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Russia's perspective on the war against Ukraine

The article offers a partial analysis of Russia's war in Ukraine based on Russia's strategic declarations and the actual military strategy implemented during the full-scale invasion of Ukraine starting from February 24, 2022. In the article, the author presents the construction of the Russian military strategy through its key elements such as goals, ways and means of its implementation.

Key words: NATO, Russia, national security strategy, military doctrine, full-scale invasion, occupied territories, command and control.

«There is no greater danger than underestimating your opponent».

Lao Tzu

Formulating the problem. The military-political development of the Russian federation (RF) is the subject of special attention of scholars, as it goes beyond Russia itself and modifies the national interests of other states. The influence of Russia on the system of international relations has become a permanent element of the modern world, which not only persists but also grows. Its essence can be understood by the doctrinal approaches of the RF, which tend to change in the context of strengthening presidential power in this country.

The full-scale aggression of the RF against Ukraine has changed the understanding of security not only in the European region, but also in other countries of the world. In fact, the Kremlin's aggressive policy has been formed for many years, which was reflected in the main strategic documents of the RF – military doctrine and national security strategy, which, according to the author's view, are stimulating elements of Russian aggression and shape the RF's approach to warfare in Ukraine.

The purpose of the article is to analyse Russia's strategic documents that define its aggressive policy, which had a corresponding impact on the outbreak of war against Ukraine. The basic documents for the analysis are the military doctrines of Russia in the period 1993–2014. Taking into account these documents, the author aims to consider the components of Russia's military strategy in the war against Ukraine.

Strategic declarations of Russia

Considering the Russian security strategy today, it can be characterized by the following theses:

- a sense of vulnerability and constant danger;
- active use of military instruments in foreign policy;
- aggressiveness is interpreted as a defensive mechanism.

The military doctrine (MD) is a key document for any country, as it defines strategic priorities and approaches to national security and the corresponding military policy of the state in the near future. The main changes in the Russian MD after the collapse of the USSR took place in 1993, 2000, 2010 and 2014.

MD 1993

The 1993 MD [1] was the first attempt to formulate a strategic direction in the context of a free independent state. It was an important document given its historical significance, due to the time of transition after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This doctrine reflected the changing geopolitical landscape and challenges facing RF at that time.

The key theses of the 1993 RF MD include the following:

1) Recognizing the importance of national security as a priority, the need to protect the country from various threats and challenges;

2) Maintaining focus on a credible nuclear deterrent. The RF keeps the right to use nuclear weapons in response to a nuclear attack or a large-scale aggression with the use of conventional weapons against the RF or its allies;

3) Development of the armed forces to maintain the ability to respond to various security challenges with plans for their reorganization in two stages: 1993–1996 and 1996–2000, the latter of which is the final one in determining the groupings of troops and their purpose on the territory of the RF;

4) The importance of non-nuclear means of deterring aggression, such as conventional armed forces and strategic stability through nuclear arms reduction;

5) The use of the Russian armed forces to protect Russian citizens in other countries in the event of an armed attack. Thus, creating a legal precedent for the possibility of intervention in other countries.

Given that the 1993 MD was a transitional document, it had a corresponding uncertainty about the challenges of the post-Soviet period. Compared to subsequent versions of military doctrines, this doctrine did not contain specific statements regarding NATO. One of the main sources of external military threats identified by the doctrine is «the expansion of military blocs and alliances» and «the build-up of troop groups on the borders of the Russian Federation to a level that violates the existing balance of power».

Another interesting fact in the doctrine is that the newly formed Russian Federation did not consider any country in the world as its enemy.

MD 2000

The MD 2000 [2] is a more comprehensive document in terms of strategy, which systematically defines the nature of the military-political situation, related destabilizing factors and sources of modern threats. On the whole, the document retained the main provisions of the previous version of the doctrine, but against the background of growing ambitions for influence in the international arena, the new doctrine significantly expanded the concept of military security.

