



Major General (just retired!) Mick Ryan @WarintheFuture *Fri Mar 25 21:01:52 +0000 2022*

A month has passed since the beginning of the Russian invasion of **#Ukraine**. Today I will examine again how the Russian campaign continues to evolve, particularly in light of today's briefing by Russian Colonel General Rudskoy. 1/25
<https://t.co/CObnvmyKbd>



2/25 As always, a shout out to those reporting on the Russian invasion. This includes [@KofmanMichael](#) [@maxseddon](#) [@IAPonomarenko](#) [@RALee85](#) [@shashj](#) [@DanLamothe](#) [@ikhurshudyan](#) [@IanPannell](#) [@ChristopherJM](#) [@KyivPost](#) among others. Please follow them.

3/25 Today, General Rudskoy claims "the main thrusts of the first stage of the operation have been completed." Note he uses 'main thrusts completed' not 'objectives achieved'. <https://t.co/A5u9bbvXK6>

4/25 Russia's Plan A to use light forces – supported by an 'air campaign lite' - to seize Kyiv and other key points, capture government leaders and force a political accommodation from Ukraine, had obviously failed within 48 hours.

5/25 Recommendation for future military planners – using light, airborne forces against prepared and defended locations with mechanised forces is a bad idea. Just watch "A Bridge Too Far".

6/25 Russia, its opening gambit foiled, needed a Plan B. And it had to use the forces already assembled around the periphery of Ukraine.

7/25 So, the Russian campaign Plan B was a 'creeping, multi-axis attrition'. It featured more firepower, as well as destruction of smaller cities to set an example for Kyiv. Plan B also appeared to hope that the Russian Air Force eventually turned up.

8/25 And it is clear now that the majority of the forces used for Plan B were ground combat centric with a very light logistic footprint. These forces were used on three separate fronts (north, east and south) without obvious overall coordination.

9/25 The Russian high command had rolled the dice and rested Plan B on 'mass on multiple fronts' being able to win the day in the north, east and south. But once that 'mass' runs out of food, fuel and ammunition, it loses military utility. And can become a stationary target.

10/25 The Russians continued to take heavy casualties with this plan B. They have given up many lives for small gains in terrain. Rear area security also suffered, with the Russians pushing forward as much combat power as possible.

11/25 So Plan B did not work out either. The Russian high command had to go back to drawing board (again) with their campaign design. And because it appears they have not appointed an overall theatre commander, Moscow has to coordinate with commanders in the field.

12/25 About a week ago we saw the start of Russia's 'Plan C' campaign in Ukraine. It was an even more ad hoc & more brutal plan than their two previous attempts. It featured holding gains, long range firepower on cities, and destroying as much infrastructure as possible.

13/25 Rudskoy claims city bombardment aimed to cause "damage to military infrastructure, equipment, personnel of the Armed Forces of Ukraine." This is code for expending large amounts of cheap artillery & rockets to terrorise Ukrainian civilians & force a political accommodation.

14/25 But rear area security shortfalls meant the Ukrainians continued to attrit the Russian force. Ambushes on logistics convoys continues as a source of losses in personnel, supplies and equipment to add to combat losses.

15/25 Summing up, Russia has not achieved its key military objectives in the north, east or south. It is desperately trying to capture Mariupol as a consolation 'victory'.

16/25 Therefore, the Russians appear to be evolving their Plan C campaign. What does this look like? First, it accepts that a short war is now not possible. The Ukrainians are in this for the long haul to defend their nation. The Russians appear to be saying the same.

17/25 Rudskoy implies this in his briefing today – "In general, the main tasks of the FIRST STAGE of the operation have been completed." Russia may need to mobilise more personnel and industry to replace precision weapons, ammunition and other equipment lost so far. <https://t.co/FJq8y1sTJz>



18/25 The evolved Plan C may see the Russians choose a single front, focussing reinforcements & other supporting assets there to secure more tactical success, or even a breakthrough. Given attacks on Dnipro, and some advances in Luhansk / Donetsk, this may be in the east.

19/25 Rudskoy notes this area as a priority in his briefing – "The combat potential of the armed forces of Ukraine has been significantly reduced, allowing us, I emphasize again, to focus the main efforts on achieving the main goal - the liberation of Donbas."

20/25 So we may also see a move of combat forces, artillery and logistics to the east. And in other areas, we may see soldiers 'digging in' and constructing trench lines as a sign the Russians don't intend to continue their advances on these axes in the short term. <https://t.co/I2mkFViO4I>



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Russian forces are roughly 15-20 km northwest of Kyiv's city center, senior U.S. defense official says. They appear to be building defensive positions.

"What we're starting to see now is they're basically digging in."

8:16 AM · Mar 24, 2022 · Twitter Web App

21/25 The evolved Plan C is also likely to feature greater emphasis on air power. There is evidence that the Russian Air Force has stepped up the number of daily sorties in the past week. <https://t.co/G0t99zHQaB>

22/25 Possibly, entry of forces from Belarus could be used as a deception plan to cover for a larger offensive in the east. Or it could be used just to expand the scope of Ukraine's defensive plan, absorbing forces that could be used to conduct

any offensive against the Russians.

23/25 Worst case, the Russians might use weapons of mass destruction as well. The use of such weapons features in Russian doctrine, but given Biden's comments, Russian leadership will have to carefully think through potential NATO reactions to such use. <https://t.co/QEwCAMLG2l>

24/25 A final part of this evolved campaign might be in Russian military leadership. Possibly, Putin could purge his senior military leadership to shift blame while also searching for a more effective strategy. And appoint an overall joint commander for Ukraine.

25/25 Russia has shown the ability to adapt. But all their adaptation has been upon the back of military failures. It is likely they will shift to a revised, longer-term campaign to husband their forces, attrit the Ukrainians & gain ground in the east. End. (Image-@UWeapons) <https://t.co/Adi0s9t3Zb>

