

TIME Magazine Profile Depicts Grim Führerbunker-Stage of Zelensky's Conflict



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The talk of the blogosphere is the new devastating [TIME magazine profile](#) on Zelensky which paints the most grim, 1945 *Führerbunker* portrait of Zelensky yet. Bernhard covers it well [on MoA](#), but I'm going to retread some of the same points to take the analysis into a slightly different direction of anticipating what comes next vis a vis the current political turmoil in the U.S.

NOV. 20, 2023

TIME

‘Nobody believes in
our victory like I do.
Nobody.’

It's been nearly two years.
Russia still controls a fifth of Ukraine's territory.
Tens of thousands have been killed.
Global support for the war is shrinking.

The Lonely Fight of Volodymyr Zelensky

by
SIMON SHUSTER



time.com

<https://time.com/6329188/ukraine-volodymyr-zelensky-interview/>

First let's cover the most salient revelations.

Zelensky admits that the entire world is losing interest in Ukraine, treating it as a TV re-run that's on for the 10th time in a row:

"The scariest thing is that part of the world got used to the war in Ukraine," he says.

"Exhaustion with the war rolls along like a wave. You see it in the United States, in Europe. And we see that as soon as they start to get a little tired, it becomes like a show to them: 'I can't watch this rerun for the 10th time.'"

Members of Zelensky's team say he's lost the "sparkle" he once had, now arriving to give orders then coldly leaving without any fanfare or trivialities. He feels "betrayed" by his "allies," he says.

But that's where the frightening part comes in:

*But his convictions haven't changed. Despite the recent setbacks on the battlefield, he does not intend to give up fighting or to sue for any kind of peace. On the contrary, his belief in Ukraine's ultimate victory over Russia has hardened into a form that worries some of his advisers. It is immovable, **verging on the messianic**. "He deludes himself," one of his closest aides tells me in frustration. "We're out of options. We're not winning. But try telling him that."*

This is the quintessential *Führerbunker* moment.





They go on to say that Zelensky's stubbornness keeps them from discussing the one big taboo subject: ceasefire.

Zelensky very forthrightly admits that if he doesn't get further aid, *Ukraine will lose*:

Instead, on the morning of Sept. 21, Zelensky met in private with **then House Speaker** Kevin McCarthy before making his way to the Old Senate Chamber, where lawmakers grilled him behind closed doors. Most of Zelensky's usual critics stayed silent in the session; Senator Ted Cruz strolled in more than 20 minutes late. The Democrats, for their part, wanted to understand where the war was headed, and how badly Ukraine needed U.S. support. "They asked me straight up: If we don't give you the aid, what happens?" Zelensky recalls. "What happens is we will lose."

In a very revealing paragraph, they admit that not only has the counteroffensive failed and that Zelensky will have to fire the general in charge, but that things have gotten so bad units are no longer even following orders to advance or attack:

The cold will also make military advances more difficult, locking down the front lines at least until the spring. But Zelensky has refused to accept that. "Freezing the war, to me, means losing it," he says. Before the winter sets in, his aides warned me to expect major

*changes in their military strategy and a major shake-up in the President's team. At least one minister would need to be fired, along with a senior general in charge of the counteroffensive, they said, to ensure accountability for Ukraine's slow progress at the front. "We're not moving forward," says one of Zelensky's close aides. **Some front-line commanders, he continues, have begun refusing orders to advance, even when they came directly from the office of the President. "They just want to sit in the trenches and hold the line," he says. "But we can't win a war that way."***

Expanding on this, they recount how the order was given to retake Gorlovka, which was met with frank disbelief on the frontline, urging commanders to ask: *with what?!*

*When I raised these claims with a senior military officer, he said that some commanders have little choice in second-guessing orders from the top. At one point in early October, he said, the political leadership in Kyiv demanded an operation to "retake" the city of Horlivka, a strategic outpost in eastern Ukraine that the Russians have held and fiercely defended for nearly a decade. The answer came back in the form of a question: **With what? "They don't have the men or the weapons," says the officer. "Where are the weapons? Where is the artillery? Where are the new recruits?"***

One interesting aspect to this admission is that some may recall several months ago, around the time of the counteroffensive, I discussed possibilities for vectors here. One thing I specifically mentioned was how Russell "Texas" Bentley was loudly urging the Russian military to send reinforcements to the north Donetsk-Gorlovka area because he felt that the southern Azov direction was just a feint, and the AFU would actually attack to try to retake Donetsk-Gorlovka. It's interesting now to see that perhaps some of his instincts were correct.

But the dreadful article goes on, confessing that the lack of manpower has become so dire for the AFU that even if all the newfangled weapons from the West were to be delivered, Ukraine may no longer even have the men to use them:

In some branches of the military, the shortage of personnel has become even more dire than the deficit in arms and ammunition. One of Zelensky's close aides tells me that even if the U.S. and its allies come through with all the weapons they have pledged, "we don't have the men to use them."

You recall how many videos I've posted recently showing frontline commanders and Ukrainian pundits *specifically* highlighting this? More and more voices have risen

from the ranks of the AFU recently stating that they are flat out running out of men. This included the countless videos explaining how soon the entire population will have to be mobilized, man, woman, and child.

BUSINESS INSIDER | Business Insider

Ukraine official says it can't properly use its Western kit because it has so few soldiers left, report says

