



## **Ukraine Rocked By Corruption Scandal, Germany Sends Billions More to Zelensky w/ John Helmer**

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**Dimitri Lascaris (DL):** Good afternoon, this is Dimitri Lascaris coming to you from Montreal, Canada, for Reason2Resist on November 16th, 2025. In recent days, the Ukrainian regime of Volodymyr Zelensky has been rocked by a huge corruption scandal. The scandal has erupted at the worst possible time for Ukraine's leadership because all along the front line in the war against Russia, Russian forces are accelerating their advance deeper into Ukrainian territory. The heavily fortified towns of Pokrovsk and Kupiansk appear to have fallen to Russian forces. And in the Zaporizhzhia region, Ukrainian defenses seem to be in full-blown collapse. Could the end be nearer for Volodymyr Zelenskyy?

Now here to discuss these developments with us is John Helmer, a frequent guest on Reason2Resist. John is the longest continuously serving foreign correspondent in Russia, and the only Western journalist to direct his own bureau, independent of national commercial ties. Born and educated in Australia, then at Harvard, John has also been a professor of political science, sociology, and journalism, and an advisor to governments. He's published numerous books, including his latest *Long Live Novichok!: The British poison which fooled the world*. Thank you for coming back onto our program, John.

**John Helmer (JH):** Thank you for inviting me, Dimitri. Good to be back.

**DL:** So, John, this past Monday, Ukraine's National Anti-Corruption Bureau, or NABU, launched raids on the premises of Ukrainian officials who are suspected of involvement in a major corruption scheme in Ukraine's energy sector. And the raids, we are told, were the culmination of a 15-month investigation in which NABU collected thousands of hours of audio recordings. And a prime suspect in this investigation is a person I had never heard of before. His name is Timur Mindich, described here by a Ukrainian media outlet as "Zelensky's secretive associate at the center of a major corruption scandal". And I thought

we'd start by talking about this person's involvement in the scheme and more broadly about the scheme itself. What do we know about the allegations and who is Timor Mindich?

**JH:** Well, you began very helpfully by calling this a scandal that's rocking the Zelensky regime. I prefer to call it a rock and rolling operation, because it's not going to topple Zelensky – let me try to explain several general things that our audience expects of us here because it's not in any of the press, not the Ukrainian press, not in the American podcasters. The first thing to understand about this is that yes, it's about a corruption scheme in which Timur Mindich, a long associate and business partner of Volodymyr Zelensky and some of his associates. Alexander Zuckerman is one of them. The two of them have now fled to Israel, one of the things that's being left out of all the Western press.

The first thing to understand about this is that it's small, small chicken feed corruption by Ukrainian standards. It's a hundred million dollars worth of corrupt contracting with Energoatom, one of the state energy entities with acute commissions of 10 to 15 %. That's kind of modest by Ukrainian standards. Kick back to a group of people, if you divide \$100 million into approximately 10 million conspirators, you've only got 10 million apiece. This is very small by Ukrainian standards. By Ukrainian standards – I covered from 2014 to about 2017, the litigation over the massive diversion of IMF, European Union and World Bank monies through the Ukrainian central bank into banks like Ihor Kolomoisky's PrivatBank. That was billions of dollars, billions and billions of dollars. And that didn't topple anybody. There was no fundamental change of either the Poroshenko regime or that it had no contribution to the Zelensky succession. So first of all, there's small chicken corruption.

Second, it's aimed to knock off some parts of the Zelensky regime, and it's coming from a very limited range of sources. They are primarily driven by the United States government. NABU, the detective investigators, and the other one, the prosecutor's group, which is called SAPO [Specialized Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office], the prosecution group, were long financed by USAID, George Soros, and now a Czech oligarch called Tomáš Fiala. This is an operation designed to damage Zelensky and replace him with Petro Poroshenko, the former president. But for all of the talk of anti-corruption here, there's been no pro-peace demonstration whatsoever. This is a scandal intended to keep Ukraine fighting against Russia and keep drawing funds out of the United States, out of the European Union, out of Germany, as we'll talk about later. So one, it's small by Ukrainian standards. Two, it is only anti-corruption limited to a small number of people in Zelensky's circle. It's not in any respect a pro-peace operation.

