

## EIR Daily Alert Service

P.O. BOX 17390, WASHINGTON, DC 20041-0390

- Thinking Small Creates Big Problems
- Xi Jinping Addresses Eurasian Economic Forum, Stresses Synergy of EAEU with Belt and Road
- Why Do Russians Think Neo-Nazis Are Attacking Them?
- Moscow's FSB Arrests Ukrainians Who Planned To Sabotage Russian Nuclear Plants
- Argentine Finance Minister on Crucial Six-Day Trip to China
- Peskov Identifies Kiev's Assassination Policy as Evidence of Underlying Problem
- Russia's Prime Minister in Beijing Encourages Collaboration To Deal with Dangers of West
- Major China-Russia Economic Accords Signed at Mishustin Visit
- Will Credit Finally Be Included in De-Dollarization Dialogue?
- U.S. Military Equipment Used by Neo-Nazis in Raid Inside Russia

## EDITORIAL

### Thinking Small Creates Big Problems

May 25, 2023 (EIRNS)—“Happiness” and the “beautiful” were the subjects of China’s President Xi Jinping in a critical address to the Eurasian Economic Forum May 24 plenary session in Moscow. Xi was explaining why he thought the synergy between his Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) nations can and should be deepened. This is the tenth anniversary of Xi’s presidency and of his Sept. 13, 2013 launching of the Belt and Road Initiative in Kazakhstan. Its

mission is to discover and realize the common development for countries, and so, to open up a “path of happiness” that benefits the entire world.

Common development amongst different countries with different cultural strengths and weaknesses is not as easy as it sounds. But, as with the U.S. Declaration of Independence’s “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” happiness is the characteristic of a created world, where the Creator made mankind’s liberty, its freedom of thought to create new scientific breakthroughs, necessary for the possibility for life, for solving the recurring existential problem of running out of resources for the present state of technology. In such a created world, it is not possible that different cultures exist in fundamental opposition to each other. If there is a seeming conflict between cultures, there is a resolution on a higher level.

Xi situated the basis for an actual synergy between the BRI and the EAEU. He reasoned that Eurasia, of which China is a part, has the largest population, the largest number of countries, and the most diverse civilizations in the world. Hence, it had the most possibilities for a future world of lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity—a “beautiful” world.

More than 300 years ago, the great European genius, Wilhelm Gottfried Leibniz, the author of the concept of “pursuit of happiness” that Benjamin Franklin brought to the U.S. Declaration of Independence, posed that, if China and Europe had elements of a very high culture, it could not be the case that they were doomed to keep to themselves. Clearly, expansive Russia had the mission of transmitting both such cultures to each other, taking the world to the next higher level to which it had to go. It’s time—and President Xi qualifies.

Also yesterday, Xi met with Russia’s Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin in Beijing. Mishustin had just signed some huge trade deals with China on energy and agriculture. He posed to Xi that the partnership between Russia and China was “of particular importance for us in the wake of increasing turbulence in the international arena. Our countries stand shoulder-to-shoulder fending off the collective West’s attempts to preserve global.... I

am convinced that Russia and China will offer a resolute response to those dangerous aspirations and will create favorable conditions for steady progress—toward our common strategic goals.”

European culture has seen better times. Leibniz’s quality of statesmanship, as with Abraham Lincoln and the modern-day Leibnizian, Lyndon LaRouche, has made appearances in the United States. Yet the overriding strategic reality is that the better angel of China and that of the U.S. need to find each other. Russia still has a key role to play. Sending arms to Ukraine for neo-Nazi grouplets to invade Russia, to help drain Russia, is probably not the place to start.

Xi certainly showed yesterday that a lot can get done in a day. The West needs to re-learn how to think big, because thinking small has gotten us into quite a big problem.

- Watch [Harley’s Updates](#) with Harley Schlanger on Friday May 26, 2023: Every weekday morning on The LaRouche Organization, Schlanger will give you the strategic briefing you need to start your day.