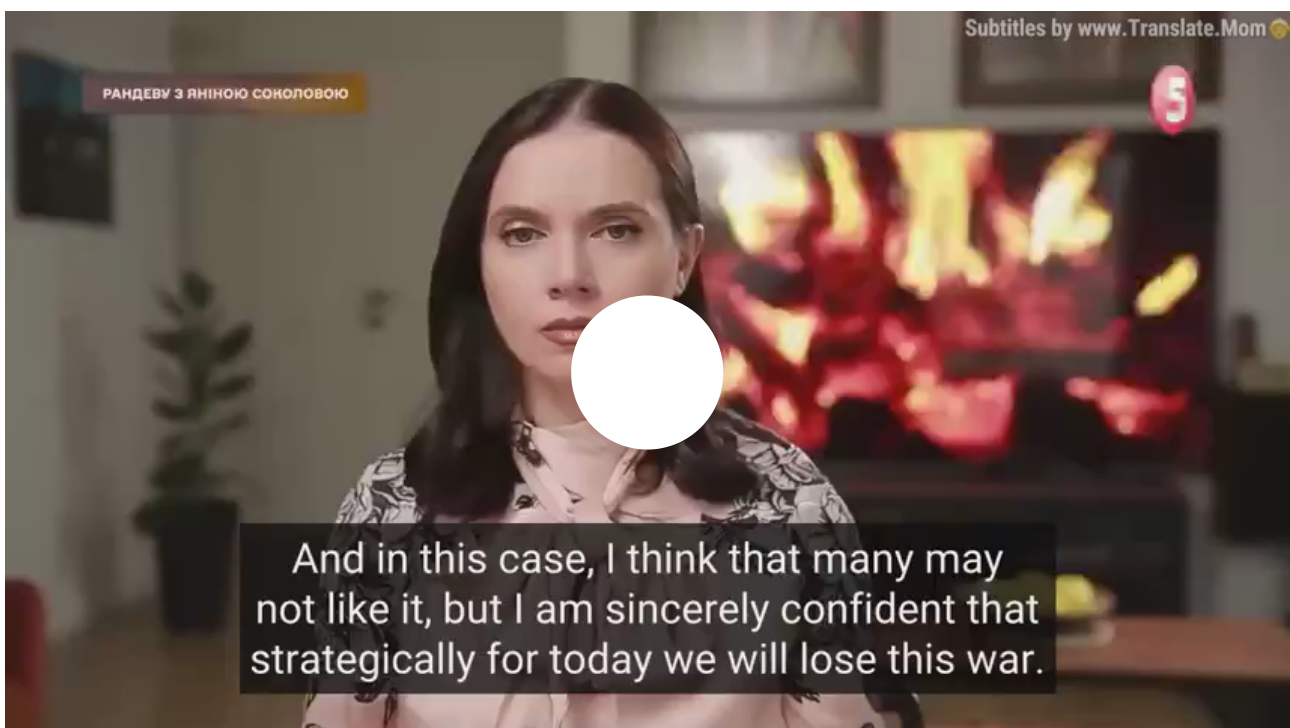
**Thibault Spirlet**

Tue, October 31, 2023 at 11:42 a.m. EDT · 2 min read

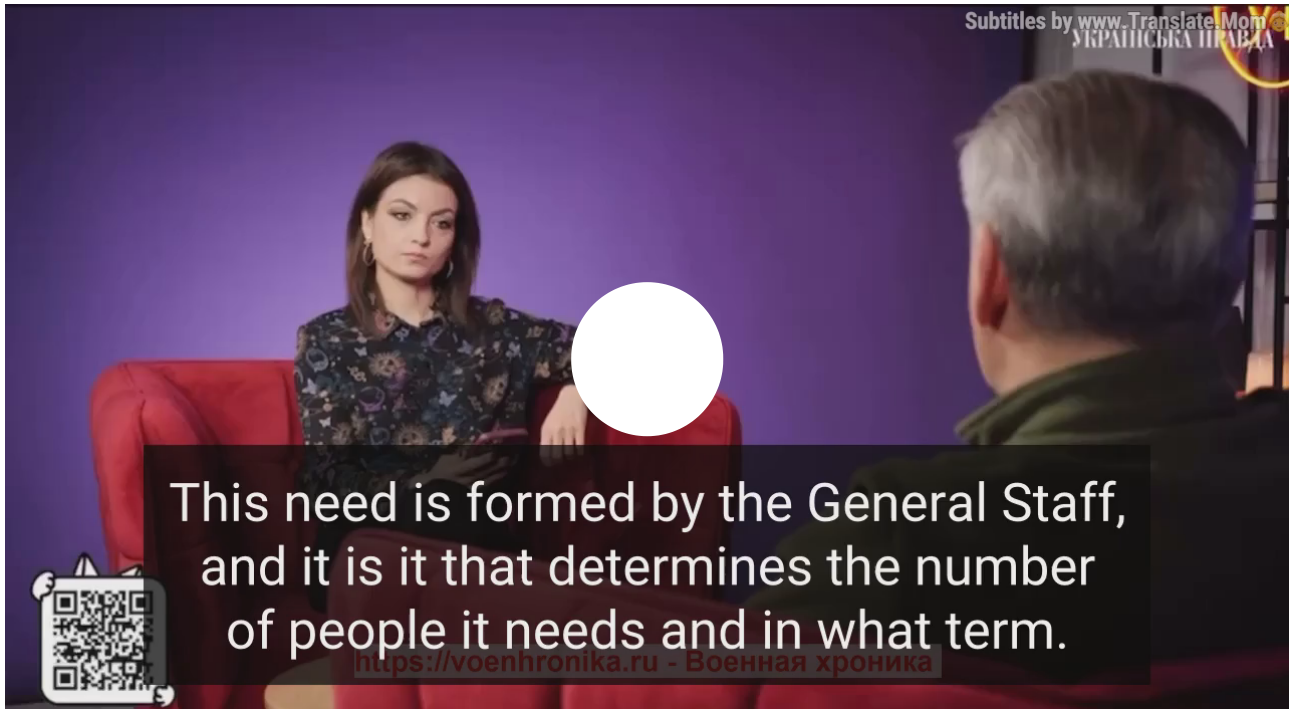
**TRENDING****1.** Tyreek Hill voted the No. 1 w
in AP's NFL Top 50 players

<https://ca.sports.yahoo.com/news/ukraine-official-says-cant-properly-154209789.html>

The most recent of these videos was the commander of the Ukrainian 3rd Assault Brigade, Dmitry Kukharchuk, explaining exactly the hinge point at which Ukraine began to lose the war:



There's even a new video of a Ukrainian official calling for more meat because all the losses have depleted them:



It's something that's been echoed over and over recently by many of the more serious and 'aware' pundits on the Ukrainian side, which I've covered here repeatedly: Ukraine was defeated by its own Western propaganda.

After the very military-strategically brilliant and gutsy move to pullback Russian forces from Kiev last year in order to shorten lines and concentrate all forces in a much smaller area, the Western pro-Ukrainian propaganda mills went into overdrive. They thought Russia was 'on the run' and had hoped that they could deliver a final "finishing blow" by way of propaganda, which would collapse Russian societal morale and lead to some kind of overthrow that would end the SMO.

But these people sadly knew very little about military doctrine or strategy. What Russia did was carry out an absolutely simple and pedantic textbook reorientation of forces with a clear logic. In fact, that moment should have been an extremely *chilling* maneuver for Ukraine. It should have signaled: "Uh oh...this means Russia is *taking its gloves off*." The initial thunder-run on Kiev was merely a brazen attempt to avoid bloodshed and see if the conflict could be ended fast and early. But not having worked, Russian military planners clearly knew that now the entire operation had to be shifted into actual war footing, rather than mere enhanced special operations raid.

Everything changed from that point on. Pro-Ukrainians should have keyed in on this and realized the heavyweight was now removing his gloves. But instead, what they did was run with the propaganda that Russia is a defeated, cowardly, inept, and

completely helpless paper tiger. This propaganda “worked” incredibly well, *too* well—but the problem is, it worked *on the wrong side*.

Instead of convincing Russians of it, it convinced the Ukrainians and Western public that the war had already been won, that Russia could never recover from this brutal “loss” (which was not a loss in the slightest but a strategic maneuver and concentration of forces). Since then, no one in Ukrainian society thought to take the war seriously anymore and Ukraine’s own “rear” end had dropped out, while Russia’s rear in fact throttled up into overdrive, in terms of the galvanization of society to supporting the troops and military machine top to bottom.

Now, the most aware pro-Ukrainian pundits are desperately trying to steer their flock back to rational thinking—but it’s too late.

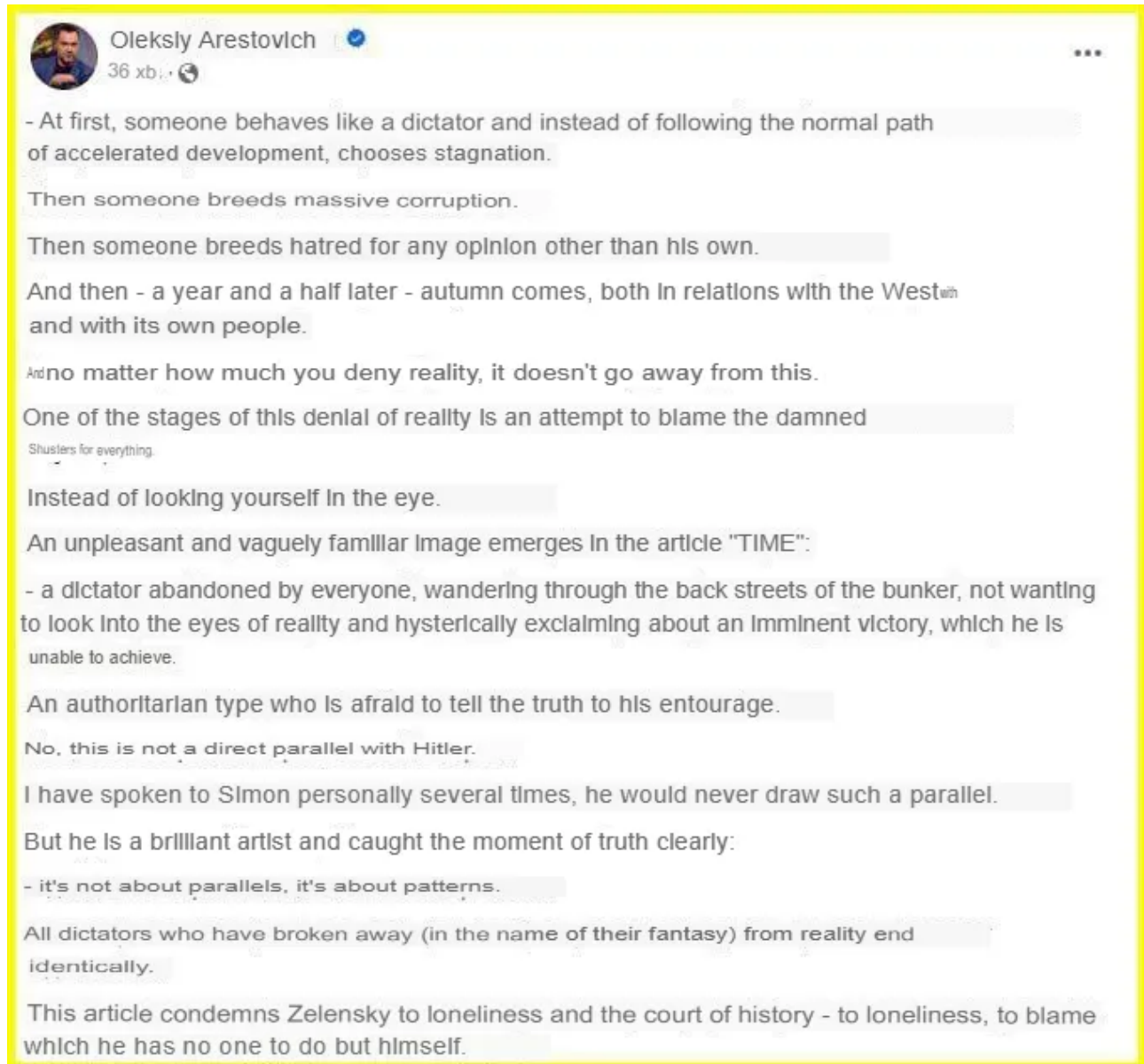
In fact, this will be studied for generations as an example of a massive propaganda fail—a propaganda campaign which destroyed its own side by way of inadequate attenuation and nuanced micromanagement of perceptions. They instead did a brute force method of flooding every which way without concerning themselves with who the propaganda was actually negatively affecting.

