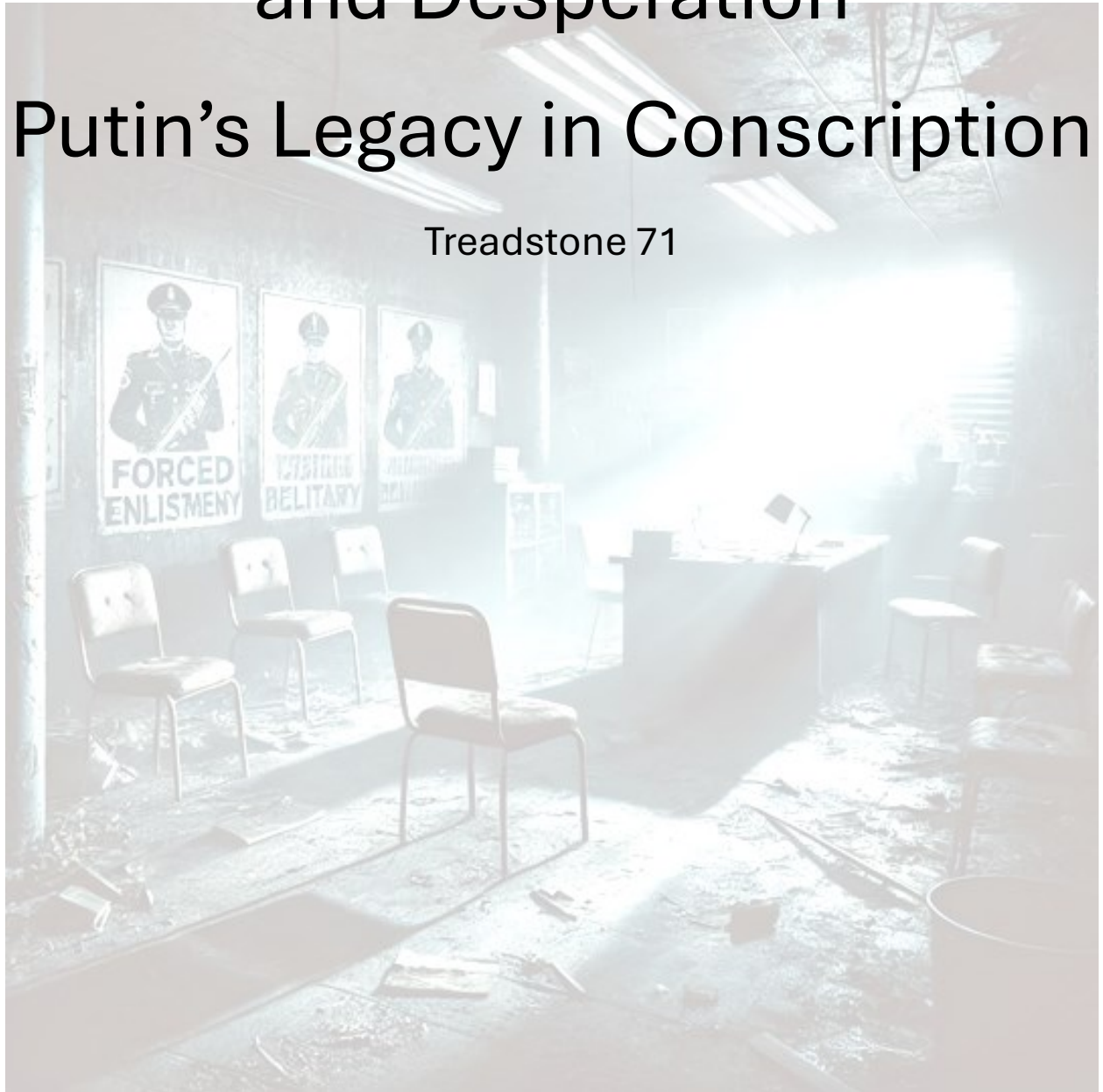