It should be noted that in this doctrine, the RF recognizes the reduced level of direct military aggression due mainly to the nuclear deterrent potential, but draws attention to external threats that, according to the author, become the basis for formal incitement to aggressive actions of the RF. These threats include:

- attempts to ignore (infringe on) the interests of the RF in solving international security problems, to counteract its strengthening as one of the influential centres of the multipolar world;
- the presence of centres of armed conflict, especially near the state border of the RF and the borders of its allies;

- creation of groups of troops, which leads to a violation of the existing balance of power, near the state border of the RF and the borders of its allies, as well as in the seas adjacent to their territories;

- expansion of military blocs and alliances to the detriment of the RF military security.

Regarding the last one, again, as in the previous version of the doctrine, there is no clarification on blocs and alliances, but of course there is a hint in this sense of NATO and allied states.

A relatively wide range of use of the armed forces is envisaged in the VD 2000, which defines the goals and content of military security, defining not only the functions of protecting the state, but also others, such as «support (if necessary) of political actions of the RF by means of appropriate military activities and naval presence», which creates an appropriate mechanism of influence on other states.

The 2000 version includes a priority direction – strengthening the system of collective security within the CIS through the development of measures based on the Collective Security Treaty, the need to develop military-technical cooperation with the states parties to this treaty. A new element of the doctrine may also be «creation of a common defence space and ensuring collective military security» as well as the possibility of creating mixed military units based on the armed forces of the CIS countries.

MD 2010

The MD 2010 [3] has updates that subsequently influenced the implementation of hybrid and full-scale warfare in Ukraine. One of the essential elements of the MD 2010 is the following:

- legalization of the use of armed forces not only to repel aggression or maintain peace under the decision of the UN Security Council, but also to «ensure the protection of its citizens outside the Russian Federation»

- expanding the use of the armed forces of the RF outside the RF to protect the interests of the RF, to maintain international peace and security;

- expanding the list of threats with the main focus on «NATO enlargement and bringing the military infrastructure of member states closer to the borders of the Russian Federation.» As we can see, this document already provides more specifics about the «military bloc» mentioned in the previous version of the MD.

It should be noted that Russia continues its policy of cooperation with the countries of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and creation of security guarantees for the countries of this treaty (Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan), strengthening collective security within the regional international organization of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). This approach to cooperation has formed a corresponding «security belt» around Russia.

Thus, the MD 2010 formed a new approach to its military policy by trying to influence the countries that are the closest satellites of the RF. By direct or indirect means, RF tried to test its future aggressive policy, as evidenced by the fact of the invasion of Georgia in 2008 and the creation of the pro-Russian territories («security buffer zones») of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. At the global level, this was a challenge to the «West», at the regional level, it was a way to intimidate and comprehensively influence satellite countries. Therefore, the MD 2010 radically changed the nature of Russia's foreign policy compared to previous versions, which maintained a balance in relations with the «West.»

MD 2014

Changes to the MD 2014 [4] occurred due to, once again, new threats that pose a danger to the RF near its borders. At the same time, the new document separates the concepts of military danger and military threat, creating a new precedent of tension and warnings of danger both outside and inside the RF, without specifying under what conditions military danger can develop into a military threat.

One of the influential factors of military danger that led to the need to amend the MD 2014 is considered to be «the establishment of regimes in the states neighbouring the Russian Federation, including as a result of the overthrow of legitimate bodies whose policies threaten the interests of the Russian Federation,» which clearly indicates dissatisfaction with the «Revolution of Dignity» in Ukraine.

In turn, a new element in the MD 2014 is the characterization of the peculiarities of modern conflicts, among which special attention should be paid to «the integrated use of military force, political, economic, informational and other non-military measures implemented with the wide use of the protest potential of the population and special operations forces». This approach was planned and implemented by the RF for the occupation of Crimea and subsequent hybrid actions in eastern Ukraine, which resulted in the emergence of the self-proclaimed republics of «LNR» and «DNR». In fact, this characterization of the current conflict does not warn the RF against the complex nature of the use of military force, but is a direct guide to its use. At the same time, such actions are very similar to those mentioned in the so-called «Gerasimov Doctrine» of 2013 [5].

Another document, the National Security Strategy (NSS) of the RF, has gained particular importance. The latest NSS was signed by Putin on July 2, 2021. The document replaced and significantly changed the previous NSS, issued in 2015. The changes in the NSS are related to the transition to a tighter national security policy. With the transition to the 2021 strategy, new priorities for cooperation are emerging (Table 1) [6].