I’ve posted videos for months where Ukrainian soldiers from the frontlines *begged* civilians to stop exaggerating and underestimating Russian forces. They said over and over that this is disrespectful to the AFU who are dying by the yacht-load every day to these so-called toothless “Orcs” and “homeless drunks” which Russian soldiers were characterized as being. But to no avail. One can likely blame the infantile NAFO movement as the chief culprit in this.

But the Times report goes on to underline the losses:

*Since the start of the invasion, Ukraine has refused to release official counts of dead and wounded. But according to U.S. and European estimates, the toll has long surpassed 100,000 on each side of the war. **It has eroded the ranks of Ukraine’s armed forces so badly that draft offices have been forced to call up ever older personnel, raising the average age of a soldier in Ukraine to around 43 years.** “They’re grown men now, and they aren’t that healthy to begin with,” says the close aide to Zelensky. “This is Ukraine. Not Scandinavia.”*

The article veers into corruption with the same old stories that we all know are ever-present. The only interesting take away is that Arestovich later commented on the article, not only agreeing with the corruption bits but painting Zelensky in exactly those lone, detached dictator tones:



MoA believes Arestovich could perhaps be undergoing preparations as replacement, posting [this article](#) which discusses the various theories for why Arestovich is suddenly 'allowed' to so sharply criticize the ruling regime.

And why would they release such a damning TIME report *now*? Some believe it's merely done to light a fire of urgency under the U.S. Congress—as if to say, “look how bad things are, we need that budget pushed through ASAP!”

It could be, though I think it's also a desperate bid to regain global sympathy after the world's reserve of it went to the Israeli situation the past few weeks. The TIME editors likely thought by showcasing the ultra-grim reality of the Ukrainian front, they could turn the world's attention back onto Ukraine out of sheer guilt. In essence, a last ditch attempt to guilt trip the world into re-engaging with Ukraine.

So how does all this dovetail with the ongoing mess in U.S. Congress?

The [latest from ZeroHedge](#) still points to a complete deadlock:

Bills On Israel, Ukraine 'Dead On Arrival' In Both House And Senate As Shutdown, Funding Battles Gear Up



BY TYLER DURDEN

TUESDAY, OCT 31, 2023 - 11:20 AM

Summary:

In short,

- The government will run out of money (again) in roughly two weeks, requiring Congress to act (again).
- According to Democrats and GOP Neocons such as Mitch McConnell and Lindsey Graham, **America needs to send billions of taxpayer funds to both Israel and Ukraine**, and won't consider any legislation that doesn't combine the two.
- House Republicans under newly minted Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA), as well as a group of Senate Republicans, **want Israel aid separated from Ukraine aid**, while the Biden White House wants to jam a \$105 billion foreign aid package (\$14B to Israel, \$60B to Ukraine) through Congress.
- The House's plan (if they can even pass it) to separate Israel aid from Ukraine aid is DOA in the Senate, while both the Senate's combined package **and** the Biden admin's package is DOA in the House.
- The House and the Senate also need to pass 12 appropriations measures for 2024, or face a 1% across-the-board cut on defense and nondefense spending, per the debt ceiling bill passed earlier this year.

So the House plan to separate Israel aid from that of Ukraine is completely dead-on-arrival in the Senate. But the Senate's plan to combine the two is completely DOA in the House. Neither side can agree and it appears no one knows, precisely, what happens if the deadlock continues until the budget runs out.

Rand Paul:

"If Sen. McConnell thinks he's going to pass a \$100 billion conglomeration — what Biden wants — there's no way it passes the House. Sen. McConnell's not unaware of the way the

House works,” Paul told us. “It’s a very precarious position the speaker is in. I think that’s all he can get through.”

***There are some** practical challenges tied to what Vance and Paul are pushing for. For one, a standalone Israel bill with offsets is a no-go for the Democratic-led Senate.*


As the future starts to look increasingly bleak for Ukraine, there are reports that internally Ukraine is being urged to switch to full-on defense on every front, rather than continuing attempts to carry out some showy advances and assaults in obscure areas.

From Legitimate Ukrainian TG channel:

About warnings to the Kiev regime from the West:

*“Our source reports that Western intelligence services are warning the Office of the President of another offensive by the Russian Armed Forces in a direction other than Avdiievka, where the Russians are adopting the “noose” tactic. Now there is an accumulation of manpower and equipment in the RF Armed Forces. **The West advises Zelensky to abandon any offensive operations and undertake deep defense, otherwise the consequences will be catastrophic.***

From Rezident-UA channel:

 *"The Ukrainian counteroffensive is nearing its tragic conclusion - the so-called "Azov Massacre" has come at a great cost to the Ukrainian Armed Forces (AFU), resulting in significant losses in equipment and manpower.*

Furthermore, Ukraine's ability to undertake a similar operation in the future has been severely diminished, as its military strength is waning, along with the confidence of its Western partners in Kiev.

It's worth noting that, throughout their summer counteroffensive, the AFU managed to recapture less than 300 square kilometers of territory and did not secure any strategic positions.

Currently, there is substantial evidence indicating that the Russian Armed Forces are gaining the upper hand on the frontlines, particularly in the eastern sector where the Russian forces' offensive is notably strong.

Western military experts are convinced that the positional warfare will gradually deplete the remaining reserves of the AFU, forcing President Zelensky to choose between the loss of Kupyansk, Marinka, Avdeevka, or a mass retreat along the Azov direction. Counteroffensive is no longer an option, at most, the AFU can attempt to engage in defensive actions across the entire front."

But Zelensky already explained his thinking on this in the new TIME profile, saying that he cannot stop attacking for the fear that it would give Russia all the initiative and advantage.

So the AFU, for now, continues to mindlessly throw themselves onto the spears and caltrops of the Russian army. The past few days have seen a number of reports of new, humongous losses for the AFU in every major district.

For instance, from Masno on Bakhmut:

From 200 to 4...

The fighting around Bakhmut is extremely heavy.

I discussed the Bakhmut situation with a Ukrainian soldier today, who was on weekend leave. His unit was surrounded over the last weeks. 200 men were surrounded, over 5 days 170 were killed. They eventually managed to break through and escape.

He spoke to his unit this morning, out of his original unit of 200, only 4 are alive today.


From what I am hearing, the cemeteries are filling up again in many cities.

The fighting that is taking place now, is much heavier than during the height of the Ukrainian offensive.

Many deaths go unreported, last week 20 Ukrainian soldiers died in a single strike on the border near Kharkov.

I presume this is in reference to the new breakthroughs Russian forces made in Berkhovka (northwest Bakhmut), where Ukrainian forces got somewhat pincered by the reservoir there and had to retreat. One of the reasons is the Russian elite VDV are operating in that zone, so I'm not surprised to hear of the AFU's huge losses there.

And a new Nytimes report on Avdeevka fighting admits that the AFU is suffering heavy losses there:

 Military personnel admitted to Nytimes journalists that it is not easy for them to resist the onslaught of Russian troops and that there are well-founded fears of losing a strategically important settlement


Ukrainians are suffering heavy losses in the battle for Avdiivka, military personnel of the Ukrainian Armed Forces admit to journalists from the New York Times. One of them said that **only six soldiers from his unit, made up of more than 50 people**, remained unharmed after the first days of fighting.

“The most we had was half a day of silence,” said the former MP, who now serves in the 109th Territorial Defense Brigade, **“These battles were the most brutal of all time.”**

The fighting on the first day was so intense that the 110th Separate Mechanized Brigade ran out of drones. She turned to the 109th Brigade, located nearby, for reinforcements. But he also quickly ran out of supplies:

“We pushed them back, but at night [the Russian military] sent new soldiers,” said the pilot of the drone with the call sign “Boomer.” The unit had to call for volunteers to send more drones, he said.

Realistically assessing the situation, the battalion commander of the 59th brigade with the callsign “Bardak” believes that Ukraine could lose Avdiivka under the weight of such Russian firepower, as happened with Artemovsk (Bakhmut).

“This is possible if we run out of people and ammunition,” Bardak said 

In fact, it's been now reported that the entire command structure has been evacuated out of Avdeevka, as they realize the pincers are beginning to close. It's led to unconfirmed reports that Zaluzhny is now even pushing for a full withdrawal:

Office of the President of Ukraine: proposal to withdraw troops from Avdiivka by General Valery Zaluzhny - the 49-year-old Commander-in-Chief of the Ukrainian army - did not receive approval from Zelensky and his subordinates. Zelensky decided to let his soldiers fight to the end

It's a redux of the Bakhmut situation, where Zaluzhny begged for full retreat in February 2023, but Zelensky kept the slaughter going for months, generating tens of thousands of killed soldiers.