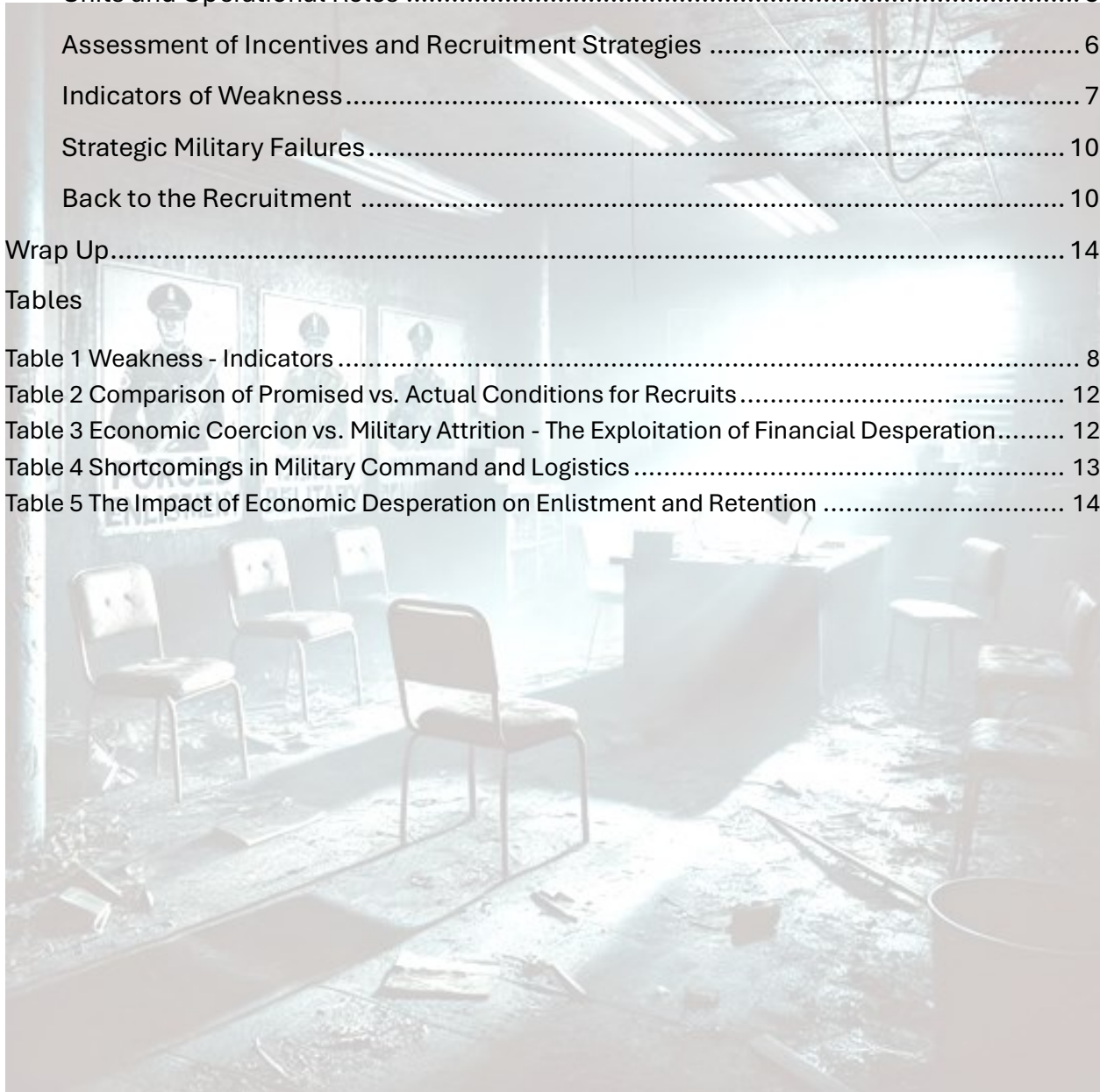