The third thing about it is the way it's been covered in the Western press. If our audience picks up the London Financial Times today, they will see that the story covered is by three individuals, one of them is a very recent addition to the FT's KIA bureau, who has been working for the French. He's called a freelance journalist. Freelance journalists in war zones are never journalists exactly. But they don't rely on their coverage on anyone directly involved in Ukrainian politics. Their sources are political scientists, political commentators, and anti-corruption activists. In other words, the FT is relying for sourcing of this scandal on

the sources of the political opposition to Zelensky. The New York Times does exactly the same. Andrew Kramer, who was the dopest member of The New York Times Moscow Bureau for years and years – he still owes me a lot of meals that he invited me to attend while he tried to shake me down for information – Andrew's been there since 2014. That's a lot of years, and he doesn't know anybody in the middle of this scandal. Nobody! I mean, The Guardian, which is another maniacally pro-Ukrainian, pro-war against Russia publication in London, doesn't even run the details of this story. It wants to bury it and bury it under statements from the Zelensky Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko and others promising the audits and cleanup.

In other words, the way in which the press is handling this is to keep the war going with Russia, which is pretty much the way the Ukrainians are handling it. That all said, I'd like to recommend that everybody understand there is good coverage in the Ukraine. I don't follow Ukrainian politics closely enough anymore to contribute the fine detail that you asked me about, but I can recommend a website called Events In Ukraine. Events In Ukraine is a Substack by a person calling himself Peter Korotaev, K-O-R-O-T-A-E-V, a Russian name, unlikely to be his real name, maybe the name of a group. It's very well written. It's intimately informed, and it understands the way this particular operation has been organized by Mindich, Ihor Kolomoisky, who was his former sponsor, who was the father of the young woman that Mindich was going to marry but didn't, and so on.

To understand this stuff, it's basic politics. You've got to know who's related to who, who sleeps with who. Everybody's Jewish in this particular conspiracy, almost everybody, certainly starting with Mindich and Zuckerman and Zelensky and Kolomoisky. As we said, Mindich and Zuckerman have fled to Israel, whether they'll be extradited back to the Ukraine is another matter. So you've got to know who the "Mishpocha" is, the Yiddish term. You want to know the Russian term, it's "Tusovka". Who is the network here? You have to know the geography. Most of these people started in Dnipropetrovsk, which is where Kolomoisky ended up as governor in the Poroshenko administration. And fundamentally, you have to know how to make money, how to lose money, how to steal money. This is what this is about. So money, family, and geography are what these things are about. If you're not Jewish in the Ukraine, you can't know exactly how the money's made.

And Korotaev does a very good job of laying all this out. Yes, there are parts of the reporting he does, which exaggerates the importance. Ukrainians always exaggerate their importance. We all know that. They think they're the center of the world. They always have, especially the fascists in Lvov, especially the Azovists. Their mission, their mentality is that they lead the world to a kind of resurrection over the destruction of the Slavs and so on and so on and someone won't go into that. But there's an exaggeration there about the significance of these individuals of the stealing they've done. I've explained that it's chicken feed by Ukrainian standards. And it doesn't understand some of the fundamental business operations. We can go into some of them that they've tried to analyze. But Mindich is a relatively small businessman who's got relatively big in Ukrainian politics by his closeness to [Zelensky]. And now maybe, and there's strong indications this might be going on, Ihor Kolomoisky, who Zelensky's put in

prison, may be helping his enemies destroy Mindich in order to spring him out of jail. But that's all inside baseball, you might say, inside the Mishpocha, inside the Tusovka. And those of us who are outside have got to admit, we can't know exactly what's going on.

**DL:** John, back in 2022, at a time when Zelensky was being treated as a rock star throughout the West, including especially here in Canada with a very large Ukrainian community. I authored a long piece about him titled *The Churchillian Zelensky is a Western Fiction*. And in it, I talked about his relationship to Kolomoisky, the fact that Zelensky's private holdings or certain of them had been revealed to some degree in the Pandora papers – I think this was before 2020 – and that during the campaign when he ran to be president, his opponents alleged that \$41 million from Kolomoisky entities found its way between 2012 and 2016 into offshore firms belonging to Zelensky and his circle.

Kolomoisky, as you indicated, is Israeli-Ukrainian. I recall reading reports in the Ukrainian media back in 2022, that when he was running to be president, Zelensky traveled frequently to Israel, apparently.

**JH:** And Geneva, yes.

**DL:** Right. And as you indicated, the Western reporting on this Mindich character has been quite guarded. I found article after article which said that he was tipped off and fled the country, Mindich, hours before these raids began on November 10th. But almost nobody wanted to say where he fled to. You had to look really hard to find out that it was Israel. So all of these connections, these corruptions. Can you tell us a little more about Kolomoisky and his history, the role that he played in the ascent of Volodymyr Zelensky and whether you think ultimately justice will be meted out to Kolomoisky or is this all just a kind of scam?