Seguing to Avdeevka in general, there are now confirmations from the Ukrainian side that Russia has in fact taken the area south of the Slag Heap and is beginning to storm the Coke Plant. But also some reports even state Russia is now operating west of the Stepove railway and gaining ground there:

Avdiyivka

The occupiers managed to roll over the railway to the west. Now they are trying to break through directly in the direction of Stepovoy.

Also, the enemy is present near AKHZ (Coke Plant) and its surroundings. They are not yet at the factory.

Our art and drones work non-stop. A lot of enemies are mowing down.

The orcs are constantly retreating, but new groups are coming in for assaults. Almost non-stop.


Occupants there are like cockroaches. In addition, they brought a fresh army there.

It was difficult, but it will be even more difficult.

Please do not ask if we will keep Avdiivka.

First, no one knows it. And he can't guarantee even more.

Secondly, it is disrespectful to our military, who are now holding back a veritable horde there.

 **Ukrainian Post**

It's hard to know for certain because this video of 3 Bradleys being destroyed was apparently geolocated to right near Stepove, on the west side of the track divide:

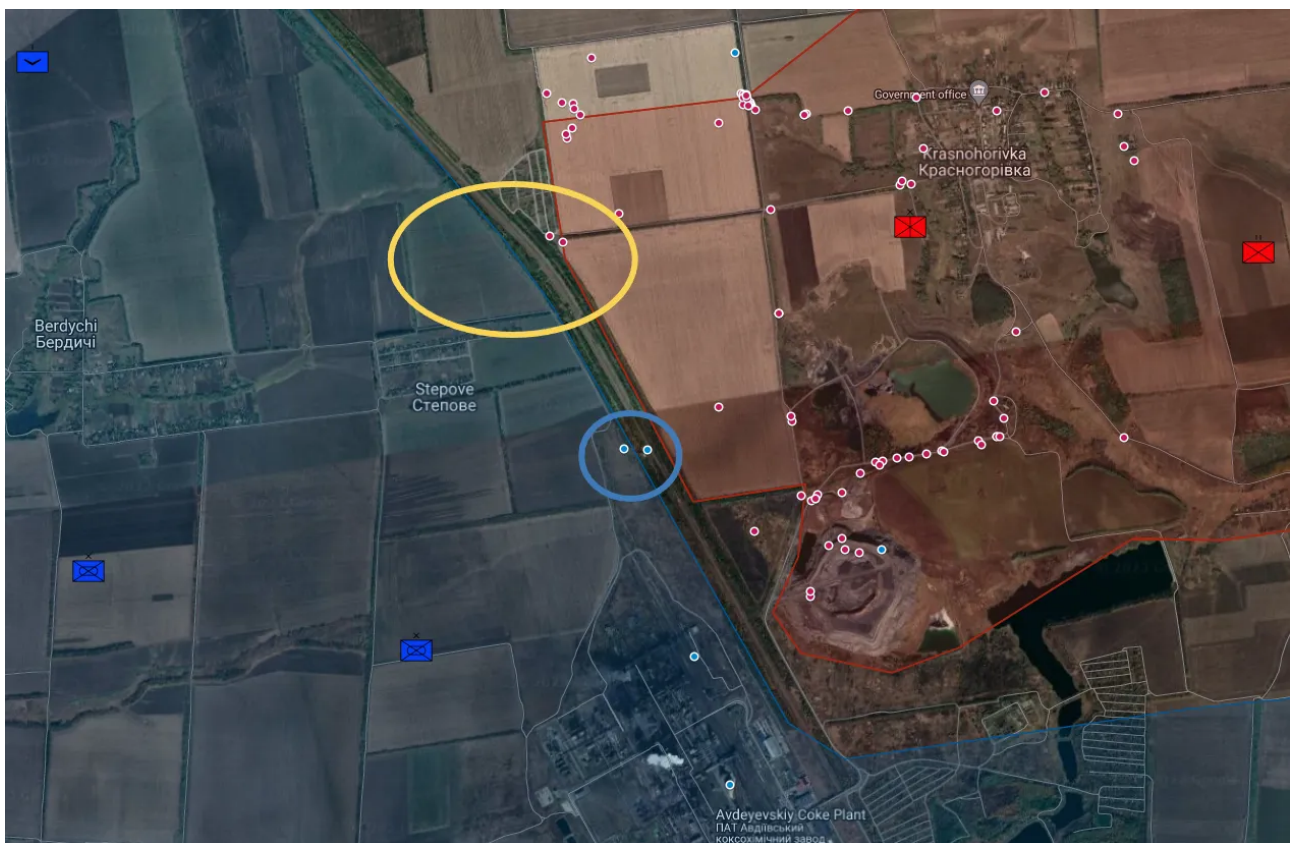
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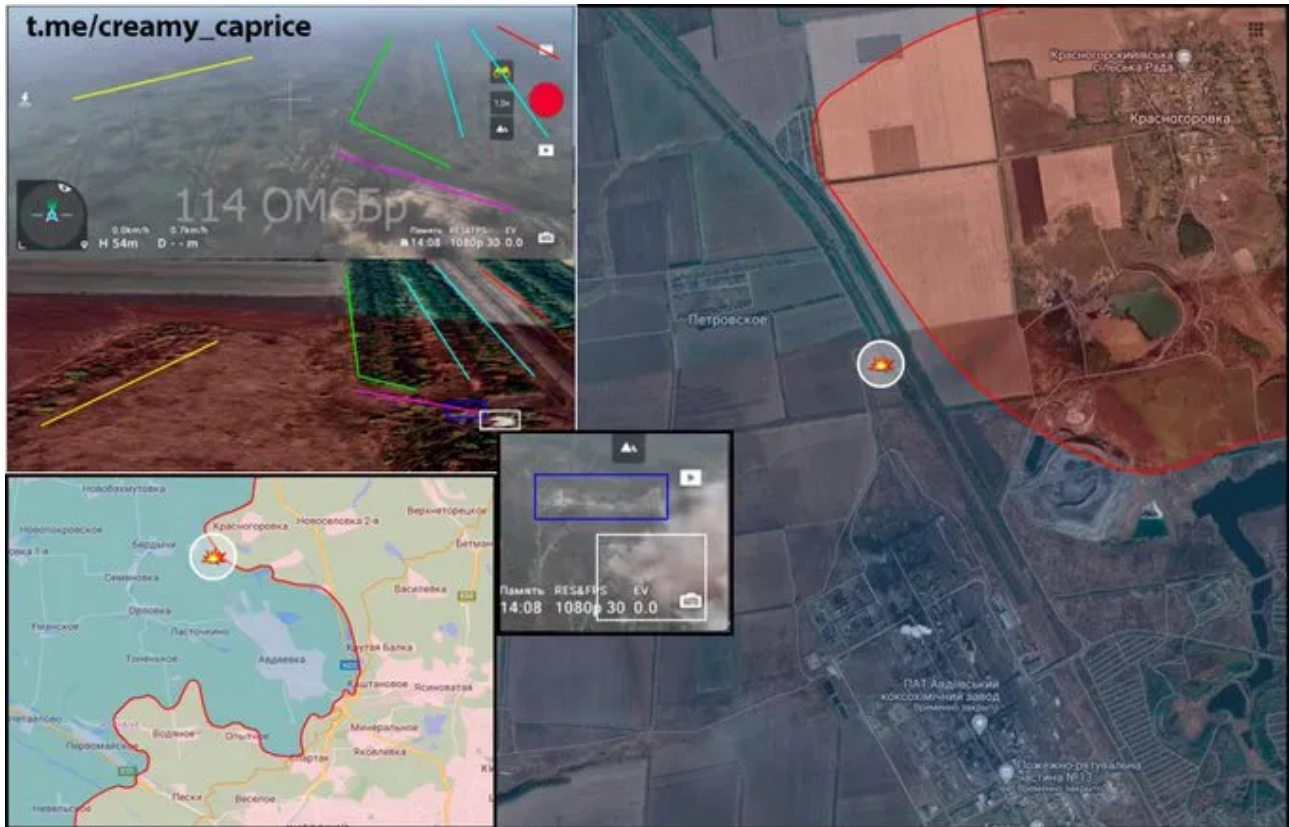
Another destroyed Bradley was even spotted right on the tracks at **48.1906, 37.69704**.



However, this is on the tracks south of Stepove, the area where I believe Russia has possibly crossed the tracks is just north of Stepove, potentially here at the yellow circle:



The blue circle is where the Bradleys and a Leopard were destroyed.



You can watch the full video of the Leopard 2A6 destruction here:

0:21 / 7:59

It is alleged it was hit by a Russian T-72 firing an HE (High Explosive) shell, rather than artillery or ATGM, which would make it the first truly confirmed tank on tank kill of NATO's most advanced armor by a Russian tank.

How do we know? Because the frontline correspondent named Andrei Filatov reportedly was filming the event with his own drone and specifically stated the Leopard was destroyed by a T-72 not artillery.