Empire of Broken Promises and Desperation Putin's Legacy in Conscription

Treadstone 71



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Introduction

The ongoing conflict has laid bare the brutal inefficiency and exploitation within the Russian military structure, driven by a leader who prioritizes a false image of power over his people's well-being. Economic collapse, spurred by sanctions and rampant inflation, has forced countless Russian citizens into military service. Rather than a patriotic duty, enlistment has become a means of economic survival in a nation where financial despair leaves few alternatives. The promises of high wages, benefits, and incentives contrast sharply with the grim battlefield reality—an orchestrated bait-and-switch where financial desperation is manipulated to fuel a failing war machine.

For those enlisted, however, the promises quickly disintegrate. Poorly trained and equipped, recruits are thrust into a brutal meatgrinder with subpar leadership, inadequate supplies, and an inflated officer corps now recruiting men up to age 54. Tables of comparison reveal not only the stark gap between recruitment promises and operational reality but also the cascading effects of a broken command structure, weak logistics, and unsustainable attrition rates. Each table highlights the tragic exploitation of vulnerable citizens who, without meaningful alternatives, find themselves fodder for a conflict led by a leader more concerned with self-image than sound military strategy.

The Treadstone 71 analysis underscores the full spectrum of failures in Russia's approach - from hollow financial incentives unable to compensate for life-threatening conditions to inadequate and aging leadership recruited out of sheer necessity to the relentless consumption of soldiers pursuing an unrealistic and poorly conceived vision. The tables reveal an undeniable truth—a command that gambles with human lives and economic futures in a misguided effort to maintain a crumbling facade of power. The breakdown exposes the depth of the leadership's failures and the profound cost of its delusions in stark, unyielding detail.

The latest Russian (conscription) recruitment drive, in their words:

We are recruiting for contract service in - ● 123 OMSB LUGANSK ● 810 Navy (reserve) military unit 1154 ● 47th Tank Division. ● 69th SAM Kamenka ● 346 MTP Kursk - 51 separate logistics brigade - 8th separate railway brigade - 132nd communications brigade - 442 military clinical hospital ✓
PRIVATE **MEN - UP TO 60 YEARS OLD** ★ **OFFICERS - UP TO 54 YEARS OLD !! WE WORK WITH RELATIONSHIPS.** !! IF YOU HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR MILITARY UNIT, COME! WE ACCEPT FROM ALL REGIONS. !! LIFTING PAYMENTS 2,100,000 RUBLES AT ONCE. ★ SALARY FROM 210,000 RUB/MONTH ★ 8,000 RUB/DAY COMBAT ★ 50,000 RUB FOR EVERY KM OF PROGRESS ★

BONUSES FROM 50,000 RUBLES FOR DAMAGED ENEMY EQUIPMENT! ♦ The contract is concluded in St. Petersburg!! ✓ The candidate must have with him/her - ★ Passport, Military ID (if available), Taxpayer Identification Number (INN), SNILS, work record book (or extract from electronic work record book). MIR bank card details. ★ We make the VTB card on site. Advantages - ★ Equipped with modern equipment ★ Professional training course ★ Social guarantees and benefits ★ Accommodation and three meals a day ★ Transportation to the collection point ★ Official registration and employment ★ Life insurance ★ Combat veteran status!!! ★ AFTER SIGNING THE CONTRACT WE ISSUE COSTS ⚡ Life insurance - for injury from 350 thousand rubles to 3,000,000 million rubles. For death - 12,000.00 million rubles. 💡 You can get more information by phone -
 ☎ +79119694310 ☎ +79812716369 ☎ +79291086555 ☎ +79110847474 ☎ +79812182029
 ☎ +79817490237 ☎ +79055535355 ☎ +79323300712

Analytic Brief

The Russian leadership's exploitation of economic hardship to fuel a failing military strategy highlights a reckless disregard for citizens' lives, creating a cycle of coercion, attrition, and hollow promises that undermine military effectiveness and national stability.

"When ego drives strategy, soldiers become statistics."

The Russian government, facing high attrition rates and economic instability due to sanctions and inflation, targets its citizens with deceptive recruitment efforts. The military recruits men of all ages, offering exaggerated financial incentives to fill depleted ranks while disregarding the safety, training, and support these recruits require.

Despite minimal training and inadequate equipment, economic desperation and eroding living standards force many Russian citizens to enlist. Promises of bonuses, benefits, and stability dissolve once recruits meet brutal frontline conditions and untested leadership. This "meat grinder" strategy strains every level of military readiness, from inexperienced and aging officers to limited logistical support, creating widespread operational failures.

This approach reveals a profound misalignment between Russian military goals and its ability to achieve them, exposing an underprepared and morally strained force. The reliance on vulnerable citizens, driven to enlist out of financial need, signals severe weaknesses within the Russian state, highlighting an inability to sustain a coherent and effective fighting force. These failures contribute to growing disenchantment among the population, placing the military's long-term effectiveness and morale at risk.

The impact of sanctions has severely weakened the Russian economy, accelerating inflation

and crippling income sources, particularly in energy and manufacturing. These economic pressures force the government to expand recruitment eligibility and incentivize service with unrealistic promises, making military enlistment a last resort for many, coupled with rising military casualties and manpower shortages.

The shortfall of trained recruits and an over-reliance on poor enlistees has resulted in a fractured military effort with increasing casualties. Leadership gaps, resource shortages, and unfulfilled benefits promises erode morale and combat readiness, leading to high desertion rates and distrust among ranks. Public support wanes as families witness the toll of unrelenting deployments and unkept promises.