**JH:** I mean, this is a war, and in the end, the winners will inflict on the losers certain punishments. Let me make a bigger point and then come back to the valuable questions you've just asked. Let's ask: what's the lesson from whatever's going on? And I think we do understand what's going on, on the way the end of the war settlement could be negotiated. And the first thing we could say is when you look at these people fighting, and you're right to begin, this is triggered by the collapse of the army along the front, but no military individual, not even a Minister of Defense or a former Minister of Defense, whose corruption is also huge, is involved yet in this. So there's no sign that the general staff is collapsing. There's no sign of anyone approaching capitulation on the civilian side. There is no sign that any of these people biting each other's nether parts have agreed to negotiate on any terms.

In fact, when you look at it, this is an object lesson in why the Ukrainians won't and can't come to any form of terms of negotiation with the Russian side, right? There's nothing here of people against them or among themselves that indicates readiness to negotiate on any set of terms, let alone the Russian ones. There's no readiness of any of them to leave Kiev, leave Ukraine, except a new form of government. Poroshenko has proposed some sort of new government of national unity to fight on. Okay, so here we have Kolomoisky, who founded

PrivatBank with Gennadiy Bogolyubov and others, who fought ferociously to establish himself as the leading oligarch in Ukrainian mining, minerals processing, iron ore – all sorts of mining enterprises. And banking enterprises. Including the fight that he had with Victor Pinchuk.

One of the ways in which I was able to cover what was happening inside the Ukraine was that Kolomoisky and Bogolyubov were litigating in London against Victor Pinchuk. Victor Pinchuk also owns a bank, also has promoted the war through the Yalta, I forgotten, it's the YES, the Yalta something-or-other something-er-other [Yalta European Strategy], which has brought together every year the luminaries in the West who support war against Russia, led by Chrystia Freeland, one of the frequent attenders in the Yalta seminar each year and one of the regular people who pocketed Victor Pinchuk's money.

Because Kolomoisky and Bogolyubov fought Pinchuk, Pinchuk fought them, and Pinchuk stole money out of the Russian insurance system and so on and so on. All of this tumbled into the court records in London, and I was able to pick up the court records and talk to the individuals involved. Once they stopped fighting each other, the records of what they were doing to each other disappeared. So Mr. Akhmetov, for example, the surviving steel making, coal making, mining oligarch of eastern Ukraine and the controller of one of the major electric power utilities, doesn't talk very much. He's got a nice house in London or a beautiful apartment at the top of Knightsbridge. He doesn't talk and he doesn't litigate outside the country. So the record keeping comes back to individuals who were Ukrainian like Korotaev to sort it all out.

I think one could say that the Mindich scandal is part of Kolomoisky's revenge for being put in jail by Zelensky. Why is he in jail? Because the Americans got sick of Kolomoisky. When Kolomoisky began to say "it's bad for all of us, bad for business to keep fighting against Russia. A well-losing", said Ihor Kolomoisky. "A well-losing". This is the man who helped start and fund the Azov battalions that took up much of the original fighting in Mariupol, as you know and as you've documented. Kolomoisky came to the conclusion pretty early on that there had to be a negotiated settlement, otherwise Ukraine would lose and lose and lose. In other words, Kolomoisky got the common sense idea that the sooner Ukraine came to terms, the better. The Americans, particularly the Nuland-Blinken-Biden gang, didn't want that. And they put immense pressure on Zelensky to get rid of, as he did, Ihor Kolomoisky. So Kolomoisky is in jail and is now happily reading about the miseries inflicted on some of the people with whom he was associated in business and who've broken away from him and are helping themselves to stealing from his old businesses.

I think that's enough said about how they fight each other and bite each other so long as we don't lose the main point here. These people, leaving Kolomoisky aside, don't want to negotiate with Russia. Everything they do, their bank accounts, their palaces inside Ukraine, their offshore toys, their offshore assets, everything depends on keeping the war going so they can go on stealing. So if Ukraine is unready for negotiations, this corruption scandal proves that it doesn't prove anything else. It proves they can't reach an accommodation

among themselves. What should Russia do? Answer. Answer. Very clear. Turn their lights off. Make sure that the toilet, whether it's a golden toilet or a plastic white one, or whatever the toilet is, doesn't flush because there's no electricity to pump water and control the sewage systems of the Ukraine or Lvov. This is a case for saying to, in the Kremlin, President Putin, take off all restrictions on the electric wall. It's not enough that the Ukrainians are now facing a choice in the east, Kharkov to Odessa, along the front. It's not enough that they face the choice between having their electric lights on or their heat off. That's the electric wall campaign that's been escalating, that President Putin has authorized be sustainable now is concentrated on the contact line in the East – we're talking cardinal directions from a Ukrainian point of view – in the East along the lines.

