The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Ukraine's Ex-Leader Wanted to Cling to Power, Putin Tells Oliver Stone

July 09, 2019



Kremlin.ru

Ukraine's former president sought to maintain his grip on power by stoking a diplomatic crisis ahead of this spring's elections, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said in a new interview with Hollywood director Oliver Stone.

The Russian Navy captured 24 Ukrainian sailors and their three vessels in the Kerch Strait in November 2018, straining already tense relations between the two countries.

Related article: Ukraine Vote Shows 'Total' Policy Failure of Departing Leader – Putin

In the interview with Stone previewed on Monday, the president accuses Ukraine's Petro Poroshenko of "provoking" the naval incident with Russia last fall as part of his presidential campaign.

"I have grounds to believe that [Poroshenko] wanted to declare martial law all across the

country and postpone the elections," Putin said.

He accused the former Ukrainian leader of "looking for an opportunity to retain power in any way."

Poroshenko lost the election to former comedian and political upstart Volodymyr Zelenskiy by a landslide in April.

The interview appears in the documentary "Revealing Ukraine," made by Ukrainian-American director Igor Lopatonok, which is scheduled to premiere on the state-run Rossia 1 channel July 19.

Embed:

Russian state-run media has been accused of falsely reporting that the documentary won an honorary prize at a Sicilian film festival last week.

Stone presided over the jury at the festival and received a personal prize for his contribution to cinematography, not for the documentary he helped produce. Lopatonok received the festival's award for his previous documentary on Ukraine in 2016.

Stone has previously faced criticism for not challenging the Russian president's responses in his four-part "Putin Interviews" documentary released in mid-2017.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/07/09/ukraines-ex-leader-wanted-to-cling-to-power-putin-tells-oliver-stone-a66333