



Successful Russian IO Campaign

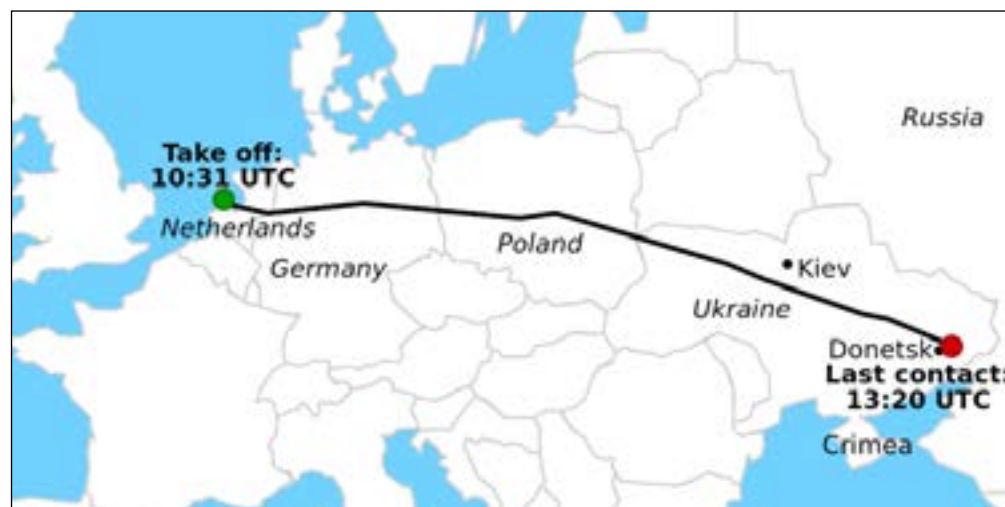
OE Watch Commentary: The downing of Malaysian Airlines Flight MH-17 over Southeast Ukraine in July 2014 was one of the deepest watersheds in the deterioration of relations between Russia and the West. While the Western narrative claims that separatist forces in the Donbas region (perhaps aided by regular Russian forces) were responsible for this tragedy, the Kremlin and its pliant media juggernaut have developed numerous scenarios which ‘prove’ that the separatists and their Russian sponsors are blameless. The accompanying brief excerpt from the pro-government source, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, reflects both the general belief that Russia is innocent and the Kremlin’s strategy of deflecting any blame for this crime.

The author (a senior military analyst) begins his article by claiming that despite detailed international reports which point to Russian involvement in the destruction of this airliner, “it is still wholly unclear here who downed it.” He then reviews a couple of the earlier Kremlin explanations which placed the blame on the Ukrainians, pointing out that even though these versions were easily debunked, “the theory that the Boeing was downed by a Ukrainian Su-25 attack aircraft is still very popular in Russia.” Given the distorted coverage of the Kremlin-sponsored media, such an assertion is understandable.

The gist of the article focuses on attempting to discredit the recent Dutch and Australian-lead commission of inquiry which provided specific evidence of Russian culpability. The author suggests that the commission released its findings in late May “clearly to coincide with the 2018 World Cup.” Such a suggestion supports the Kremlin’s narrative that the West will do anything to weaken Russia’s global image. The commission’s attempt to use video graphics to illustrate its findings is dismissed by the author as a “cartoon film” which can “hardly be considered even indirect evidence of Russian guilt and absolutely certainly have nothing to do with direct evidence.” The author asserts that the “Dutch-Australian call on Russia ‘to repent’ and ‘admit blame’ is a kind of request for help,” but that since no one in Russia or the Donbas region has come forward to admit their involvement, there is “no evidence of Russia’s guilt.”

The author concludes by stating that “the loss of the Boeing will remain a subject of political speculation, but simply will not be solved.” Such a statement accurately reflects the strength and success of the Kremlin-sponsored media campaign on its own population. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)**

“It is four years since the moment of the loss of the Malaysian Boeing 777 airliner over the Donets Basin (Donbas), and however odd, it is still wholly unclear here who downed it.”



Route map of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17.

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MH17_map-en.svg CCA-SA 3.0.

Source: Aleksandr Khranchikhin, Deputy Director of the Institute of Political and Military Analysis, “Кто же сбил «Боинг» над Донбассом? (Who Downed the Boeing Over the Donbas?),” *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 13 July 2018. http://nvo.ng.ru/realty/2018-07-13/1_1004_boeing.html

It is four years since the moment of the loss of the Malaysian Boeing 777 airliner over the Donets Basin (Donbas), and however odd, it is still wholly unclear here who downed it. The parties to the conflict placed the responsibility, as expected, on each other, “corroborating” the charges with a variety of nonsense.

The theory that the Boeing was downed by a Ukrainian Su-25 attack aircraft is still very popular in Russia. However surprising, this theory has been articulated even by some officials....

...This entire sum of astonishing theories could have induced sad contemplation were it not for the West with its commission of inquiry, which was dominated by the Dutch (the Boeing had departed from Amsterdam) and Australians (the majority of stricken passengers were from this country). This commission gave a reminder of its presence at the end of May of this year, clearly to coincide with the 2018 World Cup....

Your author is far from an expert in jurisprudence, but it is surmised that the cartoon films on the drive of a self-propelled transport-erector launcher and radar (TELAR) of the Buk-M1 air defense missile system (SAM) from the Russian Federation Armed Forces 53d Air Defense Missile Brigade (zrbr) stationed in Kursk by Russian and Ukrainian roads shown by the commission of inquiry may hardly be considered even indirect evidence of Russian guilt and absolutely certainly have nothing to do with direct evidence....

In actual fact, the May Dutch-Australian call on Russia “to repent” and “admit blame” is a kind of request for help. Or a recruitment approach. It follows from it that the commission has no real evidence but suddenly in Russia or the Donbas self-proclaimed republics there will be a traitor who will provide this evidence? No traitor was found: possibly, simply because there is nothing to provide, there is no evidence of Russian guilt nor was there ever in view of the absence of the guilt itself. Malaysia, who owned the Boeing, is not tied to Western mutual assistance, this is why it stated plainly that it has no evidence of Russia’s guilt....

...Ultimately, however surprising in our time, the loss of the Boeing will remain a subject of political speculation, but simply will not be solved....