In the West however these people are fighting to keep the war going so why is there any form of restriction? Why are they allowed to move in and out by train or by car or by bus to Poland the way Mindich got out. Answer – why not? And second, if the Ukrainians are unready for negotiation, what to make of the American view? I mean, we've heard President Trump say maybe they have to fight it out a bit longer. Is that an invitation for Russia to finish it off more quickly? And what is the White House view of this corruption scandal? Do they really want to press a new Ukrainian regime to negotiate? Because that's not what Poroshenko wants. And Poroshenko appears out of all of this to be the US candidate for a succession. There's no sign of MI6 in this scandal.

**DL:** As I recall back in 2022, I think it was shortly after the invasion or shortly before, Zelensky's regime charged Poroshenko with corruption.

**JH:** Yes.

**DL:** There was quite a bit of pressure put on Zelensky, as I recall, by then-Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the arch-Neocon serving under him, Chrystia Freeland, pressure put on Zelensky to drop the charges or at least not to pursue them because they were concerned this was going to be embarrassing. It's like the entire political elite of this country is mired one way or another in mutual recrimination for grand corruption. I just have one little question for you to detail, but I'm curious about this, John, back in 2022 as I recall by which time Kolomoisky had been charged by US law enforcement with a multi-billion dollar bank fraud. He was more or less hiding out in Israel. And the American government put some kind of meek sanctions on him, travel sanctions or something. But they didn't seem to be applying any particular pressure on the Israelis to hand Kolomoisky over. And I'm curious how he ended up in a Ukrainian jail cell after apparently seeking sanctuary in Israel. Was he lured back to the country with false promises or something? Was he forced by the Israelis to return to Ukraine? What happened?

**JH:** I don't know. My sources have run out by then. The background is that Israel has a policy that it does not extradite Jewish people who hold Israeli citizenship and an Israeli passport. Ihor Kolomoisky has lived in Cyprus. He had a Cyprus passport. He lived in Geneva and his family lived on the French side of the Switzerland-French border. And he's

lived in Israel. My understanding always was it was a big inconvenience to live in Israel for him and boring, boring, and that he didn't like living there. This is a man who's probably intellectually far superior to a lot of the others and he doesn't appear, apart from his well-known eccentricities – a shark tank in his office in Dnipropetrovsk, if I'm not mistaken. He's not been as, let's say, as concerned to have palaces, airplanes, yachts, and toys like most other Russian and Ukrainian oligarchs have. This one loves business. This one loves making money. And he's made a great deal of it. I don't know the circumstances in which he was – first, I can tell you, he did lose his Swiss residency under US pressure. He did lose confidence that he could stay in Cyprus and he did need to run from Ukraine when he was threatened with jailing before. Why he was brought back, what guarantees lured him back, how uncomfortable he is in prison – all of these things, I don't know. They're good questions, I just don't know the answers.

**DL:** So, on a related note, as all of this sordid business was unfolding before the eyes of the world, the German government, for some befuddling reason, decided at this very moment to announce that it was increasing its military aid to Ukraine, to the equivalent of \$13 billion, that would be for 2026. Here you see the German defense minister or minister of war, Boris Pistorius, making the announcement. One would have thought that at a moment when international attention is fixated on corruption in Ukraine yet again, and when your economy is in the toilet as the German economy is, it might not be a good time to be announcing that you're going to be spending some 13 billion US dollars on supporting this disastrous proxy war next year. What do you make of this announcement, and particularly its timing? Is this just political stupidity, or are they trying to shore up Zelensky at a moment when he seems particularly vulnerable politically? Or is there nothing at all to infer from the timing of this?

**JH:** Well, first of all, what it isn't: Some US podcasters insist that Germany, France, England, and the UK and the others are a coalition of the brain dead. Any notion that these people are brain dead, silly, stupid, foolish, is utterly wrong. The politics of this are quite different. The politics of this are simply that under Chancellor Merz, the German economy is being so-called "revived" by the substitution of the old German engineering and manufacturing industries that needed Russian energy. They're being replaced by the arms makers by Rheinmetall, by Diehl, by HENSOLDT, and by the others to make Germany the biggest military power in Europe except for Russia. And Merz's policy is to rearm Germany, to build a domestic constituency, a business constituency for himself and to keep his party in power by continuing war against Russia. For the time being Ukraine is the platform. When Ukraine disappears, as it will, Germany will go on rearming and extend its influence into Poland, the Baltic states, Finland, the Scandinavian states up to the Arctic. And German intention is the old Hitler one of rearming, reviving the economy, building political support and national identity support behind this program. That's what they're doing. That's why it makes sense. They're not stupid. They may be headed for a massive form of new defeat. After all, they're there by destroying their own gas supply, by going to war against Russia, by participating as indubitably they did in the destruction of Nord Stream. They have changed the nature of the German economy, which is put in the toilet exactly as you said, Dimitri, and that's right.