The shot of the Leopard's side shows a clear hit area in the rear, which likely ruptured the engine and caused fluids to leak and set on fire:



There is no gouge in the ground to indicate any artillery hit, as artillery would make a large crater. Nor could the tank have been hit directly by something like 152mm as that would have created far more visible damage and potentially ripped the turret off.

The other alternative would be ATGM but the hit on video didn't quite look like an ATGM hit, nor an APFSD—which is what I assume led people to surmise the HE shot. It's hard to tell for certain, all we know is that in the video they say callsign "North" hit the Leopard "on his first try", but they don't mention the method.

Whatever it was, while Leopards may have nearly impenetrable front armor, they're said to have fairly weak side armor, even compared to legacy Soviet tanks. It appeared like 3 crew members can be seen bailing, but a Leopard has 4 crew since it doesn't have an autoloader. They get into a Bradley which hightails it north along the treeline toward Stepove.

This episode shows us that Ukraine is *extremely* desperate to hold the line at this hedgerow divide and not allow Russian forces to progress even an inch. The fact that they lost 3-4 Bradleys and a Leopard in a day in the same exact spot trying to hold back the advance means they're throwing *everything* at it.

Here's how some see the current map:



This is a reversed view which shows Russian forces have embedded themselves into the forest strip just south of the Slag Heap and directly abetting the Coke Plant:



Another Ukrainian post:

Avdiivskiy - the enemy almost completely took control of the railway from the Stepovoy district to the territory of the AKHZ.

At the same time, further advancement is blocked by our soldiers.

They still haven't established a single permanent foothold west of the railroad.

Maryinsky, Berdyansky - no changes.

👉 Ukrainian Post

This one says Russians have *not* gone west of the railroad but that they have consolidated the entire length of the railroad from north to south, whereas before there was a gap in the middle below Stepove.

Here's a new post from Vozhak Z, the Russian author volunteer fighting in the south of Avdeevka:

DAY TWENTY-SECOND

*There are no significant changes in our sector. Positional battles are going on, tanks, artillery and drones are working. We're still looking for enemy dugouts, finding them, destroying them. **The main events, of course, in the north. There is information that ours have begun the assault on Koksokhim (Coke Plant), I do not know the results yet.** We own the terracon, but Germans are constantly firing mortars at it. When we take Koksokhim, things will go faster. **The enemy's losses are heavy**, as he himself regularly writes in the cart. I'm still in the company, my wound is healing little by little. The battle continues, the fighting does not subside. We keep our fists for the northern faction.*

My call sign is Leader.

Victory will be ours!

This brings me to the next point.

There was a series—well, three—Russian posts in the past few days which criticized the goings on at Avdeevka from the standpoint of Russian casualties or poor tactics, command. Vozhak was one of them, where he was injured in an assault that he reported was not properly prepared with artillery.

Another report echoed similar thoughts, stating that any assault without adequate artillery support is a “meat assault” and claiming that Russian forces have had to operate like this recently.

A third report was from the same Andrei Filatov I referenced earlier. He described how the initial assaults we saw at the start of the Avdeevka operation had the losses they had due to a lack of coordination, where certain columns were meant to advance together in order to “thin out” Ukrainian artillery fire. But some units “arrived 3 hours late” while others “didn’t go at all”, according to him, which led to the main assault column of the 114th DPR Brigade to come under much heavier fire.

It's difficult to tell how accurate his description is, after all he's just a correspondent and wouldn't be privy to deep military plans. In general, I'm addressing these issues because they've made the rounds in Ukrainian circles as more "proof" that Russia is losing in Avdeevka. But the fact is, as always one must know their source. Filatov, for instance, is a great reporter but he's also been known as one of the more cynical and critical ones. It comes from a good place as I think he cares a lot about the troops. But my point is that he's complained on every front he's been on, and Russia has always won on all those fronts.

Furthermore, as always pro-UA accounts pick and choose his one critique post but ignore the post he made directly afterwards which proves that Ukraine is taking far more losses in Avdeevka.

What was the post? The recounting of a story he witnessed himself where the AFU sacrificed the lives of 30 men just to try to steal Russia's flag on top of the Slag Heap:

On symbolism and mincemeat.

Everything is as you would expect. Ukrops decided to repeat "operation flag".

*During the night the enemy had **two Bradleys minus** (one on the photo, the other burned). **Men 30 infantry in the minus.***

*And all for what? And all for the sake of sososniki or just "dickheads for a medal", **climbed the southern slope of the dump**, dressed in anti-fluorescent clothing and tried to put a flag.*

They were counting on the possibility to shoot their flag, and our fighters, who would try to throw it down, would be shot by a sniper from the upper tiers of AKHZ. But we drew the fools, the fools could not.

The morons tried it in the war of the flags. The stuffing for the "operation" was allocated.

So they lost 30 men and 2 Bradleys just to play some sort of vanity flag game on the Heap. For UA supporters who so excitedly posted his previous account of Russia's mistakes in the opening assault, you can't take one and not the other. Either both accounts are fake or you have to trust him on both, which means it proves the AFU is throwing away mountains of men for the most frivolous of reasons. If they don't care

about liquidating 30 men for a flag, imagine how many they're throwing on a daily basis for actual relevant strategic objectives?

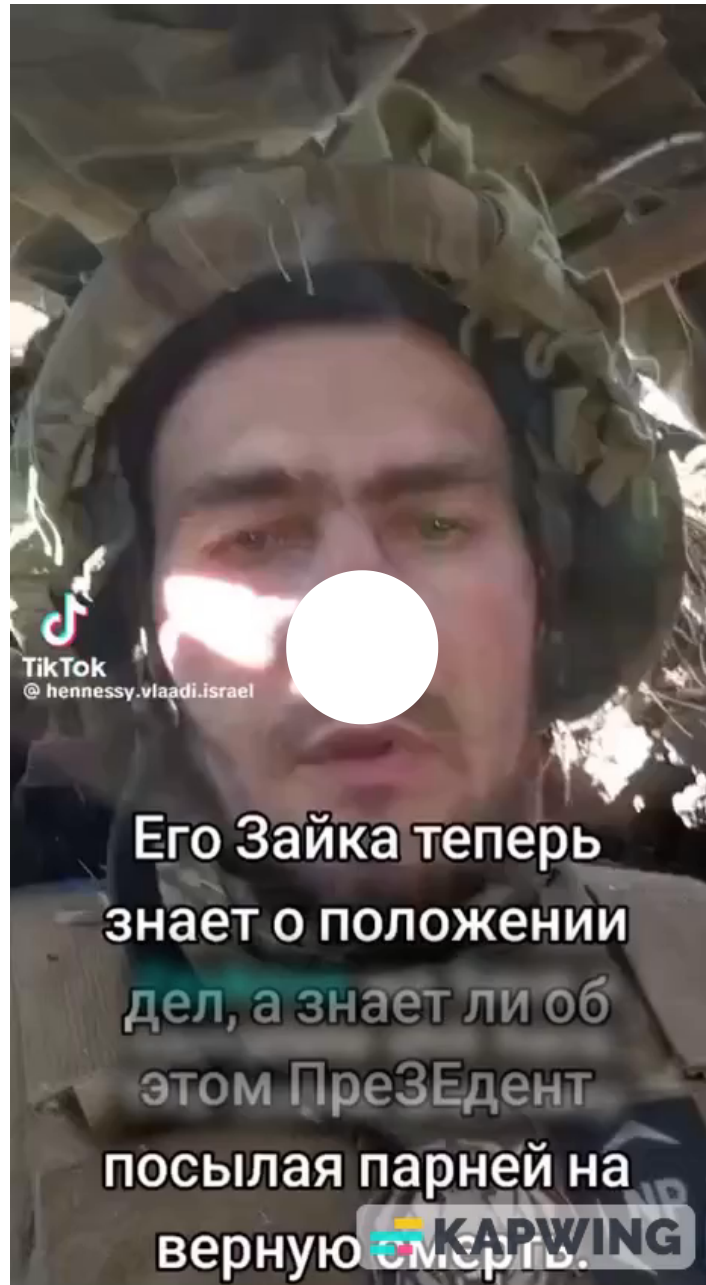
Same thing goes for Vozhak—they reposted his one complaint post yet his new update I posted above specifically says “the enemy’s losses are heavy.”

Some accounts have even pointed out how desperately pro-UA supporters have been trying to gin-up fake losses, for instance posting this one infamous photo of a field of corpses and trying to pass it off as Russian “meat assault losses” in Avdeevka. Only problem is, those were Ukrainian dead from Bakhmut as many well-trusted accounts have pointed out:



Whoops.

This Ukrainian transmission from Avdeevka speaks of “crazy losses”:



But let's see what Vozhak has to say today:

Situation for the morning.

