

British Officials Spread Russia Coup Plot Disinformation for United States

Washington's 'junior partner' does the dirty work for the US

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Months of frenzied speculation about an imminent Russian invasion of Kiev by Western journalists, think tanks, and politicians culminated on February 15 with Moscow reducing its military footprint near Ukraine's border.

The [withdrawal](#) came one day before President Joe Biden's administration inexactly [forecast](#) a phantom incursion.

Panic was stoked to a perplexing degree. Atlantic Council representative Melinda Haring [declared](#) on February 11 that Russian President Vladimir Putin had "big weekend plans" forthcoming in Ukraine, including cutting off the nation's power and heat, knocking out its entire navy and air force, killing a number of general staff in order to install a pro-Russian president, and resorting to "full-scale military invasion if Ukraine doesn't give in."

When none of this came to pass over the weekend, Haring meekly claimed emotions were "running high," and she'd "let them get the better" of her. She said she would be "more judicious" in future.

Still, Haring [complained](#) of "Russian trolls," and as Russia withdrew forces, she conveniently [reframed](#) the narrative. "We've been so focused on Russian troops and tanks that we missed Moscow's strategy: strangle Ukraine's economy and sap the resolve of its people."

Almost as baffling and bizarre was British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss boldly asserting on January 22 that London possessed “information” indicating Moscow planned to forcibly install a puppet government in Kiev. Forces would invade Ukraine and mount a coup through the help of a quintet of Ukrainian politicians with alleged links to Russian intelligence.

“The information being released today shines a light on the extent of Russian activity designed to subvert Ukraine, and is an insight into Kremlin thinking,” Truss stated.

An Illogical Coup Leader

When asked to substantiate the claims, British officials were at a loss, and also refused to clarify how the information was obtained and verified.

These [claims](#) rapidly circulated. The New York Times praised Britain’s reckless inflaming of a highly volatile situation as “[muscular](#).” But the media also acknowledged Truss “[provided no evidence](#)” to support the bombshell allegations.

In an ironic twist, Yevhen Murayev, a former Ukrainian MP named by London as the Kremlin’s pick for President, [expressed](#) amusement and dismay.

“You’ve made my evening. The British Foreign Office seems confused,” he told the Observer while laughing. “It isn’t very logical. I’m banned from Russia. Not only that, but money from my father’s firm there has been confiscated.”

Two days later, London [followed](#) the US lead in withdrawing its embassy staff from Kiev. Yet hours later, a senior European diplomat [made clear](#) European Union member states would not withdraw, adding snidely there was no need to “dramatize” the situation while talks with Moscow continued.

The Washington Post added to the confusion on January 29 when they [quietly revealed](#) that intelligence underlying Truss’ shock announcement was “collected and declassified” by the US, and the Biden administration had specifically asked British authorities to publicly expose the purported plot.

Oddly, details weren’t shared with allies, such as Germany, where officials consistently expressed skepticism toward the notion that Russia would invade Ukraine.

Nowhere in the Post’s coverage did the newspaper ask a very obvious question—why was the disclosure of the incendiary material outsourced in this manner?

An Obliging Client State

Britain’s laundering of US intelligence created the illusion that an ally had independently reinforced [dodgy claims](#) from US officials of an imminent Russian invasion. It allowed Washington to recast the December [transfer](#) of 90 tons of “lethal aid” to Ukraine as reactive.

What’s more, the ruse provided plausible deniability in the event that the false narrative unraveled, as it inevitably did.

The Biden administration knew very well that London could be relied upon. At the conclusion of World War II, a Foreign Office official [ruefully concluded](#) that a bankrupt Britain’s future

lay in serving as “junior partner in an orbit of power predominantly under American aegis.”

Ever since, the UK government has consistently gone further than most countries in serving Washington interests.

In September 2021, Yahoo! News [exposed](#) how the CIA had “secret war plans” to kidnap or even assassinate WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange if he attempted to leave the Ecuador embassy in London for Moscow. The report contained a shocking example of Britain’s willingness to do the bidding of US intelligence. (Note: Assange’s legal team says Assange was opposed to Ecuador’s proposal to assign him to a diplomatic post in Moscow.)

Scenarios to thwart Assange’s escape included “gun battles with Kremlin operatives on the streets of London” and “shooting out the tires of a Russian plane carrying Assange before it could take off for Moscow.” US officials reportedly “asked their British counterparts to do the shooting if gunfire was required, and the British agreed.”

The British also took the leading role in producing propaganda ahead of the US invasion of Iraq. As far back as 1998, MI6 “black propaganda specialists” were [involved](#) in “psychological warfare” known as Operation Mass Appeal, according to former United Nations weapons inspector Scott Ritter. The foreign spying agency circulated “intelligence” to media outlets “to help shape public opinion about Iraq and the threat posed by WMD [weapons of mass destruction].”