But Merz's political domestic strategy is different. It's to be based on rearmament. I'm just flipping over the papers I've assembled to answer your question so I can ask our audience to understand that there are plenty of Germans who make money at this and who see their interest in continuing the war. For example, Rheinmetall is a very big arms builder in Germany, whose share price is up 60% for this year alone. But since the war started against Russia in 2022, it's up 4.5 times. That's its share price. Rheinmetall is the biggest beneficiary of the budget increases for military spending you just mentioned. You asked about timing. The timing is that the new 2026 budget must pass through the German parliament and it's just had committee endorsement so it's heading for a Bundestag vote soon. The timing is the new defense budget for 2026 has to be approved soon.

So what we have is a Merz model which is to increase borrowing beyond the old German budget limitations by keeping defense out of the budget limitation rule that German budget making has had constitutionally for many years. Make defense the driver of political revival for Merz's CDU party, Christian Democratic Union party, turn him from being a very weak minority prime minister into what he would hope to be a majority chancellor. Good luck to him on that one, because it's unlikely to succeed and do it all with the notion that Germany is going to be the biggest military power in Europe against Russia. It has to be against Russia, so Merz leads that model.

Second, there's the Trump model. The Trump model is get the, let's say, the domestic constituencies of Europe to agree to 5% increase, 5% of the GDP of each country, to be spent on defense, then by most of that increased budget spending on procurement from US arms builders, Lockheed, Boeing, and many others, and transfer that equipment into whatever battlefield's going on, whether it's the Ukraine today, or it'll be somewhere else along the northern front against Russia. But it'll always be against Russia. So the Trump model is that the US will get rich supplying the German and NATO allies' increase. That's the Trump model. And that is going to happen too.

Though most, I've got papers in front of me and I'm deluged with papers so I can ask those of you who disagree with me or want better evidence than I can offer by scrambling for papers in front the camera, go to *Dances with Bears* and I'll follow up with all the evidence you need to see to find whether I'm something accurate or inaccurately. Rheinmetall – share price up 205% over the last three years – is the principal beneficiary of this money, about 48 % according to the stuff I'm looking at, of Germany's 377 billion euro rearmament program. About 40 %, let's call it half, is going into Germany. A relatively small amount is going to foreign US-led arms builders. So Rheinmetall's first, second is Diehl, a privately owned family owned business that makes air defense missiles. ThyssenKrupp is another one, another whopping share price increase. It produces the turrets on German tanks, which can't resist a Russian attack, but that's another story. It uses naval weapons, submarines, corvettes, ships, as well as artillery. And a company called HENSOLDT, which makes electronics radar and ECM. The ones who are share listed are all enjoying booms – that means not only are their workforces increasingly expanding, the neighborhoods are expanding, the votes are gaining in mass, but the shareholders in these arms firms are getting dividends out of borrowing. This



is what the American arms builders are doing. The military boom against Russia provides dividends to shareholders that haven't been earned. They have to be borrowed. In other words, shareholders are getting bribed by borrowing against a wall that won't stop. So that's the brains, if you want to call them that, of German rearmament and NATO's 5% increase.

**DL:** Now, your comments about the intellectual acumen of Europe's political elite might not extend or be applicable to the leadership of Estonia. And one of the reasons why I say that is that the Estonian government recently announced it was going to close the border with Belarus. The only problem with this is that Estonia doesn't have a border with Belarus. That's not what I wanted to ask you about, in particular, when it comes to Estonia. What I wanted you to ask about was an article, a very interesting article, which you just published on *Dances with Bears*. And in this article, you talk about a paper that has been leaked, which critiques the way in which Estonia's relatively massive military budget is being expended. And what you said about it really caught my eye. You described this as, quote, "the greatest boondoggle in the history of Estonia since the country pinned its hopes on Adolf Hitler and German military investment between 1941 and 1944". I'm very curious to know why you said that.

**JH:** Right. Well, again, I have to plead, I can't remember all the details to answer all the questions. So anyone who wants to disagree with me, and you're welcome, I'm bound to be making lots of mistakes, go to the *Dances with Bears* article and look at the Estonian evidence. The Estonian hatred for Russia was one of the reasons that Estonia welcomed the German occupation during World War II and attempted with US and British support and allied and NATO support to resist the Soviet occupation and then to develop independence since the breakup of the Soviet Union, to develop Estonia as another war platform against Russia. That's a doctrine accepted by most of the political parties in Estonia, and certainly there again you have a weak ruling coalition of conflict parties in conflict with one another. I'll defer to any expert on Estonia out in the audience to correct me if I've made mistakes in the *Dances with Bears* article or in our discussion now. So let's try to avoid small errors and get to the big truths here.