The coercive recruitment strategy is unsustainable, and unless the Russian leadership adapts, the military will face further degradation. The Russian propaganda video from March 17, 2018, is embarrassing, at the very least. As economic conditions worsen, the government may intensify coercion to meet military demands, risking civil unrest and further eroding public support. Without a fundamental change in strategy, Russia's military and social structures are poised to bear deep, lasting scars, with increasing resentment likely to fuel domestic instability and a weakened global position.

Analysis

The recruitment drive outlined reveals several indicators of significant personnel shortages in various Russian military units, symptomatic of Russia's high battlefield losses and current strategic vulnerabilities. The following assessment expands on the groups listed and their current operational challenges.

Units and Operational Roles

123 OMSB (Lugansk) - Operating as a Motorized Rifle Brigade, the 123rd OMSB likely provides infantry support and is tasked with securing territories and supporting armored units in the contested Lugansk region. As a focal point of Ukrainian resistance, Lugansk needs significant manpower, which these recruitment efforts suggest Russia cannot sustain internally.

810th Navy (Reserve) Military Unit 1154 - As a part of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, the 810th unit comprises naval infantry meant for amphibious operations and securing coastal areas. Its shift to reservist recruitment shows that losses or personnel shortages affect even core units designed for Black Sea dominance, likely stemming from significant engagements around coastal frontlines.

47th Tank Division - Tank divisions play critical roles in offensive maneuvers, often serving as the backbone of ground operations. The recruitment push for the 47th Tank Division suggests that attrition among tank operators and support staff has degraded combat capabilities, limiting Russia's ability to sustain armored offensives without replenishing ranks.

69th SAM Kamenka - A Surface-to-Air Missile unit, the 69th SAM is tasked with air defense, protecting ground units from aerial threats. High losses likely result from intense anti-air operations, indicating degraded air defense coverage and a need to bolster this sector to mitigate growing vulnerabilities from Ukrainian air and drone strikes.

346 MTP Kursk - This Military Technical Support unit would focus on logistics, maintenance, and technical support for frontline equipment. Recruiting from broader regions underscores significant strains on logistical units essential for sustaining prolonged military engagements.

51st Separate Logistics Brigade - This brigade handles logistics, such as supply chains and transportation of materiel, which is critical for maintaining prolonged combat operations. High turnover and a lack of skilled personnel hinder effective supply chains, which are essential for any continued presence on the battlefield.

8th Separate Railway Brigade - Specialized in managing and securing rail networks, this brigade is pivotal in moving personnel and supplies to the front lines. Recruitment signals difficulties in maintaining secured rail lines and effective logistical support due to high risks of sabotage and attacks on infrastructure.

132nd Communications Brigade - This brigade supports command-and-control communications for operational cohesion. The urgent need for recruits indicates possible disruptions in command and coordination, hampering effective communication across Russian military structures.

442nd Military Clinical Hospital - Recruitment for this hospital points to immense casualties and demand for medical services, suggesting that current medical personnel are insufficient to manage the scale of battlefield injuries, further underscoring the toll of high casualty rates.

"When leaders are blinded by illusions of power, their citizens pay the highest price."

Assessment of Incentives and Recruitment Strategies

The outlined recruitment package offers high financial incentives -

- **Immediate Payment** - 2,100,000 rubles upon contract signing implies a need for immediate personnel, reflecting the urgency and high turnover.
- **Combat Pay and Bonuses** - 8,000 rubles per day for combat, 50,000 rubles for each kilometer of territorial gain, and added rewards for destroyed enemy equipment aim to attract recruits with performance-based earnings, likely targeting those with prior military experience who can quickly integrate into combat roles.

Indicators of Weakness

- **Aging Recruits and Broadened Age Requirements** - Allowing "private men up to 60" and "officers up to 54" reflects a need to fill ranks with older individuals, a non-standard measure that reveals a reduced available pool of younger recruits. This broad age range points to strained manpower resources as Russia exhausts traditional recruitment pools.

Putin's Election Propaganda Video from March 2018 is Now a Haunting Reality – His Own



- **Dependence on "Relationships" for Recruitment** - Encouraging recruits to use connections or relationships within the military suggests reliance on personal networks rather than formal recruitment channels, indicating a weakened ability to attract new volunteers through standard recruitment appeals. This approach reflects

the low appeal of military service and potential distrust or disillusionment among the population about the military's viability and mission.