The real Russian strategy

An assessment of the strategy of Russia in a full-scale war against Ukraine can be analysed using the model [7], which provides a vision of its political intentions. This model contains three main components: «Ends-Ways-Means».

Table 1

Comparison of the priorities of the RF national security strategy of 2015 and 2021

NSS 2015	NSS 2021
Strengthening National Defence Capabilities/ Protection of Sovereignty	Strengthening National Defence Capabilities/ Protection of Sovereignty
Improving Life Quality of Russian Citizens	Protection of Russian People and Development of Human Potential
State and Public Security	State and Public Security
Economic Growth	Economic Security
Science, Technology, and Education	Scientific and Technological Development
Protection of Public Health	–
Culture	Protection of Traditional Russian Moral Values, Culture, and Historical Heritage
Ecology and Rational Use of Natural Resources	Environmental Security and Rational Use of Natural Resources
Strategic Stability and Equal Strategic Partnership (with everyone, including US and Europe)	Strategic Stability and Mutually Advantageous International Cooperation (mainly with CIS, BRICS, SCO countries, China and India)
–	Information Security

Given this approach, let us consider each component step by step.

ENDS

Occupation of Ukraine (at least the left bank of the Dnipro river, southern Ukraine, access to Crimea?). Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the Russian leadership has repeatedly changed the goals of its so-called special operation («SVO»), as stated in the public space. On February 24, 2022, Putin called the purpose of the «SVO» «the protection of Donbas residents, demilitarization and denazification of Ukraine.» A week after the outbreak of the war, when Russian troops failed to capture any strategically important cities, goals such as «demilitarization» and «denazification» disappeared from the usage of Russian politicians. In March 2022, defence minister Shoigu said that the attempts to occupy the Kyiv region in February were «distracting actions,» and now the purpose of the special operation is «to protect Russia from the threat of Western countries that are trying to use the Ukrainian people to fight against Moscow.» In January 2023, Putin set a new goal. According to him, the Russian invaders in Ukraine are «protecting Russia»[8].

Thus, as of February 2023, Putin's rhetoric changed – Russia does not need new Ukrainian lands, and the main goal is only to protect its own territory, which remains the main message of Russian propagandists.

In 2024, an official statement was issued by deputy chairman of the Russian security council Medvedev regarding the seizure of Kyiv and Odesa [9], as well as a return to the already established Russian narrative about Russian lands (the «Novorossiya project»), which involves the seizure of more Ukrainian territory [10].

The constant change in the goals of the «SVO» clearly demonstrates the manipulative nature of the actions of the Kremlin's leadership, however, such actions negatively affected the course of the operation itself. This, in turn, led to the failures of the Russian troops in the «SVO» and caused misunderstandings and chaos in the military and political leadership of Russia. However, at present, Putin cannot officially recognize the failures of the special operation because of the threat of losing power and the collapse of Russia as a state. That is why the rhetoric about ending the war through negotiations has recently intensified in the Russian public space.

The resolute and skilful resistance of the Armed Forces of Ukraine halted numerous Russian offensives, including on Kyiv, and liberated Sumy and Chernihiv regions, as well as parts of Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, and Kherson regions that had been temporarily captured by Russian troops.

WAYS

Ways to achieve Russian goals in the Russian-Ukrainian war can be seen through a number of measures implemented by the RF in Ukraine:

1. Rhetorical justification of actions in Ukraine [11]:

To justify the restoration of RF's geopolitical influence, the concept of a «strong state» is put forward and the thesis of a thousand-year uninterrupted Russian history, of the territory of a «great, historical» Russia, is promoted. In this context, it is postulated that Kievan Rus is a common source of origin for Russians and Ukrainians. The Ukrainian capital Kyiv is the «mother of Russian cities,» but the Moscow Kingdom is the only successor to Ancient Russia as an integral part of Russian history, culture, and spiritual space.

Its policy toward Ukrainians is based on the historical claim that their national identity is artificial. Ukraine and Ukrainians were presented as a Polish-Austrian project of «anti-Moscow Rus». The allegedly hostile states deliberately supported and promoted Ukrainian nationalism as a geopolitical tool to weaken Russia.

