
> The leaked documents, which were first posted on a Russian Telegram channel, underscore that the United States and NATO should do more to prepare Ukraine for a negotiated settlement to the conflict."

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The Post Wrote a Similar Story in Ukraine: A Plan for Getting from the Battlefield to the Negotiating Table.

"The best path forward is a sequenced two-pronged strategy aimed at first bolstering Ukraine's military capability and then, when the fighting season winds down late this year, ushering Moscow and Kyiv from the battlefield to the negotiating table."

The article does not mention the leaks, though it was published after the disclosures made clear that the Ukrainian officials, intended to "break through Russia's hard bridge in Crimea, would fail.

Filled with the usual talk about Ukraine being better "operational skill" than Russia, and that the war will end in a "stalemate," the piece represents an emerging strategy in the West: namely that before negotiating, Ukraine needs to launch its offensive to push back some territory, "secure heavy losses on Russia, forcibly bolstering Moscow's military options, and increasing its willingness to contemplate a diplomatic settlement."

But that is a tall order. Moscow would have to unlikely to negotiate at the end of the Ukrainian offensive, particularly as the article admits the "Russian military's numerical superiority" and that Ukraine is "facing growing constraints on both its own manpower and help from abroad."

Moscow was ready to cut a deal with Kiev one month after Russia's intervention but the West, with its strategy of lengthening the war to weaken Russia, quashed it. Why would Moscow accept a deal now when Ukraine is in the weakest Russia is poised to make significant gains on the battlefield?

The *Foreign Affairs* piece admits, "This diplomatic gambit may well fail. Even if Russia and Ukraine continue to take significant losses, one or both of them may prefer to keep fighting."

Ukraine was out of the fighting season," the article says, "the United States and Europe will have good reason to shatter their stated policy of supporting Ukraine for 'as long as it takes,' as U.S. President Joe Biden has put it."

And what comes next? "NATO allies would start a strategic dialogue with Russia on arms control and the broader European security architecture."

Incredibly this is what Russia was asking for before February 2022 intervention and it was rebuffed by NATO and the U.S. *Now a Foreign Affairs* article is recommending it.

Is there no better sign that Ukraine has lost this war?

Going Ahead With the Offensive Anyway

Big strategy of Ukraine going ahead with an offensive it knows will achieve little is Kiev's last gasp — unless delusional neocons continue to outmaneuver the realists in Washington.

Most importantly for the West, the failure of this last gasp attempt would serve as a way for it to escape the disaster it has created for itself, namely, the hatching of the economic war on Russia, billions of the information war to the non-West and ultimately defeat on the battlefield in its proxy war.

Ukraine's military, according to a recent piece in the *New York Times* that a pro-Ukraine "group," and possibly the Ukrainian government itself, was behind the destruction of the Nord Stream pipelines, a way of distancing the U.S. from Kiev as the end-game looms nigh.

Who Did the NSM Pipelines Blow?

Why did the Times, the *Post* and other establishment outlets publish stories about Seymour Hersh's story that Biden ordered the Nord Stream pipelines blown up? Because the Times and the *Post*, teaming with Western Europe's mainstream media, turned their attention to finding the leaker, in what Elizabeth Vos in an article today on **Consortium News** argues makes corporate media the anti-Wikileaks.

Rather than protecting the source of leaks, which is the public, they hunted down the alleged leaker, 21-year old Air National Guardsman Jack Teixeira, who was arrested by military-clad F.B.I. agents outside his Massachusetts home.

So what is the third reason why the major media published the leaks?

Very likely for the same reason they published the stories about Marcos and Schulz telling Zelensky to go home last year, and that the Ukrainian government may have been responsible for the Nord Stream sabotage: to lay the ground work for the U.S. and its allies to pull the plug on their Ukrainian adventure by finally abandoning Ukraine to its fate.

Towards that end, there is speculation that Teixeira did not act alone with the motive of impressing his teenage followers on the Discord chat forum, as the press has reported.

Former C.I.A. analyst Larry Johnson believes Teixeira was set up, possibly by a senior officer. Johnson thinks this because among the documents Teixeira allegedly leaked was one from the Central Intelligence Agency Operations Center, where Johnson noted to wrote:

"CIA Operations Center produces two daily reports — one in the morning and one in the afternoon. It is not a 'Community' product, it is not distributed to the other intelligence agencies. It is an internal CIA document (of course, it is available to the Director of National Intelligence). Johnson wrote on his website *War of the Nine Generals* Blog.

