

U.S. State Dept. Spokesperson Jen Psaki Praises 'Beautiful' Russian Culture

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U.S. Department of State spokesperson Jennifer Psaki stands with Russian counterpart Maria Zakharova between U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry (R) and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Paris, Jan. 13, 2014.

Known in Russia for her supposedly "anti-Russian" stance, U.S. State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki has extended an olive branch to critics, saying she is a fan of Russian culture and the novel "Anna Karenina" is one of her favorite books.

"Russia is a beautiful country, beautiful people live there. It is a country with a great culture and history," Psaki was quoted as saying Thursday by state-run news agency RIA Novosti.

As proof of her love of Russian culture, the former spokeswoman for U.S. President Barack Obama, said one of her favorite novels was "Anna Karenina," a Russian classic penned by acclaimed author Leo Tolstoy in the 19th century.

Psaki, who has featured in a number of Russian-language memes criticizing her intelligence, said she understood she had become a victim of the country's "propaganda machine."

Attacks on Psaki have included altered photo images, cartoons, satirical reports and edited video.

"It is especially intense now the situation in Ukraine has worsened," she said.

Despite the deteriorating relations between Russia and Ukraine in recent months, Psaki insisted there were many areas in which the two countries continued to cooperate.

"The strength of a relationship is sometimes just being able to talk about topics on which there is a disagreement," she was cited as saying by RIA.

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