“We have some outlets in foreign newspapers – some editors and writers who work with us from time to time – where we can spread some material,” MI6 representatives told Ritter. “We just need to be kept informed on what you are doing and when, so we can time the press releases accordingly.”

A particularly controversial British intelligence assessment claimed Iraq President Saddam Hussein was [capable](#) of attacking Europe with WMD in just 45 minutes. It turned out the [source](#) was a lone Iraqi taxi driver.

The claim was [repeated](#) in a televised speech by President George W. Bush in September 2002 and proved fundamental to the war in Baghdad two months later.

British intelligence led the way in fomenting the US-led conflict against Syria in August 2013, after opposition-controlled Ghouta was allegedly struck by rockets fired by government forces containing the chemical agent sarin.

The incident had the [hallmarks](#) of a false flag operation. US officials were [forced to concede](#) evidence implicating the Syrian government was hardly a “slam dunk,” and [communications intercepted](#) by German spies indicated that whatever happened, Syrian President Bashar Assad’s government had not sanctioned or been aware of the attack.

However, the British Joint Intelligence Committee possessed no such doubts and [declared](#) it was “highly likely that the Syrian regime was responsible,” and “there [were] no plausible alternative scenarios.”

This resulted in a [parliamentary vote](#) on launching military intervention in Syria (alongside Washington and Paris mere days later). But that failed, taking the question of Western military action against Damascus off the table.

British Influence Operations In Ukraine

Ukraine is a country where Britain consistently seeks to influence events in order to derive economic, political, and military benefits.

For example, [leaked documents](#) indicate London funded consultants to effectively market neoliberal labor “reforms” to the Ukrainian public, which would destroy employment rights and protections.

The Foreign Office also [financed](#) Ukraine’s StopFake, a purported “fact-checking” website with [deep links](#) to fascist elements in the country.

StopFake defended Ukrainian [military training camps](#) for children that are run by the Neo-Nazi militia [Azov Battalion](#). They also defended [Andrey Parubiy](#), a Ukrainian parliamentary speaker from 2016 – 2019

Parubiy is an avowed [Adolf Hitler fan](#). When Parubiy visited Britain in 2018, local reporters [sprang to his defence](#). He was [implicated](#) in a reported false flag massacre of Maidan protesters in February 2014.

Even more significantly, the Foreign Office is [secretly co-opting](#) journalists and media organizations in Kiev via funding, training, and the surreptitious production of anti-Russian, pro-Western, and pro-NATO content. “Girls on HBO...but in Ukraine” was one suggested example of programming to support in leaked internal files.

These efforts are a component of a £100 million [clandestine drive](#) by London to “weaken the Russian state’s influence” over its neighbors.

All of which is another facet of Britain’s bond with the US that has been absolutely fundamental: relations between Moscow and Washington must remain tense.

By presenting itself as a dependable bastion of European security, Britain can remain relevant globally, able to perpetually piggyback off its partner’s might.

For this reason, London was willing to circulate bunk US intelligence about an impending Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The West Keeps ‘Guessing’

Fittingly, in the wake of Moscow’s announcement that it would withdraw troop deployments from some annual military exercises, Britain’s notorious Sun tabloid [published](#) an “exclusive” stating Russia was *still* planning to invade at 1 am London time on February 16.

No “massive missile blitz” happened so the Sun updated the “exclusive” to say “Putin continued to keep the West guessing.”

The article quoted Truss at some length, who said officials were “preparing for the worst,” believed an invasion “highly likely,” and “over the next few days there could be an attempt to claim the Ukrainians are attacking them so the Russians have a justification for invading.”

“Certainly, our latest intelligence suggests that an invasion is imminent, that it’s highly likely, and that we’ve seen 100,000 troops stationed around the border,” Truss

fulminated. "We would expect multiple sequenced attacks and not a single strike."

"We could be on the brink of a war in Europe. That would have severe consequences not just for the people of Russia and Ukraine but also for the broader security of Europe," Truss added.

Such fearmongering has been de rigeur since 1946, when British Prime Minister Winston Churchill delivered an [iconic speech](#) at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri.

Churchill warned that communism posed "a growing challenge and peril to Christian civilization." Without "a [special relationship](#) between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the US," there may be another World War.

At the time, opinion polls indicated American citizens not only valued and trusted their Soviet ally far more than Britain, but they foresaw a much-reduced role for the latter in world affairs following the war.

Churchill's comments were poorly received, but their impact was quickly apparent. Six months later, US-Soviet cooperation collapsed due to disagreements over the future of occupied Germany.

Washington became wedded to a hardline anti-Soviet policy, and the Cold War was launched.

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