Teixeira was not in the C.I.A. so there is no way he'd have access to an Operations Center document, Johnson wrote. So how did he get it? Johnson:

The implication is that Teixeira may have been a patsy for someone within the realm wing of the U.S. military or intelligence establishment who opposes the neocons' obsession with continuing the war at all costs.

The neocons are not going down without a fight. John Bolton, the former C.S. national security advisor and chief neocon, wrote a desperate piece in The Wall Street Journal last week, titled, "A New American Grand Strategy to Contain Russia and China."

Bolton gets it that the world is changing, and not in America's favor. So his response is not to move ballast U.S. policy but to "double down" on the policy that created rather than brought dominance. It, but is double down like a riverboat gambler. His solution raise military spending to "contain" Russia and China, expand nuclear bomb testing and taking the North Korea Treaty Organization global, inviting Japan, Australia, Israel and others committed to NATO defense spending targets to join.

Bolton laughingly says the U.S. must "exclude" Moscow and Beijing from the Middle East, where Saudi-sponsored talks are underway, the most dramatic diplomatic transformation in decades.

But Bolton saves his best laugh for Ukraine:

"After Ukraine wins its war with Russia, we must aim to split the Russia-China axis. Moscow's defeat could unseat Putin, and Russia could then come under a government of unfamiliar composition. New Russian leaders may or may not be back to the West rather than Beijing, and might be so weak that Moscow's Asian possessions become ripe for the picking. Or, Russia's disintegration.

Even if the Ukraine Bolton is dreamed, there still is a major obstacle in the realists' way: Biden's re-election campaign. He says he's going to announce soon. He's already thrown his hat in with the neocons.

Is there any conceivable way that he could accept Ukraine losing this war, after all the blue and yellow flags waving, without also losing his re-election?

The Biden team's aim was to bleed Russia. But it is Ukraine that is hemorrhaging. Will reality at last overcome ideology in Washington?

Joe Lauria is editor-in-chief of Consortium News and a former U.N. correspondent for the *Wall Street Journal*, *Boston Globe*, and numerous other newspapers, including *The Montreal Gazette* and *The Star of Johannesburg*. He was an investigative reporter for the *Sunday Times of London*, a financial reporter for *Bloomberg News* and began his professional work as a 19-year old stringer for *The New York Times*. He can be reached at joelauria@consortiumnews.com and followed on Twitter @joelau.

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ARCHIVES
- April 2023
- March 2023
- February 2023
- January 2023
- December 2022
- November 2022
- October 2022
- September 2022
- August 2022
- July 2022
- June 2022
- May 2022
- April 2022
- March 2022
- February 2022
- January 2022
- December 2021
- November 2021
- October 2021
- September 2021
- August 2021
- July 2021
- June 2021
- May 2021
- April 2021
- March 2021
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- December 2009
- November 2009
- October 2009
- September 2009
- August 2009
- July 2009
- June 2009
- May 2009
- April 2009
- March 2009
- February 2009

