

# **RUSSIA IS A FAKE POWER**

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Winston Churchill famously called Russia “a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma.” A more accurate description of the current Russian Federation is a forgery wrapped in a deception inside a lie.

Numerous analysts have focused on Moscow’s campaign of disinformation to undermine the West, but they have barely noticed that the most important subject of disinformation is Russia itself. Moscow has a long record of deceiving Westerners and depicting its empire as invincible.

In a previous imperial incarnation, Soviet communism and socialist internationalism were supposed to ensure salvation for all humanity. Until, that is, they were exposed as a fraud. Today’s Russia has created an image of great power status, economic strength, and military power that is rapidly unraveling in Ukraine. This is revealing that the Russian state structure itself stands on rotting foundations.

According to numerous Western reports, Russia’s state disinformation was supposed to be sophisticated and persuasive. In reality, it has failed to convince anyone outside of a narrow group of true believers that Moscow is conducting a just war of “de-Nazification” in Ukraine.

Attempts to control the narrative have failed miserably because of early exposure of Kremlin war aims by Western intelligence services and by an effective information campaign by the Ukrainian government and civil society.

Similarly, Russia’s much vaunted cyberwarfare capabilities have been grossly exaggerated, as Kyiv was evidently well prepared for any digital disruption of Ukraine’s critical infrastructure.

Russia's military prowess has proved to be another myth that fooled Western analysts. Simply studying Russian reports on weapons systems, battle strategies, and military theories is insufficient to grasp actual capabilities.

Little attention has been paid to absence of morale and ethics, incompetence, poor training, dismal education levels, corruption, falsified reporting, interethnic factors, and officer-soldier relations inside the Russian military. This has resulted in a grave failure to foresee the defeats that Russia has sustained in Ukraine.

Although Moscow has wrought enormous destruction in Ukraine, it does not have the resources or manpower to sustain a prolonged war or occupation.

Russia's economic strength is also a fig leaf. Simply citing figures about its national wealth funds and foreign reserves has failed to underscore that the Russian economy is primarily based on revenues from fossil fuels.

Without large-scale energy exports, the budget simply cannot sustain the spending necessary to keep the federation intact.

And with the sanctions starting to take effect, many of Russia's federal regions will seek alternative revenues to survive, whether by curtailing Moscow exploitation of their natural resources or turning to neighboring states for direct economic ties.

As Moscow's budget depletes and its energy revenues decline, any incentive to remain in the failing federation will rapidly diminish, and Russia's state fragility will be increasingly transparent.

Western governments are failing to grasp the significance of this historic moment. Incremental measures to assist Ukraine and sanction Russia allow the aggressor to make military and economic adjustments to stay afloat.

*The time for de-imperializing the Russian Federation is here*, not through Western military intervention but by massively bolstering Ukraine's armed forces, cutting all trade and energy links with Russia, and helping this artificial state to embroil itself in internal conflicts.

A military defeat in Ukraine that reveals the inherent weakness of the Kremlin, combined with crippling economic sanctions that collapse living standards, will provoke public unrest, regional revolts, and power struggles within and between various elites.

Intensifying internal battles in a collapsing economy will culminate in state fracture and the emergence of new entities that will reject Moscow's delusional imperial project.

NATO should not intervene militarily unless its territory is breached, but it can encourage and develop links with the fledgling states that emerge from a crumbling Russian empire.

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*Janusz Bugajski is a senior fellow at the Jamestown Foundation in Washington, D.C. He is the co-author of Eurasian Disunion: Russia's Vulnerable Flanks with Margarita Assenova. His new book, Failed State: A Guide to Russia's Rupture, will be published in May.*