## STRATEGIC SHOWDOWN

### **Xi Jinping Addresses Eurasian Economic Forum, Stresses Synergy of EAEU with Belt and Road**

May 25, 2023 (EIRNS)—On the same day that China’s President Xi Jinping met with Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin in Beijing, he attended by video link the Eurasian Economic Forum plenary session in Moscow. In his address, Xi noted that the world today is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century. He said that it is the broad consensus of the international community to uphold genuine multilateralism and promote coordinated development across regions. He proceeded to explain why the synergy between the Belt and Road Initiative and the Eurasian Economic Union can and should be deepened

Xi noted that Eurasia is the region with the largest population, the largest number of countries, and the most diverse civilizations in the world. It has a profound impact on the world, one needed in dealing with the present turbulence. In this light, he had put forward the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilization Initiative, to build a world of lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity—a “beautiful” world.

China’s Belt and Road initiative, which Xi noted is marking its 10th anniversary, has, as its mission, to discover and realize the common development for countries, and so, to open up a “path of happiness” that benefits the entire world. As part of that universal mission, China’s development is dependent upon that of Eurasia, and vice versa.

In building for the third Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, to be hosted by China later this year, he expressed hope that the EAEU nations and the Belt and Road nations continue to work together to write a new chapter in the progress of civilization in a multipolar world.

### **Why Do Russians Think Neo-Nazis Are Attacking Them?**

May 25, 2023 (EIRNS)—The May 22 terror attack on Belgorod region of Russia was carried out by the “Russian Volunteer Corps” (RVC) of Denis Nikitin (aka Kapustin). He is a longtime, known neo-Nazi who has been recruiting other neo-Nazis through fight clubs, street brawls and “white power” rock groups.

Prior to 2022, when Ukraine’s Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) decided to arm his paramilitary group, Nikitin had run a clothing business out of Russia called “White Rex,” specializing in neo-Nazi insignia, such as the Nazis’ “Black Sun.” He chose to found his company on August 14, 2008—significant for its magical 14/08/08 code, a nod to the infamous white racist “14 words” (“We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children”), combined with the well-known, ubiquitous homage to Hitler, “88” (referring to the 8th letter of the alphabet, hence, “HH” for “Heil Hitler”). Nikitin is usually given short-shrift in Western media as a “football hooligan”—but he admits that he’s not a fan that fights

the other team's fans. He attends football games simply to start rumbles, for the anarchy and the violence.

He had problems with Russian authorities and moved to Kiev in 2017, where he mixed his "white power rock" with fight clubs and mixed martial arts (MMA) events. His partner in his annual MMA in Kiev was Arseniy Bilodub, the lead singer of Sokyra Peruna, advertised as a "white power rock" group. Two of their "songs" are "Six Million Words of Lies" and "August 17th." The latter is an homage to Rudolf Hess, said to be the last of the Nazi leaders to die, on Aug. 17, 1987. The band's drummer Dmitry Volkov went to prison for his pogrom against Kiev's Brodsky Synagogue in April 2002. Bilodub also founded a clothing business, "SvaStone," centered around marketing the Nazi "Black Sun" insignia.

RVC member Alexey Levkin posted videos of their escapade into Belgorod this week, where they wounded a dozen civilians and killed one border guard. Levkin, a buddy of Nikitin's, was the founder and lead vocalist of the neo-Nazi black metal band M8L8TH, in the mid-2000s. His gang in Russia was convicted of desecrating ethnic cemeteries, attacking foreigners, and committing several murders. However, Levkin was institutionalized instead of jailed, being deemed mentally unstable. After his 2011 release, he founded a "WotanJugend" neo-Nazi group that celebrates Hitler as a hero. In 2014, he raised funds for weaponry for the Maidan coup. In 2015, he left Russia, moved to Kiev and joined the Azov Regiment. In 2019, Levkin organized the "[Asgardsrei](#) music festival" in Kiev, run in conjunction with Nikitin's MMA event.

[EIR](#) published more on Nikitin last year, before he founded the "Russian Volunteer Corps."

After the Belgorod raid, the RVC posted on their Telegram page the following: "...The war will continue until Putin's hanged body graces the walls of the Kremlin and his gang is judged by a fair trial of Russian anger. The country is ripe for change. The country is ripe for liberation. And most of all they are waiting for the liberation of the territories bordering the war zone: Kursk, Bryansk, Belgorod. Their unspoken call is followed by the

Russian Volunteer Corps, which took the liberty of taking the first step towards our Motherland. The ... guerrilla movement is not constrained by traditional military operations.”

