

The ongoing information war over Ukraine | Columbia Journalism Review

By Jon Allsop

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Last week, a pair of leaks to the press shined a fresh light on the extent of US assistance to Ukraine in its war against Russia. On Wednesday, Julian E. Barnes, Helene Cooper, and Eric Schmitt, of the *New York Times*, reported, citing “senior American officials,” that the US has provided Ukrainian officials with locational details of Russian movements that they have subsequently combined with their own information and used to target and kill Russian generals—a flow of intelligence, the *Times* wrote, that “has few precedents.” Then, on Thursday, NBC’s Ken Dilanian, Courtney Kube, and Carol E. Lee reported, citing “US officials,” that US intelligence helped Ukrainian officials to locate the Moskva, Russia’s flagship in the Black Sea, which they subsequently sank.

There was speculation, in national-security circles, that the Biden administration planted the pair of stories deliberately in order to humiliate, or otherwise send a message to, Russia, but *Politico*’s Alexander Ward (who had a busy week) and Paul McLeary reported that this was not the case; on the contrary, the leaks sparked an “internal freakout” at the White House.

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