

The information war over Ukraine | Columbia Journalism Review

By Jon Allsop

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Late on Saturday night, local time, British government officials published a highly unusual press release under an ultra-clickable headline: “Kremlin plan to install pro-Russian leadership in Ukraine exposed.” The officials went on to do the exposing, claiming to “have information that indicates” the Putin regime’s desire to replace Volodymyr Zelensky, Ukraine’s president, with a puppet, possibly in the person of Yevhen Murayev, a former Ukrainian lawmaker. Some stories in US media relayed the claim more or less uncritically; others noted that the press release did not offer any specifics or evidence; none that I saw emphasized that the British government is in the thick of a COVID-partying scandal from which it might welcome a Putin-shaped distraction (or that Liz Truss, Britain’s cheese-import-skeptical foreign minister, who signed off on the press release, is angling to become prime minister should Boris Johnson fall).

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