Russians think neo-Nazis are attacking them because neo-Nazis are attacking them. And these attackers are getting their armored vehicles and military equipment from Ukraine’s authorities, as detailed in this issue.

### **Moscow’s FSB Arrests Ukrainians Who Planned To Sabotage Russian Nuclear Plants**

May 25, 2023 (EIRNS)—A plot to blow up the high-voltage lines linked to two of Russia’s nuclear energy plants, timed to disrupt Russia’s May 9 Victory Day national celebration of the defeat of the Nazis, was discovered and disrupted, according to today’s statement by Russia’s Federal Security Service (FSB). Officials also presented a video of the testimony of two of the Ukrainians arrested, Eduard Usatenko and Alexandr Maistruk, who tell of being recruited and trained by Ukraine’s Foreign Intelligence Service, the SZRU. They were equipped with 36.5 kg of C-4 plastic explosives, 61 foreign-made electric detonators, 38 electronic timers, and two Makarov pistols with ammunition.

Before being captured, they had mined five transmission towers on lines leading to St. Petersburg’s Leningrad Nuclear Power Plant, and mined pylons leading to the Kalinin NPP in Udomlya, Tver Oblast. Their plan involved destroying over 30 pylons bearing the high-voltage lines on the eve of May 9, so as to “cause the shutdown of nuclear reactors, disruption of routine operations of the nuclear power plants, and deliver serious economic and reputational damage to Russia,” according to the FSB’s statement.

A third saboteur is believed to have escaped to Brussels, and two Russians have been detained on suspicion of providing vehicles with fake license plates to the Ukrainian saboteurs.

## Argentine Finance Minister on Crucial Six-Day Trip to China

May 25, 2023 (EIRNS)—Argentine Finance Minister Sergio Massa and his delegation will leave tomorrow for a May 29-June 4 visit to China, stopping in Shanghai to attend the 8th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) May 30-31, and then proceeding to Beijing for top-level meetings. On May 10, the new NDB President Dilma Rousseff, former President of Brazil, and Chinese Finance Minister Kun Liu, who is also vice president of the NDB's Board of Governors, sent a personal invitation to Massa to attend the annual meeting, whose theme is “Shaping a New Era for Global Development.”

Argentina Central Bank Governor Miguel Pesce will accompany Massa, as will others of his economics team, and, interestingly, Deputy Maximo Kirchner (the son of Vice President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner), whose presence has political significance, as he is not an economist. Argentina's activist Ambassador to Beijing Sabino Vaca Narvaja, who has an excellent relationship with Massa, and is close to Vice President Cristina Kirchner, will join the delegation on the ground.

Massa's trip to China is the result of careful coordination between Brazilian President Lula da Silva, Chinese President Xi Jinping, and Dilma Rousseff, all of whom have taken steps to help Argentina, which is suffering from a dire financial crisis from what Lula charges is “the IMF holding a knife to its neck.” Argentina is in urgent need of bolstering foreign currency reserves, which are at an all-time low. After meeting with Argentine President Alberto Fernández on May 2, Lula contacted Xi Jinping and Rousseff to urge them to act on Argentina's behalf.

Argentina is not a member of the NDB, although it wants to become one as soon as possible, in order to access the financing and credit lines the bank offers. One of the issues to be discussed at the annual meeting is modification of Article 7 of the NDB's statute to allow it to function as a guarantor for credits issued to Brazilian exporters. That way they can sell to Argentina and receive payment in pesos, to be later converted to Brazilian

reals. Whether non-member Argentina, or other non-members, may access the NDB's contingency funds for emergencies may also be discussed.

A top agenda item Massa will be discussing with Chinese authorities is the increase in the existing \$19 billion currency swap to as high as \$38 billion, according to the Argentine daily *Dangdai*, and an increase from \$5-\$10 billion of the portion of the swap to which the Argentine Central Bank has free access, used to import from China and pay in yuan. Massa hopes to have details on the proposal ready to present to the Chinese before leaving Buenos Aires.

China's Ambassador to Buenos Aires Zou Xiaoli, who has a close working relationship with Massa, helped to arrange meetings for him in Shanghai and in Beijing. In Beijing, Massa is scheduled to meet with the chairman of the National Development and Reform Commission, as well as with the Ministers of Finance, Production and Economics. He also expects to finally pin down Chinese financing for several infrastructure projects already agreed to in the Memorandum of Understanding on joining the Belt and Road Initiative that Alberto Fernández signed on Feb. 4, 2022, during his meeting with Xi Jinping. These include railroad, energy, and other transportation projects, and the all-important Atucha IV nuclear reactor, which China will build.

