**Fatherland Day on Ukraine War**

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February 23 – a holiday in Russia, Turkmenistan, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan is celebrated as the Defender of Fatherland Day. Kazakhstan marks the day on May 7 while Ukraine abolished the day in 1992. After the Revolution of Dignity in 2014, Ukraine has instated a somewhat similar Defender of Ukraine Day that is marked on 14 October. Congratulations to all those celebrating the “Defender of the Fatherland Day” on February 23 with Russia or on other dates.

It’s marked for compulsory military service for most of the men in the celebrating countries. Gifts and postcards are frequently given by women to male relatives, even though they’ve never served in the armed forces. On a workday before or after the holiday, many women also congratulate their male colleagues, and schoolboys may receive small presents from their female classmates. Russian authorities organize local parades to honour the military and veterans on this day. It is becoming more common for women who serve in the military to be honoured on this day; challenging the traditionally masculine aspect of the holiday.

First celebrated in 1919, the day marks the date in 1918 during the Russian Civil War, when the first mass draft into the Red Army occurred in Petrograd, and in Moscow on 17 February. In January 1919, it was decided to combine the celebration of that day with the anniversary of the publication of the decree on the establishment of the Red Army (of 18 February 1918). In 1919, 17 February fell on a Monday, so it was decided to move the holiday to the following Sunday, 23 February. That choice of the day has been retained ever since. It was originally known as “Red Army Day.” But, in 1923, it was officially named the Day of the Red Army and the Navy. In 1949, it was renamed Soviet Army and Navy Day. Following the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the state holiday was given its current name in 2002 by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Western information technology’s influence from the territory of Ukraine on the Russian infrastructure can cause uncontrollable processes in cyberspace.

In 2023, the day falls when the Russian Army once again is defending the pro-Russian parts of Ukraine. BBC reported on 2 February 2023 quoting Ukraine’s defence minister Oleksii Reznikov that “Russia is preparing a major new offensive, and warned that it could begin as soon as 24 February.” Moscow had amassed thousands of troops and could “try something” to mark the anniversary of the initial invasion last year. The attack would also mark Russia’s Defenders of the Fatherland Day on 23 February, which celebrates the army. Moscow had mobilised some 500,000 troops for the potential offensive. The true figure recruited and deployed to Ukraine could be far higher.”

This apprehension comes at a time when the US-NATO are struggling to equip Ukraine with highly sophisticated German Leopard tanks. Germany is unlikely to agree until the US Abraham tanks accompany them. Meanwhile, in the backdrop of the Russian Armed Forces’ successful use of massive missile strikes using precision-guided weapons against critical infrastructure in Ukraine, the United States and its allies intend to carry out cyber-attacks on Russia’s power sector facilities. The West seeks to disable the Russian energy system to disable the country’s residential and social assets and provoke large-scale protests among the population. At the same time, according to Washington, the power outages should disrupt the functioning of key administrative, military and defence-industrial facilities, air and sea ports, and railway stations, as well as the agrarian complex of Russia.

Destructive US cyber-attacks on Russia’s digital infrastructure will lead to a new round of escalation of tensions between the two nuclear powers. The US budget for 2023 includes $11 billion for cyberattacks against hostile governments. Russian response in cyberspace would destroy vital US infrastructure and damage the civilian sector.

NATO held the world’s largest cyber defence exercise, Cyber Coalition 2022, in Estonia last December. More than 1,000 military personnel from the alliance’s 26 members, as well as Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Japan, Sweden and Switzerland, participated in the exercise. The stated objective was to strengthen the ability of NATO member states and partners to defend their networks and work together in cyberspace.

The West is using Ukraine to carry out illegal cyber-attacks against Russia to conceal its involvement. In the United States cyber doctrine, Russia is enshrined as one of Washington’s main adversary states in cyberspace. In addition, according to the Pentagon’s cyber strategy, since 2015 there have been combating units in the US Armed Forces designed for offensive actions in the global network. To carry out hacking attacks on the banking and service sectors, as well as other Russian infrastructure facilities, the Americans use a special project of the US cyber command “IT Army of Ukraine”, which involves both specialized cyber units of the AFU and Ukrainian Internet activists.

Western information technology influence from the territory of Ukraine on the Russian infrastructure can cause uncontrollable processes in cyberspace and lead to significant damage to other countries. Washington’s transfer of malware to the Kyiv regime will inevitably lead to its leakage to the black market and further use by Ukrainian and other hacker groups for criminal purposes, including against digital resources of international organizations and individual states. This has happened more than once.

“Shadow Brokers” have stolen elements of the US National Security Agency’s Windows operating system source code, which were used to create the WannaCry ransomware virus that blocked many organizations around the world in 2017. The situation seems to lead to a complex warfare regime. The cyber-attacks on the Russian installations may lead to a bigger disruption over the internet world, while the “decisive” clash of titans is likely to bring more misery and mourning not only to Ukraine but to the region too, with a high impact on the globe.

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