Russian propaganda artificially created the idea of the alleged spread of «fascism and Nazism» and the threat to Russians in Ukraine. In 2014, this argument was used in disinformation campaigns to justify the annexation of Crimea and military operations in Donbas. The Kremlin argued that the decision to annex the Ukrainian peninsula was made to protect the rights of the Russian population from the neo-Nazis of Maidan, as the Russian president is the guarantor of the security of the «Russian world,» i.e. all compatriots who are outside the borders of the Russian federation.

The next step of Russian aggression was to destabilize the situation in the eastern and southern regions of Ukraine in order to implement the political project «Novorossiya». According to Putin, «Novorossiya» has a historical right to exist on the territory from «Kharkiv to Odesa,» as these lands were not part of Ukraine in tsarist times and were transferred from Russia to Ukraine.

By justifying the aggression, the Kremlin wants to convince the world that the formation of Ukrainians as a people and Ukraine as a state is a geopolitical anti-Russian intrigue, and that Russians and Ukrainians are «one people» with a common history and culture, which implies that they should also share a common political destiny today.

The Russian leadership and propaganda argue that the war is just because the Russian army is defending the people from Nazism, regaining its historical territories, and resisting the West, which seeks to weaken and disintegrate Russia. The main historical narratives of the Kremlin as a basis for justifying Russian aggression against Ukraine focus on a fundamental issue: the legitimacy of Ukrainian identity and the emergence of the Ukrainian state.

Neo-imperial political practices were argued by historical facts, and historical politics became an important element of the Kremlin's manipulative activities. In the context of the war, precedents from the past are put

forward by the Kremlin as evidence of the legitimacy of Russia's military and political actions to justify the seizure of Ukrainian territories.

2. Creating panic and moving forward.

Creating panic is a part of information-psychological operations, which are fundamentally designed to intimidate Ukrainians. Information and psychological operations («IPSO») have always been at the forefront of Russia's actions and account for about 90% of all its aggressive actions against Ukraine. At the same time, the Russian leadership is directly involved in active «IPSO». This has been happening almost continuously since 2008, in particular, during the Bucharest Summit, when Putin officially spoke about territorial claims to Ukraine. Today, he is voicing ultimatums and his own information templates that are meant to frighten, depress, and cause anxiety and panic.

In the first days of the full-scale invasion, Ukrainians tried to take their families to safe places. In most cases, the men returned and tried to find their place in the defence of their hometowns. National resistance was gaining momentum.

According to the Kremlin's calculations, Ukraine's leadership was supposed to flee immediately, the army was supposed to start capitulating, and the population was supposed to be met with at least neutral treatment. But the Russian leadership's expectations were not materialized. In the first weeks of the full-scale invasion, Ukrainians in the occupied territories held numerous protests, stood in the way of military equipment, and burned it with «cocktails».

3. Terror.

Russia's terror campaign against Ukraine is an act of genocide against the Ukrainian people. It has been shelling Ukraine's civilian infrastructure, including energy facilities, and has blown up the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant. The consequences of this explosion will be felt for decades. Now Russia is threatening to blow up the Zaporizhzhia NPP, which is under Russian occupation.

On October 13, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution recognizing Russia as a terrorist regime. This is the first international institution to respond to President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's call to officially label Russia's actions in Ukraine as terrorism. This is how Ukraine qualifies attacks on peaceful Ukrainian cities.

4. Declaring the seized Ukrainian territories as primordially Russian.

Russian propaganda uses the narrative about Ukrainian lands to justify its actions in Ukraine and to shape the opinion of Russians and foreign citizens that Russia has the right to territorial claims to Ukraine. The narrative is based on the thesis that Ukrainian lands are and have been

Russian, that Ukrainians are not a distinct nation but part of the Russian nation. In this way, Russia is trying to gain support from its citizens and other countries that may perceive the Russian narrative as historical truth and qualify its actions as legitimate in Ukraine. However, these narratives are not supported by historical evidence and have been disproven by many studies.