The enemy in their TG-channels confirms that our troops have crossed the railroad and are attacking in the direction of Steпноye. They are also consolidating in the Koksokhim area. More and more often in their posts sound doubts that they will be able to hold Avdeevka. In fact, the width of the corridor through which the Avdiivka group is supplied is 9 kilometers. The main road through Orlovka and Lastochkino is shot by our artillery. Still, it is too early to talk about a radical breakthrough. The turning point will come when we take Koksokhim.

So he states that Russian troops have in fact broke through the railway and are actively storming the Coke Plant.

Another selection of updates which confirms some of the above:

*Avdiivka. GPS tracks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine were uploaded to the network during different periods of the battles for Avdiivka (see in tg). According to them, the enemy has not moved along the main road between Orlovka and the city for quite a long time, **the main logistics line has already been disrupted.***

The main movements are carried out by rail along the factory territory of the Avdiivka coke plant (here) and inside the city itself and neighboring settlements.

Active routes of movement of the APU but marked between Ocherchino in the north and Umansky in the south.

According to this, GPS tracking shows that the AFU no longer is using that MSR supply route that runs from Avdeevka to Orlovka just west of it. The part about movement being carried out by rail makes no sense since Russia most definitely controls the rail line at this point, so I'm not sure what they were getting at there—perhaps they meant *alongside* the railway, which does have a road. In fact that's the road seen being used by the evacuation Bradley in the earlier video.

Another:

*The situation in Avdiivka. The reserves of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the city and on the territory of the plant are huge: **ammunition, weapons, food and other technical means. The defense can be held for a long time.***

Civilians had left the city long ago - the assault was only a matter of time, and everyone knew it. The APU also removed all heavy equipment and headquarters from the city

Another:

⚡⚡⚡👉Avdeevka clippings.

Along the north they are trapped in the outer houses and fighting.

According to Experienced (Opytne), progress is hindered by many minefields.

There is also information that they took the quarry from Avdeevka, but this is not certain.

We advanced south of the rubbish heap and settled on some kind of forest plantation ⚡⚡⚡

Ukrainian post which confirms Russian forces are storming the Coke Plant:

!!UKRAINIAN POST!!

*⚡The Russians, having gained a foothold last week on the terricone north of Avdeevka, regained their strength and, as expected, stormed the coking plant. The [Ukrainian] headquarters have already been evacuated from the city, but it's time for the Command to think about the units themselves. **Because Debaltsevo 2.0 is clearly emerging.***

And lastly:

*!!RUUAThe Russian army fought its way to the Avdeevsky coke plant Ukrainian military analysts are publishing a new map of the situation at the Avdeevka coke plant with the latest successes of the Russian Armed Forces highlighted in red and gray - the enemy admits that the Avdeevka waste heap is under the complete control of **our troops and they have entered the outskirts of the industrial zone.***

***West of the Avdeevsky waste heap, Russian troops have gained a foothold in the forest belt along the railway.** The fighting continues," the enemy report says.*

South of Avdeevka, the Russian Armed Forces continue attacks in several directions. Positional combat operations continue west of Krasnogorovka. The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine reported in the evening that Russian troops carried out a series of attacks in the areas of Avdeevka, Tonenky and Pervomaisky.

Some of these make mention of the other most important advance, which is that Russian forces again crept up a few more hundred meters in the south toward the edge of Severnoe, seen here in the Suriyak map:



The only other update is that there was a somewhat cryptic post from another Russian soldier on the front who said that the real direction to watch would be toward “Keramik”:

Guys, there is no assault on the Avdeevsky coke plant.

There is no need to run ahead of the locomotive, there is no need to expose our guys.

Yes, the waste heap is ours, yes, we monitor the entire territory of the coke plant visually, yes, we are preparing.

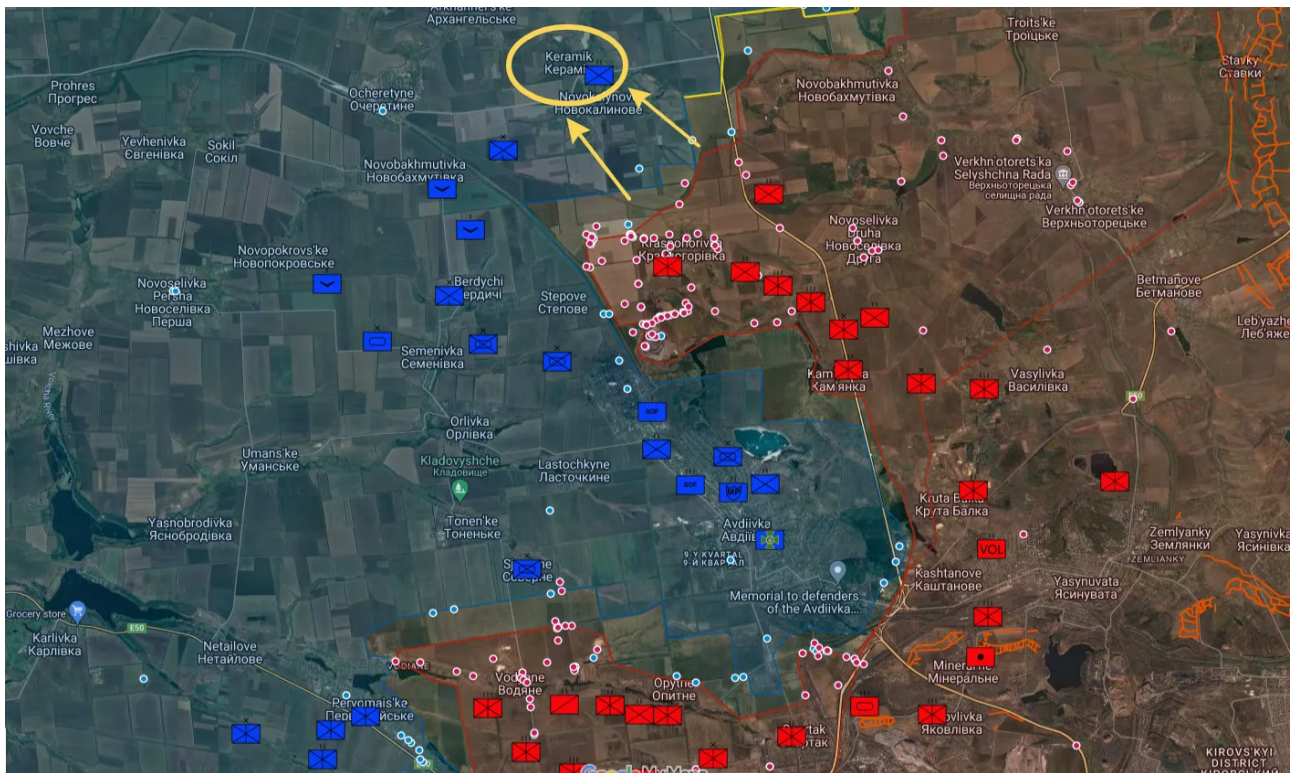
*But the task is different now, and we are doing it. The task is to make the depth of the gut into which we climbed. **We're going north, we're going well. Look for the town of Keramik on the map and you will understand everything.***

Not long after that post, which I myself dismissed as perhaps deliberate misdirection, it was announced that the AFU actually launched their own counterattack from the north in order to try to cut Russian forces toward Krasnogorovka. But this was followed by reports, like the below from Rybar, that Russian forces have likewise struck out toward Keramik there:

The Chronicles of the Special Military Operation for November 1, 2023

*Russian military personnel are continuing their operation to cover the Avdeevsky fortified area. Thus far, the fighters have successfully advanced to Novokalynove and **Keramik**, crossing the railway tracks. In the south, the AFU attempted an attack at Vodyanoy, but was unsuccessful. For a more detailed account of the Russian Armed Forces' offensive near Avdeevka, you can read our new material*

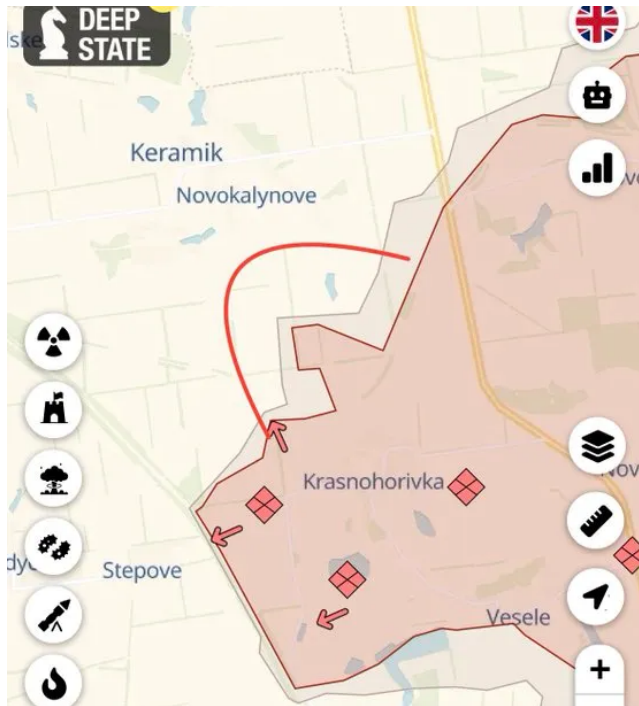
You can see in the wider shot how far up Keramik is:

