

Putin Confronted by Kremlin Insider Over Ukraine, U.S. Intel Reportedly Tells Biden

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An unnamed member of President Vladimir Putin's inner circle has directly confronted him over mistakes and mismanagement of the war in Ukraine, The Washington Post [reported](#) Friday, citing U.S. intelligence.

The insider's confrontation and identity were reportedly included in U.S. President Joe Biden's daily intelligence briefing and shared with other U.S. officials.

The individual's identity could not be confirmed, but Putin's tight inner circle is believed to comprise mostly former colleagues from the KGB and the 1990s-era St. Petersburg administration where Putin had served as deputy mayor.

"Our assessments suggest [Putin's closest aides and advisers] are particularly exercised by recent Russian losses, misguided direction and extensive military shortcomings," The Washington Post quoted an unidentified Western intelligence official as saying.

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“There are a lot of people who are convinced this isn’t going well or the right course of action,” another senior Western official said.

“This is a breaking point,” The Washington Post quoted one of two Russian business executives in contact with political officials as saying.

The unnamed executives said the coming weeks could be crucial for determining Putin’s future and his decisions on the war in Ukraine, the publication reported.

The Kremlin said the U.S intelligence report was “absolutely not true,” acknowledging disagreements within Putin’s inner circle but classifying them as “part of the normal working process.”

“It is not a sign of any split,” Putin’s spokesman Dmitry Peskov told The Washington Post.

European security officials said they had not seen the U.S. intelligence reporting and were not aware of any direct challenges to Putin's decision-making, according to The Washington Post. One senior official said the growing criticism of Putin, including from within the Kremlin, happens “behind his back.”

“There is scapegoating. Finger-pointing. All of this is happening,” the publication quoted a second security official in Europe as saying.

A senior Baltic official said Russia is “still going” with its war effort despite internal tensions over the military’s mounting losses, which have forced Putin to order a chaotic, unpopular mobilization effort and make thinly veiled nuclear threats.

“We haven’t seen anything to suggest otherwise,” they were quoted as saying.

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