5. Implementation of other measures.

5.1 Building fortifications. Since the summer of 2022, Russia has built some of the most extensive military defence systems seen anywhere in the world in recent decades. Russia, which occupied southern Ukraine in the first days of the invasion, has built a vast network of fortifications stretching for hundreds of kilometres in several lines and consisting of trenches, anti-tank ditches, strongholds – a kind of land fortresses, concrete fortifications of minefields. Fortifications were built along the front lines and in the occupied territories. The most powerful of them were built along the eastern part of Ukraine, where Russian troops have been deployed since 2014. Anti-tank barriers have been built along the combat line, but in any case, they are not of great importance in terms of tactical advantage for a Russian defence [12].

5.2 Encouragement of collaborators. It is a fact that for years Russia has been preparing for a full-scale invasion. One of the components of this preparation was to identify potential collaborators and recruit traitors. Unfortunately, there are many representatives of the government and law enforcement agencies among them. However, the «great» war allows Ukraine to get rid of them forever. Russia is using all possible levers to manipulate the local population and force the authorities to cooperate with Russian troops. Many collaborators at various levels work for Russia, which creates a wide range of problems for the defence of Ukraine and its society [13].

5.3 Legitimization of the occupied territories. The RF seeks by all means to convince the world of the legitimacy of its open terrorism and aggression against Ukraine. Such actions are qualified as «legitimization of the occupation». In September 2022, the RF announced the annexation of four Ukrainian regions (Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia). Such actions are not recognized by the international community, with the exception of North Korea and Syria. However, Russia does not reject attempts to have its occupation actions recognized by the world and invites marginalized politicians from other countries to visit the territories occupied by Ukraine.

Russian propaganda about the just return of «historical lands» contributes to the motivational efforts of the Kremlin to mobilize its citizens to participate in the war in Ukraine.

5.4 Changing demographics and identity. The RF has legalized the forced displacement of people from the territories under martial law. Martial law was introduced in

October 2022 in the territories of Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, and Luhansk regions occupied by the RF.

Forced passportization is taking place in the RF-occupied territories. Local residents are forced to hand over their Ukrainian passports and receive a Russian one. This, in turn, provides opportunities to receive minimal social benefits, and sometimes is a condition for the survival of the population in the occupied cities.

In this way, the Russian authorities also distinguish those who are unreliable in relation to Russian policy. For people who refuse from Russian passports, there is a great risk of deportation from their place of residence.

MEANS

For the war in Ukraine, the RF has used all military commands/districts: Joint Strategic Command «North» – the Northern Military District (headquartered in Severomorsk), including the Northern Fleet; Joint Strategic Command «South» – the Southern Military District (headquartered in Rostov-on-Don), including the Black Sea Fleet and the Caspian Flotilla; the Joint Strategic Command «West» – the Western Military District (headquartered in St. Petersburg), including the Baltic Fleet; the Joint Strategic Command «East» – the Eastern Military District (headquartered in Khabarovsk), including the Pacific Fleet; the Joint Strategic Command «Centre» – the Central Military District (headquartered in Yekaterinburg).

At least six groups of RF troops operate in Ukraine. As of August 2022, Russian groups were concentrated:

1. In the north-east of Kharkiv region – units of the Western Military District of the RF;
2. The Siversk-Lysychansk line – units of the central military district with separate units of the «LDNR»;
3. Izyum-Sloviansk line – separate units of the eastern military district of the RF together with volunteer battalions («dobrobats»);
4. Bakhmut – separate units of the Western Military District of the RF, units of the Wagner PMCs and «LNR»;
5. Avdiivka-Donetsk area – mostly «DNR» units;
6. South (Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions) – units of the southern and eastern military districts of the RF, airborne troops and «Rosgvardia» units.

The organization of groups, army corps or armies operating within a group of forces is flexible. It changes over time and depends on the tasks in a particular period.

From the beginning of the full-scale aggression, the Russian command and control system of the «SVO» in Ukraine was «blurred». All that was clear was that all decisions were made in the Kremlin by one person – Putin. The command and control system itself emerged only in April [14], after the failures of the Russian army to capture Kharkiv and Kyiv, but it was not constant (Table 2). The Kremlin's strategic miscalculations were based on the incompetence of those who had key decision-making

positions in the full-scale offensive against Ukraine, overestimation of the capabilities of the Russian armed forces, and underestimation of the Ukrainian government and society.

