



## Hiding Little Green Men

**OE Watch Commentary:** The moniker “little green men” was developed by journalists and Kremlin officials to describe the unmarked Russian soldiers who appeared in Ukraine in early 2014. Having removed any Russian insignia from their uniforms and equipment, Kremlin leaders could assert that these forces were not under their command. Even though most were able to see through this *maskirovka* (deception), the Russian military continues to place a high priority on camouflage and deception.

The accompanying excerpt from the government newspaper, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, purportedly describes “a special camouflage coating that changes color depending on the environment.” The article quotes a senior Russian defense industry official who alleges that “a variety of coatings have been created that mimic, like a chameleon, the color of the surrounding environment.” These coatings “almost completely conceal the thermal and electromagnetic radiation emanating from a combat vehicle and absorb the radar waves of foreign radars,” which “should hide military equipment better and make soldiers on the battlefield more invisible to the enemy.”



Little Green Men (aka Russian soldiers), Crimea, Feb 2014.

Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:VOA-Crimea-Simferopol-airport.jpg> Source: voanews.com. Public Domain.

The article goes on to describe a specially designed uniform that “literally merges with the surrounding nature.” While it’s not clear whether these uniforms have been fielded, the article does point out that “Russian army special units have begun to receive sets of Tuman-R camouflage paste,” which not only paints faces in the desired color but also “reduces infrared radiation, making them invisible to thermal imaging surveillance devices.” Besides absorbing “up to 95 percent of the heat radiation of the human body,” this wonder paste also has “medicinal properties” helping to heal wounds and ward off insects. Alongside deception and camouflage, those in charge of the Russian military have also been known to exaggerate and misinform observers on the capabilities of the country’s armed forces. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)**

*“...a variety of coatings have been created that mimic, like a chameleon, the color of the surrounding environment.”*

**Source:** Sergey Ptichkin, “Каска-невидимка; Новое покрытие позволяет бойцам и технике сливаться с местностью (Invisible Helmet; New Coating Allows Soldiers and Equipment to Blend With Terrain),” *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 17 July 2018. <https://rg.ru/2018/07/17/v-rossii-razrabotano-novoe-maskiruiushchee-pokrytie.html>

*The company Rostekh has developed a special camouflage coating that changes color depending on the environment. This should hide military equipment better and make soldiers on the battlefield more invisible to the enemy.*

*Rostekh chief Sergey Chemezov told the TASS news agency about this. According to him, cited by the agency, “a variety of coatings have been created that mimic, like a chameleon, the color of the surrounding environment.”*

*...Of course, it will not be possible to make a soldier’s clothing or a tank completely invisible. But overall concealment can be improved significantly. Classic camouflage coatings do not always match the color of the locality where military action might take place. But if they change color depending on the environment, they will actually merge with the surroundings and become really almost invisible, especially in the heat of battle....*

*...Back at the Army-2016 forum a very interesting example of camouflage was demonstrated by the Sevastopol Nina Onilova garment factory which sews uniforms for the Black Sea Fleet. The secret was that specially designed drawings make a kind of animated canvas which “comes to life” at the slightest fluctuation of the fabric. And the human eye ceases to see a static object, instead of which there is a kind of moving picture, similar to the fluctuations of grass, foliage, and branches. A man dressed in such camouflage, when moving, literally merges with the surrounding nature. Moreover, even when lying in ambush a sniper is invisible, as the wind sways his camouflage and he also merges with the terrain.*

*...It was reported that Russian army special units have begun to receive sets of Tuman-R camouflage paste, which not only paints faces in the desired color but also reduces infrared radiation, making them invisible to thermal imaging surveillance devices.*

*Applied to human skin, the Tuman-R ointment absorbs up to 95 percent of the heat radiation of the human body and retains its properties for about two weeks after application. In addition, the ointment has medicinal properties, accelerating the healing of wounds, is not toxic and does not irritate the human skin, and yet deters insects and bloodsuckers....*

*We have created very good protective coverings for armor. They also have camouflage colors. And, in addition, they almost completely conceal the thermal and electromagnetic radiation emanating from a combat vehicle and absorb the radar waves of foreign radars. That is, the vehicles become invisible to both normal and so-called technical vision....*