The big truth is that the Estonian political elite sees war with Russia as potentially more profitable, than it was trading oil and laundering money from Russia, which is how Estonia began to boom during the Yeltsin period. Sanctions have cut all of that off, so Estonia has to replace the fortunes of those elites who benefited from the trading of Russian commodities, Russian oil, Russian seagoing cargoes through Estonia, or truck and rail cargoes going through Estonia up to the export world. That all has to be replaced, and it's being replaced by military procurement. The leaks that have come into public knowledge based on two things, a national audit office report on the mishandling of military spending in that country and a report by a parliamentary committee, a multi-party committee on essentially the operations of two civilian-led agencies who have taken over contracting defense procurement, military spending to pursue Estonian strategy. Hundreds of millions of euros of Estonian budget money have been wasted, lost. You could say in the truck of Estonian defense spending, vast sums have fallen off the truck into private hands. And Estonian voters have been very upset about that and caused the the demise, politically speaking, of Kaja Kallas, the Prime Minister,

who was bundled off to become foreign minister of the European Union where she sits today, spewing some of the most virulent anti-Russian hatred that has come from the European union's foreign ministry office. But there she is as a penalty for domestic policies that are pauperizing a great number of Estonian voters.

**DL:** So she was basically promoted for failure, in other words.

**JH:** Well, yes.

**DL:** I would think that being the foreign policy honcho of the EU is a somewhat more prestigious posting than being the prime minister of such a tiny country. No offense intended of course to her.

**JH:** We're not intending to cause any offense to anyone except those who wish to cover their mistakes by stealing from their domestic population and spending it on the racist fantasy of Russia threatening the world and threatening themselves. That's a smoke screen, it's a camouflage, it is an ideology everybody in our audience is familiar with. And you do a great job, Dimitri, day by day, to expose the nature of the lies. Basically, the Estonian model is what we've just described as a German model. It's to steal and enrich your local elites for your failure of a domestic economy, to recover from the damage you've done by sanctioning Russia, which was as an economic partner, your best bet to have peaceful economic growth. Now you must have war-driven economic growth, but that's highly concentrated. And in social class terms very limited in its benefits.

**DL:** Now, if our audience hasn't appreciated it yet, the main theme of our program today is that we continue to be lied to relentlessly about the Ukraine war and all things associated with it. And this brings us to a minor scandal, but one that is Ukraine-related nonetheless here in Canada. A reporter by the name of David Pugliese came under attack not too long ago from a Canadian right-wing politician who is fanatical in his devotion to Ukraine and the proxy war. And this politician's name is Chris Alexander. Now, Pugliese works for a newspaper called the Ottawa Citizen. And by the standards of Canadian reporting has done some rather intrepid and enlightening reporting into Canadian military activities in Ukraine.

And here is an at least widely known to the anti-imperialist constituency here in Canada, an article that he wrote back in 2022, so this was early on in the proxy war. And you'll see that he's talking there about revelations which he first disclosed to the Canadian public, as I recall, that the [Canadian] military was training Neo-Nazis in Ukraine. And when this became known to the public, thanks to David, I believe it was essentially thanks to David's reporting that that became known, the Canadian military, rather than apologize for this, launched introspectively into analysis of how this came to be known to the Canadian public. And they didn't seem to have any interest whatsoever in addressing the core criticism, which is why is Canada's military training Neo-Nazis anywhere?

In any case, as you and I discussed or we had an exchange of emails about this, John, the Ottawa Citizen is one of the newspapers in the media empire of a company called Postmedia, which is the largest newspaper publisher in Canada. And I don't think any objective observer would contest, knowing the history of post media, that it is rabidly neoconservative. And so it's always been amazing to me that David is able to maintain a job at Postmedia. But at the same time, I have to say that from the perspective of people like yourself and the kinds of critics we hear in the alternative media, when they talk about the Ukraine war, David has been pretty restrained. So by the standards of the corporate media he has been quite bold in exposing some of the naughtiness that we've been engaged in in Ukraine. But by the standards of independent media, I don't think he's been particularly aggressive. And to be fair to David, he's operating in a very hostile environment. In any case, it has just been revealed that this character, Chris Alexander, was using forged KGB documents to level the accusation against David. And as I understand, I think you indicated you actually know David personally. What do you make of this scandal? And one thing I'm particularly interested in, do we know where these forged KGV documents came from? Do we have any idea?

