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Hate Speech Part Two: Russian Leaders Speak

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Стая наркоманов: a pack of junkies

Some day when I have a lot of time and patience I will create a word map of Russian leaders' accusations about Ukraine and the stated goal(s) of their "special military operation." You'd think you'd have a solid idea of what the problem was and what was wrong with the leaders before you started a war, right? But the problem keeps changing as does the Russian goal, bouncing between "we would never try to achieve regime change, that's what the bad Americans do" and "our goal is regime change." Even the name-calling and dehumanizing descriptions of the leaders — especially President Zelensky — and Ukrainian people have changed over the months, although a few are standard and constant: киевский режим (Kyiv regime); неонацисты (Neo-Nazis); and бандеровцы (Banderites).

Vladimir Putin does refer to Ukrainian President Zelensky by name, unlike another enemy

Whose Name Must Not Be Said (Alexei Navalny). But at first Putin called the Ukrainian leadership шайка наркоманов и неонацистов (a gang of junkies and Neo-Nazis) and referred to the Ukrainian army as националистические формирования (nationalist forces). That was picked up by Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Maria Zakharova, who said in the early days of the war that Zelensky was наркоман бредит о ядерной бомбе (a junkie raving about nuclear war).

At the UN the official Russian representative described the Ukrainian leaders not as people at all, but нацистская раковая опухоль, которая пожирает Украину (a Nazi tumor that is eating away Ukraine). The solution he called for: вырезать (cut it out).

Early on Sergei Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, said Ukraine was being led by антинародный и антиисторический режим (anti-national and anti-historical regime) — whatever that means — and trotted out the accusation of милитаризация и нацификация (militarization and Nazification). Later those two accusations were dropped for the most part. Lavrov did, however, try to explain how a country that voted in a Jewish president by a landslide could be Nazified: Когда говорят: "Что это за нацификация, если мы евреи?", я думаю, что Гитлер тоже имел еврейское происхождение, то это ничего не значит" (When people say, “What kind of Nazification is it if we’re Jews?” I think Hitler also had Jewish roots and that didn’t mean anything).

Then the Russian leadership dusted off the old accusation of кукол (puppet, aka Ukraine) and кукловод (puppeteer, aka USA). Putin said about Ukraine: Страна фактически потеряла суверенитет и напрямую управляется с США, которые используют ее как таран против России, против нашего Союзного государства с Республикой Беларусь, да и против ОДКБ и СНГ в целом (The country has de facto lost its sovereignty and is directly ruled from the US, which is using it as a battering ram against Russia, against our Union with the Republic of Belarus, and even against the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the CIS as a whole).

You will have noticed by now that there is never even one example of any of this.

In recent months Putin has gone back to the “Jews can be Nazis” argument. He called Volodymyr Zelensky не еврей, а позор еврейского народа (is not a Jew but a disgrace to the Jewish people) and even: Это делает ситуацию в высшей степени отвратительной, что этнический еврей прикрывает героизацию нацизма и тех, кто возглавлял в свое время Холокост на Украине (It makes the situation especially disgusting, that an ethnic Jew is a cover for making heros out of Nazis and those who once led the Holocaust in Ukraine).

But the real name-caller-in-chief is former president Dmitry Medvedev. He is also the main dehumanizer, not only of Ukrainians and Zelensky, but of American presidents and officials and Western leaders and Westerners in general.

His favorite accusation is stupidity — but stupidity writ large in red letters across the sky. Идея недоумков из G7 о тотальном запрете экспорта товаров в нашу страну... (The idea of the half-wits in the G7 to completely ban exports to our country...)... Мозгов у них вообще не осталось (They don’t have any brains left at all). Sometimes he uses Ukrainian to make his point (Why?): В голове – лишь м'яке жовто-блакитне гівно (In their head is only [Ukrainian, which he translates as] “soft yellow-blue manure”).

Everyone is an idiot: старый дурак сенатор Линдси Грэм (the old dummy Lindsey Graham); сонный маразматик Байден (sleepy senile Biden); У Борреля жестокая словесная диарея (Borrell has a really bad case of verbal diarrhea); рептилоиды (the reptiloids); братание канадских животных во главе с премьером трюдо в своём парламенте с нацистами (the fraternization of Canadian animals with Nazis led by Premier Trudeau in his parliament); количество руководящих идиотов в натовских странах растёт (the number of idiotic rulers in NATO countries is growing).

For some reason Boris Johnson — called Бориска (Boriska) as if he were a little boy — is mostly just crazy: предложил принять Бандерокраину в НАТО "без условий". Его бы, отставного дурака, принять без условий в психиатрическую лечебницу (he proposed admitting Banderukraine into NATO 'without any conditions.' They should admit this retired moron into a psychiatric hospital).

Zelensky in Medvedev's language is rarely a human being and always looking to please his "masters": Киевский пёс продолжает заходиться лаем. Слюна течёт по волосатой морде, чтобы хозяева видели его боевые качества (The Kyiv dog barks so much he wears himself out. Spit runs down his hairy face, so that his masters see his qualities as a fighter). Не is деятель в грязной зелёной майке (a figure in a dirty green t-shirt); Этот актёр – настоящий проверенный фашист, истинный наследник национал-социалистов Германии (This actor is a real, certified fascist, the true successor to the German National Socialists).

In Medvedev's social media posts Ukrainians are not human either. They are ублюдки и выродки понимают только жестокость и силу (scum, degenerate trash [who] only understand cruelty and power; киевская мразь (Kyivan crud); Украинские преступники (Ukrainian criminals); Ох, не заиграйтесь там в самолётики в своей песочнице, детки (Oh, don't play with your little planes in your sandbox, kiddies).

And then there was this: во главе разлагающегося трупа Украины стоят недалёкие манкурты: коррумпированные дельцы и загашенные клоуны, которые молятся на заокеанских хозяев (at the head of the decomposing corpse of Ukraine are moronic slaves: corrupt hustlers and stoned clowns who on their knees before their bosses across the ocean).

And that's my limit of insults for the day.

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