## COLLAPSING WESTERN SYSTEM

### **Peskov Identifies Kiev's Assassination Policy as Evidence of Underlying Problem**

May 25, 2023 (EIRNS)—While the West may look the other way at Kiev's announced policy of assassinations, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov, speaking on Rossiya 24 TV network today, cited such lawlessness as terrorism, and evidence of the underlying problem that necessitated Russia's Feb. 24, 2022 special military operation.

Peskov was responding to Kiev's Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) leaders' stating that they have the right to assassinate Russian civilians anywhere, that they have carried out such assassinations, and that

Russia's President Vladimir Putin is on their kill list. The first two pronouncements came from Kyrilo Budanov, the head of the GUR; the last, from Budanov's assistant, deputy GUR head Vadym Skibitsky. Peskov commented: "A terrorist regime talks about its terrorist aspirations."

Peskov said such statements show that the military operation launched by Russia in Ukraine, was "more than justified, more than necessary and that it must be completed." The terrorism applied domestically, from 2014 to 2022, and now internationally, is evidence of the hijacking of a nation by actual neo-Nazis and/or the dynamic involved amongst those submitting to the blackmail and terror of systematic violence. It cannot be said that London and Washington were unaware of what they were dealing with, when, as then-Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland put it, the U.S. spent at least \$5 billion to help overthrow the elected government of Ukraine.

## NEW STRATEGIC & ECONOMIC ARCHITECTURE

### Russia's Prime Minister in Beijing Encourages Collaboration To Deal with Dangers of West

May 25, 2023 (EIRNS)—Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin met in Beijing yesterday, first with China's Prime Minister Li Qiang and then with President Xi Jinping. Mishustin and Li concluded several major energy and agriculture deals, covered below. [Mishustin](#) reported, according to TASS, that cooperation in economic development and trade was discussed, including moving to a new level of collaboration by 2030. Further, he explained: "Along with stronger trade and economic cooperation, we deem it important to expand cultural and humanitarian ties. They cement the foundation of friendship and mutual affection between our peoples, which we must hand down to future generations of Russian and Chinese citizens."

TASS further covered how Mishustin described his meeting with President Xi as dealing with the [alliance of Russia and China](#), in joining together to deal with the dangers of the waning of global dominance of the West: "We sincerely cherish the long-standing bonds of good-

neighborliness, partnership and cooperation between the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. This is of particular importance for us in the wake of increasing turbulence in the international arena. Our countries stand shoulder-to-shoulder fending off the collective West's attempts to preserve global dominance and to take advantage of illegal sanctions in order to impose their will on independent countries. I am convinced that Russia and China will offer a resolute response to those dangerous aspirations and will create favorable conditions for steady progress—toward our common strategic goals.”

For his part, Xi Jinping, according to CCTV, hoped for a continuation of the “broad prospects” of the two countries. The coordination of the two countries, he said, can be strengthened in interacting on such important international platforms as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, BRICS, and the G20. “The strengthening and development of China-Russia cooperation corresponds to the aspirations of the peoples of our countries; this is the prevailing trend.”

### **Major China-Russia Economic Accords Signed at Mishustin Visit**

May 25, 2023 (EIRNS)—Prior to his high-level meetings with the President and Prime Minister of China in Beijing yesterday, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin attended the [Russian-Chinese Business Forum](#) on May 23 in Shanghai. While Russia was originally scheduled to send 500 entrepreneurs to the forum, around 1,200 actually flew to Shanghai for the event, indicating the high level of interest. The Prime Minister also met with representatives of the [Russian business community](#) in Shanghai, timed to coincide with the Chinese-Russian Business Forum and with his first official visit to China.

In his remarks, Mishustin pointed out: “Mr. He Lifeng, you have noted that for over 10 years China has been Russia's main trade partner. In the first three months of 2023 our position has also changed on China's list; Russia has risen from tenth to seventh in trade.