**JH:** I have no idea whether the investigation of the forgeries that Christopher Alexander used was covered by parliamentary immunity, by the way, he refused to say anything outside his parliamentary immunity for fear of being sued. Christopher Alexander I knew when he was a junior diplomat in the Canadian Embassy in Moscow and would regularly attend the annual summer Lobster Feast, and all the other Canadian celebrations that I was very glad to be invited to, speaking with an accent like mine. And he didn't show any signs of serious madness that he has picked up as he's become moved from a diplomatic career. Arguably because his diplomatic career wasn't advancing as fast or as high as he expected or hoped for. And the joviality, cordiality, and openness that Christopher Alexander showed when he was a diplomat in Moscow turned into the rabid Russia-hating, war-making member of parliament, which is what he's become. So I assume that his madness is related to his political ambition.

That's about all I understand, except that, as you pointed out, Dimitri, his political madness led him to publish forgeries under immunity of Parliament to accuse a working journalist of things that David Pugliese didn't do, didn't have, didn't think. But I'm glad you put it in context especially for our Canadian audience, but for all of our audiences who understand that these are the distortions of media coverage of warfighting against Russia these days. On the one hand, the serious investigative journalists in Canada start with you, Dimitri, Chris Cook of Gorilla Radio, Yves Engler, and others. Pardon me for not identifying them all because I don't know their names, but our audience understands who they are.

On the other side, the mainstream media have people like Robert Fife, the Ottawa chief of the Toronto Globe and Mail, who's been a booster of Chrystia Freeland, of the war against Russia, of the Ukraine takeover of Canada's foreign policy and budget. Fife has led that, as has his newspaper the Globe and Mail. And you've pointed to the way in which Postmedia have done the same. So here's David Pugliese trying to do an honest job in an atmosphere that's extremely hostile to anything like the truth. What he's had to do as a defense correspondent is follow the stories that he's gotten out. He also did a story about Trevor

Cadieu, C-A-D-I-E-U, who lost his position as head of the Canadian defense staffs because of the allegation of rape that he and another colleague had committed years before when they were in military cadet school. Cadieu lost his nomination and disappeared last seen assisting the Ukrainian military plan to fight Russia in the Ukraine. David did some of the investigation and some of the reporting. He didn't do all of it. And he wasn't able or willing to go further to identify where Cadieu had gone in the Ukraine and why he essentially got off the court case accusing him of sexual offenses against women.

At the same time, David did report, as did other Canadian mainstream journalists, the involvement in sexual crimes by lots of senior Canadian officers at general ranking, admiral ranking. You remember their names better than I do. So what was problematic, and let's look at the general picture here, what was possible for David Pugliese to report is that there was a misogyny, a sexually abusive character, to the way in which Canada's most senior military commanders behaved. Behaved as cadets, behaved as junior officers, behaved throughout their careers. Their sexual criminality was reportable, but not their commitment to the US-led war against Russia. And the degree to which the senior levels of the Canadian foreign ministry and the Canadian military staffs were occupied by Ukrainians, Canadians of Ukrainian descent who continued to hold the Russia-hating doctrines that reached the level of the deputy prime minister when Chrystia Freeland was in that position, not any longer. So what David Pugliese has done is, as you said, the limits of what he was allowed to do in the mainstream. Whereas you, Engler, Cook, and many others, have tried to do it outside the mainstream. Who's paid the greatest sacrifice personally in their families, in their careers? There's no doubt. Those who oppose the madness of Canada going to war against Russia and China too. Those who've opposed it have suffered most.

**DL:** Now, you mentioned a bunch of interesting characters and organizations there, John. I thought I'd share with you and our audience something relevant to all of this. You talked about the Globe and Mail, Robert Fife, Stephen Chase, and so forth. You may be interested to know the following. Just by way of background, Yves Engler, author and activist, is currently running to be the leader of Canada's nominally social democratic party, the New Democratic Party. And because of his intense and decades long critique of Canadian foreign policy and militarism, he has come under withering attack from the corporate media and right-leaning pundits who desperately want to see him excluded from the NDP leadership race. So we're going to find out in the next few days because he just applied to be formally approved as a candidate, whether they'll allow him to run. He would undoubtedly be the most outspoken critic of foreign policy in the race, were he allowed to participate and would say things that no other mainstream political candidate is prepared to say, for example, that Canada should get the hell out of NATO.

And so it was in this context that I received an email. I've actually received several emails from a reporter at the Globe and Mail by the name of Marie Woolf. And Marie Woolf is doing some reporting on Yves running to be the leader of the NDP. And she's been asking me some curious questions. By the way, she reached out to me not only because she knows that Yves and I have worked together and we're friends and so forth, but also because I have

formally endorsed Yves' run to be leader of the NDP. And I'm going to show you an email she sent me a few days ago seeking information from me.