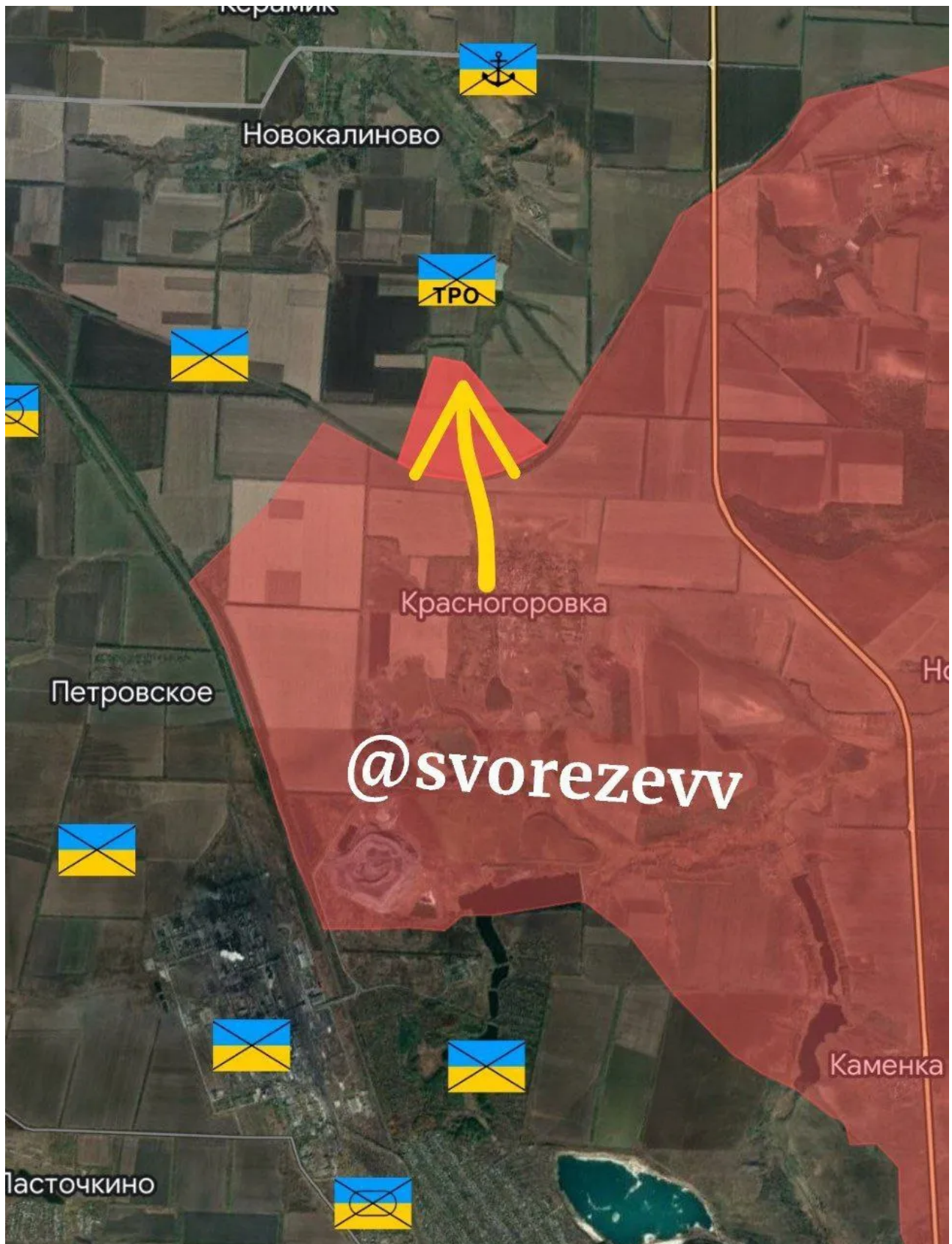


Quite frankly I can't understand the significance of it other than:

1. Increasing the width of the Russian bulge around Krasnogorivka for the purposes of safety
2. As distraction and fixing operation to draw AFU defenders/reserves away from the more serious Avdeevka hotspots further south
3. If there's a high elevation point there which can be used to further overwatch the Avdeevka valley

But some sources are claiming Russia already took a jut of territory:





I'll leave Avdeevka with this final Ukrainian post, which gives a sense of the tenor of the battle from ex-Azov Battalion deputy commander Ihor Mosiychuk:

The bloodiest battles since the beginning of the war: The fall of Avdiivka will be a death sentence for financial and military support of Ukraine, - ex-deputy commander Azov Battalion, Mosiychuk

▪ *"Therefore, Zelensky is against Zaluzhny's position on the withdrawal of the military from the city, and Tarnavsky is transferring reserves from the Zaporozhye direction.*

▪ *The battles for Avdiivka are becoming the bloodiest since the beginning of the war.*

!I just talked with Avdeevka: chaos in the leadership of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, military losses too, human losses, not enough ammunition.

▪ *The guys understand that there are only a few days left before the loss of the city. My interlocutors say: "well, a week." Can you imagine? And they keep us in a warm bath.*

▪ *It will be a disaster. The collapse of Ukraine. Tell people the truth. Withdraw your troops. Stabilize the front. Build the Mannerheim line. Stop lying. Creatures. You will be demolished. I don't feel sorry for you. Sorry for Ukraine."*

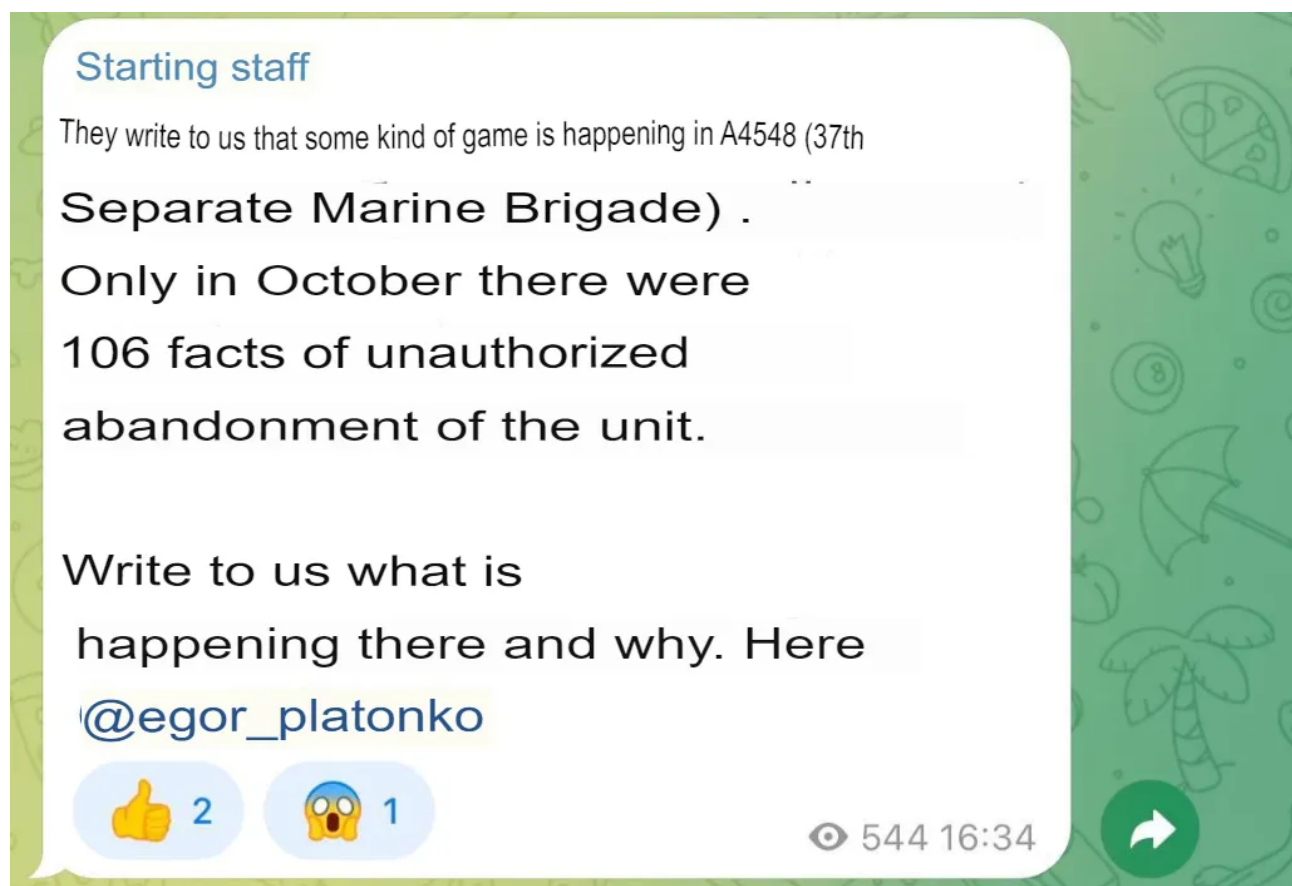


A brief note on other directions. Things continue mostly the same elsewhere. In Kherson, Ukraine continues to claim some 'successes' but in fact the real intel is that they're suffering nothing but absolute horrors there. A [video even emerged](#) showing Ukrainian troops being fired upon by Polish mercenary "blocking detachments" to force them to cross the Dnieper. There are mutinies everywhere and the Ukrainian internal boards are filled with howling rage at the treacheries:



That's the 35th Marines from the Antonovsky bridge front complaining about a wounded group that waited for evacuation for 8 days on the left bank.