“This growth goes hand in hand with important qualitative transformations, including, first and foremost, our reduced dependence on

the dollar and other Western currencies. In 2021, national currency transactions accounted for 25% of Russian-Chinese mutual settlements, in 2022 they reached over 66%....

“Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping, made joint statements that determined the strategic priorities for mid-term interaction. They set goals to boost bilateral trade volumes, improve logistics connectivity, raise the level of financial and industrial cooperation, strengthen our energy partnership, and expand technological cooperation including in the field of innovation. These guidelines will make it possible to find growth points for Russian and Chinese businesses. This is a clear message to the business community.... Today, our investment portfolio has about 80 major projects with a total investment volume of over \$165 billion....”

While all of the agreements have not yet been made public, a major emphasis was placed on energy and on agricultural products.

On May 12, the Russian government approved an intergovernmental agreement with China on the supply of Russian gas to the P.R.C. via the Far East route, through which the P.R.C. will import up to 10 billion cubic meters of Russian gas annually.

On May 15, Gazprom announced that design and survey work on the Soyuz-Vostok gas pipeline was in its final stage. This is a transit line with a capacity of 50 bcm, which will become part of the “Power of Siberia-2” export branch from Western Siberia to China.

On May 16, Kazakhstan’s Energy Minister announced that “the route has been preliminarily determined,” and “conditions for the construction” of the Russia-Kazakhstan-China gas pipeline are being discussed. If all of the above projects are implemented, annual Russian gas supplies to China will exceed 100 bcm annually.

Further, as the Prime Minister reported, “Bilateral trade in agricultural products is picking up steam. Last year, it grew by 42% to over \$7 billion. As of the first quarter, growth was already over 90% to almost \$2.5 billion.” According to a Kremlin notice, Mishustin actively worked out in

the P.R.C. the instruction given by President Putin at the beginning of May, “To consider concluding an intergovernmental agreement between the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China on the project ‘New land grain corridor Russia-China’ to increase grain production in the Far Eastern, Ural and Siberian federal districts, as well as the volume of its export to the market of the People's Republic of China.”

Agreements were also signed on phytosanitary requirements for the supply of millet and medicinal plant materials from Russia for Chinese medicine, on deepening investment cooperation in trade in services, and on expedited patent filing.

### **Will Credit Finally Be Included in De-Dollarization Dialogue?**

May 25, 2023 (EIRNS)—Perhaps even more important than the plans for trade in national currencies, which continued around the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) meetings May 24-25, were the potential plans involving the New Development Bank of the BRICS nations and Brazil-Argentina trade.

A leader in the EAEU de-dollarization process, not as often recognized, is Belarusian President [Aleksandr Lukashenko](#). The official Belarus website, BelTA, posted on May 24 a summary of Lukashenko’s calls to drop the U.S. dollar in trade as long as two years ago, which comes from a BelTA YouTube project “[After The Fact: Lukashenko’s Decisions](#).”

BelTA writes that two years ago at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit, President Aleksandr Lukashenko cautioned that countries relying wholeheartedly on the U.S. dollar are becoming increasingly vulnerable. “This not only deprives us of competitive financial and economic advantages, but also threatens national security. All the more so because this leverage is increasingly being used as a weapon,” he said.

“And what do we see?” BelTA continued. “China is now actively developing its own interbank payment system. Brazil and Argentina have decided to create a common currency. South Korea and Indonesia, India and Malaysia have agreed to abandon the dollar in domestic payments. In

the East the establishment of an Asian Monetary Fund is under consideration. Saudi Arabia has decided to abandon the U.S. dollar as the sole currency for oil trade. And this is just the beginning....

“Aleksandr Lukashenko believes that one of the primary objectives in the Eurasian Economic Union is the coordinated support of national currencies and security of payments,” explained BelTA. He recommended de-dollarization of domestic trade in hydrocarbons for the EAEU at a summit in 2021. At the EAEU summit on Dec. 9, 2022, Lukashenko stressed the necessity to revitalize the EAEU “circulatory system by all means.” President Lukashenko told his fellow heads of state: “I am talking about finance. Everyone understands already that the age of the U.S. dollar’s dominance is nearly over. The future belongs to trade blocs where transactions will rely on national currencies. Belarus and Russia have already stopped using U.S. dollars in main transactions. It is important for other partners to also get actively involved in this process.”