Now, unfortunately the print is a little bit small, but I'm going to read it to you just in case you can't make it out: "Hi Dimitri, I'm getting in touch as Yves Engler has applied to join the leadership race and wondered if you had anything additional to say since I last contacted you. Also, could I just ask why you attended the funeral of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in Lebanon? It was not without controversy given that Hezbollah is a banned terrorist group in Canada. And I noticed that, like Yves Engler, you have written for Global Research. A 2020 US State Department report on Russia's disinformation and propaganda ecosystem alleged, quote, 'it has become deeply enmeshed in Russia's broader disinformation and propaganda ecosystem', close quote. Were you aware of its alleged ties to Russia?" So those were her questions to me.

Now, I'm not going to show you the response because it was quite lengthy, But I can summarize it for you. On the question of my attendance at the funeral of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah. I said several things, like: First of all, I'm a card-carrying member of the press, or whatever you think of Nasrallah, he was an individual of consequence in the region of West Asia and will undoubtedly be a historically important figure, particularly in Lebanon. But also that I, like most countries in the world, don't agree with the designation of Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. And I think in any event that the Canadian government is constantly manipulating the definition of terrorism to suit the agenda of Washington. For example, and I said this in my response to her, in my opinion, the two worst terrorist entities on God's green earth are the militaries of Israel and the United States. And these are two countries to which we're closely allied. So that was my response there. And then I said to her about Global Research – I don't know if you're familiar with Global Research....

**JH:** Yes, I am. Yeah.

**DL:** So I said to her: "Your question assumes that we should actually attach weight to State Department evaluations of what is and is not propaganda, when the State Department is itself one of the worst propagators of propaganda in the world". And I actually pointed out to her – she seemed to be unaware of this fact, but I brought it to her attention – that not only have I written one or two articles for Global Research, and the last one I wrote was years ago, but that I regularly appear on RT. And I explained to her why and I said no, I'm not paid to do any of this. No one ever puts any constraints on what I can say when I speak to RT. They ask me to discuss issues that I care about and they have a significant audience so that's why I accept their invitations. And I said: "By the way, Robert Fife and Stephen Chase" – I guess they're really the stars of the Globe and Mail certainly when it comes to military matters, foreign policy, they're the big stars of the reporting staff there – "and they recently accepted an award called the Ross Munro Award for Journalism from the Canadian Defense Association, which is a lobby group for military contractors". So that tells you all you need to know about them. In any case, I had to share this with our audience because I thought it was sort of enlightening about how the Canadian media works. There's no question in my mind,

and I showed this email to Yves, he agrees, that there's a hit piece coming and it's going to probably be aimed at both Yves and me. And it won't be the first hit piece we've had to deal with in the corporate media. Anyways, before we move on to the next subject, John, if you have any thoughts about that.

**JH:** Look, I think what you're doing takes guts, and those of the audience who aren't Canadians will recognize that though you don't necessarily know the names and the nature of the fights and the newspaper bylines in the Canadian story, the Canadian story is being repeated all through Europe. Its journalists coming back to crossing the British border to return to England are being intercepted by MI5 and other security police and interrogated and having their phones and computers taken and searched and emptied in an attempt first to investigate whether they've been trucking with the enemy, what they've been doing and to help the security services take whatever these journalists have gotten and manipulate them for the security service's points of view.

The great British deceptions like Novichok with which you began in the reference to the book I wrote about this entire fabrication of a Russian attack on a British city in Salisbury back in 2018. It is not only a lie, but it's a story of how the entire British media have been fooled and frightened and intimidated into accepting state lies that are part of the war against Russia. And there are well-known British journalists, whose names could be mentioned, who've done no more than you, Engler, Cook, and others are doing in Canada. So the Canadian story is an example for all of our audience to look around you in whichever country you're in, Greece, Germany, France, the UK, Australia, New Zealand – wherever you are, the Canadian story is an example of the complete collapse of journalism.

Journalism is a dirty word now because it's so thoroughly penetrated by state money, university money, think tank money, defense contractor money – you name it. Journalism's finished. The famous name in journalism, Rupert Murdoch, the dirty digger, has simply set a standard for media corruption which is pervasive and everyone in our audience in a different country should understand your Canadian story. Our story is the same but that means that there are a few people who are doing their best to tell you the truth, argue with you, except that you don't agree with us, but that's what the Canadian example means. And in some countries, Australia and New Zealand, for example, there's nothing comparable to what you're capable of putting up as resistance in Canada, in the alt-media in the United States, in the alt-media in London, and it gets worse and worse all around Europe. So it's a lot of names you're not familiar with, folks, but the example is right outside your front door.

**DL:** Well, John, always very enlightening and enjoyable to speak with you. I look forward to our next discussion. We've been going for quite some time here, 90 minutes, so we're going to call it a day. And we're coming to you from Montreal, Canada, on November 16th, 2025.

**JH:** Thank you, Dimitri.

**END**

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