The command of Russian troops in Ukraine made many strategic mistakes from the very beginning, as the decision to conduct the «SVO» was made by the political elite, not the military. It seems that the Kremlin was counting on a quick scenario to capture major cities without any resistance.

The high level of centralization of the Russian command hindered decision-making at the tactical and operational levels. Moreover, the command (especially at the tactical level) did not always have a communication with the higher command. The command of Russian troops was further complicated by the fact that some units did not have combat coordination within the battalion tactical groups and brigades.

The formal command system of Russian troops should function through the national defence control centre, the commander of the joint forces (Figure 1), who is fully responsible for the state of the operation.

Theoretically, all Russian forces involved in the «SVO» had a vertical chain of command to the commander of the joint forces, including the regular armed forces of the RF, PMC «Wagner», troops of the «LDNR», «Rosgvardia» (including Chechen forces subordinated to it).

But the real vertical of command was «fragmented» [15], which significantly affected (negatively) the decision-making process and, as a result, created difficulties in communication between different units and branches of the military, limiting joint military efforts, mutual logistical support, and, consequently, operational efficiency.

Given the tendency of Russia's top leadership to directly interfere in military operations, the military chain of command will continue to face challenges.

Conclusions

1. The sense of danger in the RF has been increasingly evident since the beginning of independence. This approach is reflected in the military doctrines of the RF, where with each new stage of military policy formation, the RF identifies specific threats, the focus of which is on the threat from NATO and partner countries.

The synchronization of military and non-military means appears in the 2014 Russian MD as a special characteristic of modern conflicts, which has completely changed the approaches to the use of the Russian armed forces in the traditional format.

Using the danger, the Russian political leadership has expanded the range of tasks of the armed forces and their use. The formation of «security buffer zones» in Transnistria, Georgia, and Ukraine has shown the true security policy of the RF – the formation of zones of influence on the post-Soviet countries, provoking the «West» to take

Table 2

**Russian commanders of the «SVO» since the beginning of the full-scale war in Ukraine
and critical events that influenced their appointment**

A. DVORNIKOV February 24, 2022	G. ZHIDKO June 10 – October 8, 2022	S. SUROVIKIN October 8, 2022 – January 11, 2023	V. GERASIMOV January 11, 2023 – PT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Russian withdrawal from Kyiv region, April 1, 2022 – Deadline to capture Donbas, May 9, 2022 – Russian aggression around Izyum and Kharkiv, May 15, 2022 – Russian capture of Mariupol, May 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Russian capture of Severodonetsk, June 24, 2022 – Russian capture of Lysychansk, July 4, 2022 – Operational pause, July 7–16, 2022 – Kherson counteroffensive, August 29, 2022 – Kharkiv counteroffensive, September 7 – Ukrainian Liberation of Izyum, September 11, 2022 – Russia partial mobilization, September 21, 2022 – Ukrainian Liberation of Lyman, October 1, 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ukrainian liberation of Kherson, November 10, 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Russian offensive ops, February 8, 2023 – Ukraine tactical withdrawal in Bakhmut, March 5, 2023 – Russian deadline to capture Donetsk and Luhansk regions, March 31, 2023 – Bakhmut became a trap for 50,000 Russian troops

concrete actions and unleashing a full-scale war against Ukraine.

2. The application of the «Goals – Ways – Means» model allows us to systematize the current Russian strategy in the spectrum of a full-scale war against Ukraine.

The goals set by the RF tend to change rapidly, on the background of the unsuccessful military campaign against Ukraine, and serve, as practice shows, as a justification of another unsuccessful operation.

Russia has comprehensively demonstrated the ways of implementing its strategy through rhetorical justification of actions in Ukraine, creating panic and moving forward, terrorist actions aimed at intimidating Ukrainian society and destroying everything Ukrainian, and other measures aimed at justifying military actions in Ukraine and annexation of Ukrainian lands.

3. Russia's means for a full-scale war in Ukraine are reduced to the use of the entire military machine of the RF, the management strategy of which is imperfect, as evidenced by the changes in the leadership of the «SVO» command in Ukraine. This trend may continue in the future, considering the direct interference of the Russian

political leadership and special services in the course of the war against Ukraine.

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