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Putin's biggest lie



Lists of Vladimir Putin's lies about the war in Ukraine include his claims that the government in Kyiv is being run by neo-Nazis, that Nato promised not to expand eastward and that Ukraine was planning to attack Russia. Missing from the lists is the biggest lie of all - that Russia intended to capture Kyiv in three days. This is repeatedly attributed to Putin, but it was apparently first uttered by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff [Mark Milley](#), who told U.S. lawmakers in closed-door briefings on Feb. 2-3, 2022, that a full-scale invasion could result in the fall of Kyiv within 72 hours. It was this belief that united the West around Ukraine, that led to claims that Putin wouldn't stop in Ukraine and that caused Europe to inflict irreparable economic damage on itself in the form of sanctions and mindless defense spending. This gave Putin exactly what he wanted. Four years into the war, the West still chooses to believe that Putin's biggest lie is true, and it pats itself on the back for seeing through all the others.

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