Here's another about over 100 unit abandonments:



And this is what it looks like for those AFU Marines constantly forced to cross under heavy bombardment:



They keep talking about some sort of ‘expansion’ of their bridgehead but as I wrote about last time, it’s simply absurd. They’re doing nothing more than playing games here with no prospects for any serious advancement whatsoever.

The only other front of interest to mention:

You’ll recall I wrote about some ‘interesting’ developments on the far north, that seemed to foreshadow a potential new front being opened up, up there. Not only the 19-90k Russian troops allegedly stationed on the border (depending who you ask), but the increased DRG activity and uptick in Russian cross-border artillery strikes, like toward Vovchansk. Now there’s this report:

On the border with the Kharkiv and Sumy regions, the Ukrainian Armed Forces are creating units to stop our likely offensive.

Along the border with the Belgorod region, mobile air defense from SAMs on pickups is being strengthened, and 250 unguided S-5K aircraft missiles have been delivered to Russkie Tishki for use from makeshift installations.

*In the reserve, units are created on the basis of 3 otrb, 1 obr of special forces and teroborona. They have 40 tanks and various MANPADS. **It looks like the enemy is preparing for our offensive in the style of the beginning of the campaign** - first launch deep into its territory, and then cutting off from the rear, it thinks to smash the columns as it was in February-March 2022.*

Today there was further confirmation that Russia has completely cleared out from Belarus, giving further credence to the idea that any remnant forces have been transferred to the Belgorod region.



REPELLED MISSILE ATTACK ON CRIMEA AND SUPPRESSING UKRAINE'S AIR FORCE

@RYBAR

AFU tactical aviation airplanes

Odesa

Mykolaiv

Kherson

Zaliznyi Port

Skadovsk

Chaplyнка

Novooleksivka

Heniches'k

Strikove

Dzhankoi

Cape Tarkhankut

Yevpatoriya

Simferopol

Sudak

Sevastopol

Bel'bek airbase

Black Sea

Azov Sea

MIG-31

7.30

11.10 - 12.04

Neptune anti-ship missile

https://simplicius76.substack.com/p/time-magazine-profile-depicts-grim?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email#media-efcdb9fa-80f1-471... 35/41

figuring out how to stop these saturation assaults, particularly given that reports claim they've taken a far more pro-active approach. For instance, shooting down incoming missiles with various patrol craft, like Mig-31s and Su-30s, rather than simply relying on land-based air defense alone:

The Russian military managed to successfully repel the second massive missile attack on Crimea in recent times.

The goals of the Kiev regime do not change - Sevastopol, the Crimean Bridge and the Chongar checkpoint, notes PolitNavigator .

At the same time, one launch of Storm Shadow costs more than 1.5 million dollars, ATACMS - more than 2 million. Over the past three days, 15 missiles have been fired at Crimea, and the Ukrainian Armed Forces will not scramble planes just for the sake of firing. Zelensky clearly needs a bright episode to make headlines in the world media, especially after the Time article, which made him look blessed.

However, no matter what motives motivate Kiev, the fact remains that missile strikes do not bring results. Perhaps the reason for this was the departure of the MiG-31 with the Kinzhal complexes on board to patrol the neutral zone over the Black Sea. But in general, according to the director of the Institute of CIS Countries in Sevastopol, reserve captain 1st rank Sergei Gorbachev, it's not so much about the MiGs:

I think that, first of all, we learned to fight. We have understood the technical characteristics of the combat use of enemy weapons, we have understood the techniques, the methods, we have already acquired significant combat experience and are improving the techniques of repelling such threats.

It is possible that the Russian army began to use new or previously unused combat weapons, the captain of the 1st rank also noted.

This dovetails with recent reports from Shoigu that Russia has shot down a massive amount of Ukrainian aircraft in the past couple weeks. The claim is that Russia is now more actively using the new A-50U AWACS which, in conjunction with S-400 systems by way of data links, can vastly expand the detection and reach of AD systems.

Some have understandably balked at Shoigu's claim of 20-30+ Ukrainian aircraft shot down just in the past few weeks alone. Ukraine's side claims they've never had even

remotely the amount of aircraft Russia claims to have destroyed. This may or may not be true, however it is noteworthy that we continue to get small glimpses of reports that give us an idea how much Ukraine may in fact have been secretly restocked.

For instance, this week's **new report** that Kazakhstan is quietly 'auctioning off' over 100 fighter-jets in a mass wholesale liquidation event, which are precisely the types Ukraine most uses; i.e. Mig-29s, Su-24/27, etc. Will they end up in Ukraine? And has Ukraine been siphoning similar gargantuan wholesale liquidations this entire time from other countries?



Another important confirmation. Recall a few reports ago we spoke of Russia's new Lancet capabilities. Now it's being confirmed by Western sources that Russia has been increasing use of fully automated AI versions of the Lancet:

💣🔥💣 *The Russian Armed Forces have started actively using Lancet barrage munitions with a new guidance system.*

In fact, the target recognition and acquisition system in the new Lancet (aka Izdeliye-53) works like the homing head of an air-to-surface missile, which makes it possible to achieve absolute accuracy in hitting the target, including objects in motion.

It is noteworthy that after destroying the Czech RM-70 Vampire MLRS, the drone also targeted the Czech 152mm wheeled SAU vz.77 Dana.

In fact, after the introduction of the new Lancets, the crew's tasks are reduced to designating a combat zone for it in the programme and launching the drone from the catapult. The functions of target search and acquisition are performed by automation, and the crew can change position immediately after the launch. 💣🔥💣

The official British Defense Ministry transmission was even forced to acknowledge the recent uptick in Lancet successes:

INTELLIGENCE UPDATE

- Russia's Lancet small one-way-attack uncrewed aerial systems (OWA UAVs) have highly likely been one of the most effective new capabilities Russia has fielded in Ukraine over the last 12 months. It is designed to be piloted over enemy territory, waiting until a target is identified, before diving towards it and detonating.
- Lancets are manufactured by the ZALA Aero Group. ZALA also make the small, unarmed Orlan 10 UAV which Russia often deploys alongside Lancet to spot targets. Ukraine has also experienced success with small OWA UAVs.
- Russia deploys Lancets to attack priority targets and they have become increasingly prominent in the key counter-battery fight striking enemy artillery. Traditionally, Russia has used small UAVs mainly for reconnaissance. With its attack capability, Lancet has been a step change in how Russia uses this category of weapons.

@uranews

And ISW (Institute for the Study of War) has sounded the alarm as well. From a [Newsweek article](#):

Russia Using Experimental 'Lancet' Drones With New Guidance Systems: ISW

Oct 29, 2023 at 7:59 AM EDT

The sources said the newer versions of these drones have an "automatic guidance system that can distinguish types of targets and increase strike success rates," the ISW said on

Saturday. The Kremlin's forces are reportedly testing the uncrewed kamikaze drones "for mass synchronized swarm strikes."

The article states that the Lancet is thought to cost around \$35,000. Recall that EU's production of 155mm shells now costs over \$8,000 per shell—and that's the *unguided* ones. It takes dozens of shells to hit a target. That means Lancet is far more economical than Ukraine's artillery as 4 dumb-fired shells already accounts for the same price as a Lancet drone.

Meanwhile the U.S. continues to experience weapons woes as the much-vaunted test launch of their new Minuteman III ICBM over the Pacific Ocean was apparently deemed a failure:

U.S. Air Force blows up Minuteman III during test flight after post-launch anomaly detected

By Reuters Staff

1 MIN READ



Nov 1 (Reuters) - The U.S. Air Force said on Wednesday it had blown up a Minuteman III missile over the Pacific Ocean after an anomaly was detected following its launch from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California.
(Reporting by Dan Whitcomb and Mike Stone)

Our Standards: [The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles.](#)

*An unarmed USAF Minuteman III ICBM has been "safely terminated over Pacific Ocean at 12:06 a.m. **due to an anomaly** during a test launch from Vandenberg Space Force Base, California."*

It seems even the decaying U.S.'s ICBM capabilities are now in question.

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