BelTA describes that how share of national currencies in mutual transactions in the EAEU increased from 63% in 2013 to 73.5% in 2020, whereas U.S. dollars dominated the structure of transactions with third countries. It concludes: “The Belarusian President believes that in the near future the world will have new powerful currency unions with a new reserve currency. The Russian ruble, the Chinese yuan, the Brazilian peso, or the Indian rupee? With what will countries start paying each other? There is no answer to this question yet. But one thing is clear: The era of the U.S. dollar is really coming to an end.” Lukashenko had earlier made himself clear: “And then China came along with its own currency, the yuan, and with the desire to be leaders.”

Two-way trade settlement in national currencies is difficult if the trade is extremely unbalanced. In a Sputnik interview published May 25 with an informed businessman, [Chris Devonshire-Ellis](#), the chairman of Dezan Shira & Associates, who notes that a free trade agreement between India and the EAEU is under discussion. It is, Devonshire-Ellis says, a way of better balancing Russia-India trade, bringing Indian capital investment into

projects on the International North-South Transport Corridor and in Russia's Far East, and avoiding India's fear of Chinese industrial companies outcompeting its own in India.

Trade in national currencies does not, however, mean credit for development issued in those currencies, the driving force of success of a new monetary system.

Very important board meetings of the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB) are set for May 30-31 under the bank's new President, former Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff. The Argentine Economics Minister and Central Bank Governor are invited to the meeting in Shanghai and for an extended visit in China, as reported in this issue.

An April 24 article on CoinChapter set this up in "[Another Blow to U.S. Dollar: BRICS New Development Bank Offers Loans in Local Currencies](#)," by Karen Mkrtyan. He writes: "As confirmed by Dilma Rousseff, the new chief of NDB, the move is a step toward de-dollarization. As a result, as much as 30% or one-third of the total loan amount will not be in the greenback."

While the amounts into which this translates make it a small step, it is nonetheless important in that the NDB's practice in its eight years has been to lend with borrowed capital from international markets (thus in dollars), and, instead, to lend in BRICS national or other "local" currencies means that additional paid-in capital should come into the bank from the participating nations. This will expand its credit capacity as well.

## U.S. POLITICAL & ECONOMIC

### U.S. Military Equipment Used by Neo-Nazis in Raid Inside Russia

May 25, 2023 (EIRNS)—Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu displayed images of two severely damaged armored vehicles, left after the May 22 raid into Belgorod by the Russian Volunteer Corps of neo-Nazi Denis Kapustin (aka Nikitin). They look similar to those provided by the U.S. to Ukraine as military aid. Shoigu had shown high-quality images of

several damaged and abandoned U.S. vehicles, in particular Humvees and the MaxxPro MRAP armored fighting vehicles. However, State Department spokesman Matthew Miller called the evidence “fuzzy pictures,” telling reporters that the U.S. is “skeptical of their veracity.”

Pentagon spokesperson Brig. Gen. Patrick Ryder on May 23 said the U.S. had not authorized nor received Ukrainian requests for transferring equipment to paramilitary groups. He also expressed doubts about the Russian reports and images appearing to show U.S.-made vehicles. “I don’t know if it’s true or not, in terms of the veracity of that imagery.”

*Politico* reported that yesterday U.S. National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said that the White House is “looking into those reports that the U.S. equipment and vehicles could have been involved.” Then Kirby distanced Washington from Kiev: “We’ve been pretty darn clear: We don’t support the use of U.S.-made equipment for attacks inside Russia ... we’ve been clear about that with the Ukrainians.”

Andriy Cherniak, a representative of Ukraine’s Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR), which maintains contact with the two paramilitary groups that raided Belgorod, told *Politico* that military aid they receive only goes to Ukraine’s army. “Every bullet is tracked not only by us but also by our Western allies.” So, he had no idea as to how the paramilitary groups got the U.S.-made vehicles. He added that there “are Russian citizens who are against Putin and want to shake his regime. So we work with whoever we can” to defeat Russia.

RVC leader Nikitin claimed that his group had recovered military vehicles that somebody else had stolen from the Ukrainian military. Evidently, he just forgot to return them to their rightful owners.

Shoigu and Russia’s leadership have concluded that the West doesn’t have a problem arming neo-Nazis. That is something they don’t take lightly.