GUEST ACCESS BY CATEGORIES
- Abroad
- American Exceptionalism (22)
- Analysis (34)
- Anti-Russia Drive (1)
- BOOK CITY
- Bookkeeping (1)
- Bookstore (1)
- Ebay (1)
- Amazon (1)
- Bookstore (1)
- Books (1)
- Consortium Bookstore (1)
- Bulletin (1)
- Bulletin Board (1)
- Black Administration (1)
- Consortium Bookstore (1)
- Consortium Staff (1)
- Consorting with (1)
- Contributors (1)
- CD Gene (1)
- CN Radio (1)
- Cold War (1)
- Cold War (1)
- Colonies (1)
- Consortium (1)
- Consortium News on air (1)
- Consortium News on Flash (1)
- Consortium News Radio (1)
- Consortiumnews.com (1)
- Consortium Staff (1)
- COVID-19 (1)
- Dog Determined (1)
- Economics (1)
- Economy (1)
- Editorial (1)
- Education (1)
- Election 2016 (1)
- Environment (1)
- Fake News (1)
- Foreign Policy (1)
- Gary Webb Freedom of the Press Award (1)
- Gun Violence (1)
- Guns (1)
- Health (1)
- Health Care (1)
- History (1)
- Human Rights (1)
- Civil Rights (1)
- Immigration (1)
- Indian Country (1)
- Indigenous People (1)
- Intelligence (1)
- International (1)
- Afghanistan (1)
- Africa (1)
- Algeria (1)
- Algeria (1)
- Argentina (1)
- Asia (1)
- Australia (1)
- Bangladesh (1)
- Bangladesh (1)
- Belgium (1)
- Belgium (1)
- Bolivia (1)
- Brazil (1)
- Britain (1)
- Canada (1)
- Central America (1)
- Chile (1)
- China (1)
- China (1)
- Cuba (1)
- Czech Republic (1)
- Democracy (1)
- Egypt (1)
- Ecuador (1)
- Europe (1)
- Ethiopia (1)
- Europe (1)
- Europe (1)
- European Union (1)
- Finland (1)
- France (1)
- Ghana (1)
- Georgia (1)
- Germany (1)
- Greece (1)
- Great Britain (1)
- Guatemala (1)
- Guatemala (1)
- Gulf States (1)
- Haiti (1)
- Hungary (1)
- Iceland (1)
- India (1)
- Indonesia (1)
- International Criminal Court (1)
- Iran (1)
- Iraq (1)
- Israel (1)
- Israel (1)
- Italy (1)
- Japan (1)
- Jordan (1)
- Kenya (1)
- Kosovo (1)
- Latin America (1)
- Lebanon (1)
- Libya (1)
- Libya (1)
- Mali (1)
- Mexico (1)
- Middle East (1)
- Mexico (1)
- Mozambique (1)
- Morocco (1)
- Nepal (1)
- New Zealand (1)
- Nicaragua (1)
- Nigeria (1)
- North Korea (1)
- Northern Rhodesia (1)
- Norway (1)
- Pakistan (1)
- Palestine (1)
- Palestine (1)
- Panama (1)
- Poland (1)
- Portugal (1)
- Russia (1)
- Russia (1)
- Rwanda (1)
- Saudi Arabia (1)
- Scotland (1)
- Slovenia (1)
- Somalia (1)
- South Africa (1)
- South Korea (1)
- Southern Africa (1)
- Spain (1)
- Sudan (1)
- Syria (1)
- Syria (1)
- Taiwan (1)
- Tanzania (1)
- Thailand (1)
- Tunisia (1)
- Turkey (1)
- Ukraine (1)
- United Arab Emirates (1)
- United Nations (1)
- Venezuela (1)
- Vietnam (1)
- Yemen (1)
- Zambia (1)
- International News Analysis (1)
- Iran Contra (1)
- Iraq (1)
- Iraq War (1)
- Jon Lorentz (1)
- Julian Assange (1)
- Kosovo (1)
- Legal (1)
- Letter from Britain (1)
- Letter from Europe (1)
- Letter from London (1)
- Lobbying (1)
- Lost Liberties (1)
- Martinsburg (1)
- Media (1)
- Middle East (1)
- Mike Pompeo (1)
- Militarism (1)
- Military (1)
- Military Industry (1)
- Nazism (1)
- Neocons (1)
- News Analysis (1)
- Nigeria (1)
- Nobel Peace Prize (1)
- Obama Administration (1)
- Obituaries (1)
- Obituary (1)
- Outlaws (1)
- Pentagon (1)
- Pentagon (1)
- Peru (1)
- Police Brutality (1)
- Politics (1)
- Politics (1)
- Prisons (1)
- Propaganda (1)
- Protests (1)
- Protests (1)
- Public Health (1)
- Public Health (1)
- Racism (1)
- Religion (1)
- Robert Parry (1)
- Robert Parry (1)
- Russia (1)
- Russia (1)
- Russia (1)
- Sport (1)
- Stolen Land Series (1)
- Sunday Friend Diary (1)
- Surveillance (1)
- Syria (1)
- Terrorism (1)
- The Bush 43 Administration (1)
- Trump (1)
- Trump Administration (1)
- U.N. (1)
- U.N. General Assembly (1)
- U.S. (1)
- U.S. Congress (1)
- U.S. Justice Dept. (1)
- U.S. Supreme Court (1)
- Uncategorized (1)
- Until This Day: Alternate Perspectives on the News (1)
- UPS (1)
- UPS Review (1)
- Venezuela (1)
- Wikileaks (1)
- Wikileaks Series (1)
- Wikileaks Series (1)
- Women (1)
- Women (1)

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