- **Location-Based Contracting in St. Petersburg** - Centralizing recruitment efforts in a major urban center like St. Petersburg may reflect regional recruitment issues, perhaps because residents of occupied regions resist joining Russian forces, necessitating recruitment in loyalist regions.
- **Enhanced Insurance Policies** - Life insurance policies offering up to three million rubles for injury and 12 million rubles for death demonstrate an acknowledgment of high mortality and injury rates. By highlighting life insurance, the military attempts to reassure recruits of compensation in the likely event of serious harm or death, indicating high battlefield risks that deter potential enlistees.
- **Professional Training and Equipment Promises** - Russia markets modern equipment and training, likely responding to criticisms of inadequate supplies and training for soldiers deployed earlier in the conflict. This concession suggests that recent recruits may lack confidence in Russia's logistical or operational capabilities due to reports of poorly equipped and trained troops.

The recruitment efforts reveal a Russian military stretched thin by sustained losses and declining morale. Efforts to recruit from varied backgrounds and offer high financial rewards signify an urgency in replenishing ranks across essential combat, logistics, and support units. This recruitment drive underscores the significant strain on Russia's human resources and exposes operational vulnerabilities that reflect Russia's limited strategic depth. Focusing on financial incentives, social benefits, and targeting relationships over traditional channels further signals deep-rooted challenges within Russia's manpower mobilization structure.

"A leader who views citizens as expendable pawns ultimately writes his own legacy in failure."

The following is a comparative table illustrating the extreme weaknesses revealed by the Russian military recruitment strategies and incentives -

Table 1 Weakness - Indicators

Weakness Category	Indicators	Explanation of Weakness
Aging Recruits	Recruitment open to men up to 60 years old, officers up to 54 years old	The increased age shows a shortage of younger, physically fit recruits, suggesting

Weakness Category	Indicators	Explanation of Weakness
		Russia has exhausted younger manpower resources.
Dependency on Personal Networks	Encouragement for recruits to join based on "relationships" within units	Highlights reliance on informal networks, which undermines traditional recruitment channels and reflects low public trust.
Centralized Recruitment in St. Petersburg	Contracts and recruitment are conducted in a specific, loyalist city	Suggests recruitment struggles in other regions, especially occupied or resistant areas, limiting recruitment scope.
High Immediate and Performance-Based Financial Incentives	2.1 million ruble sign-on bonuses, 8,000 rubles per combat day, bonuses for enemy equipment destruction	Signals desperation for recruits by offering significant financial rewards, which underscores declining appeal and high turnover.
Enhanced Life Insurance Offers	Insurance ranging from 350,000 rubles (injury) to twelve million rubles (death)	Acknowledges high battlefield mortality and injury rates, aiming to attract recruits despite severe risks.
Promise of Modern Equipment and Training	Advertises "modern equipment" and "professional training."	Responds to criticisms of poor equipment and inadequate training, signaling past failures and logistical weaknesses.
Focus on Combat Units with High Attrition	Recruitment in heavily impacted units like Tank Divisions, SAM units, and Naval infantry	Indicates heavy losses in frontline and essential combat support units, reflecting severe attrition in high-risk roles.
Expanded Logistical and Support Recruitment	Positions open in logistics, technical support, and medical units (51st Logistics, 8th Railway, 442 Clinical Hospital)	Shows strain in support infrastructure essential for sustained operations, suggesting logistical breakdowns and casualty overflows.

The above table details Russia's extreme manpower vulnerabilities, including structural limitations and resource constraints. High incentives and relaxed standards prove the strain on recruitment efforts, reflecting the broader depletion of effective military personnel in ongoing conflicts.

Strategic Military Failures

The Russian military's strategic failures on the battlefield under Putin's command reveal a catastrophic blend of hubris, disregard for human life, and reckless ambition that has yielded appalling casualties. Over 700,000 Russian soldiers and recruits have become mere fodder in what amounts to a modern meat grinder—a campaign marked by poor planning, underestimation of adversaries, and a delusional belief in swift victories. These losses starkly reflect Putin's inability to recognize the realities of modern warfare, exposing his leadership's lack of adaptability and the dangers of an unchecked ego driving war strategies.

Putin's approach mirrors the tragic, ego-driven decisions of historical dictators whose self-image clouded their judgment, leading them to sacrifice countless lives for personal glorification. This self-aggrandizement fuels not only battlefield failures but also drives an increasingly brutal cycle of attrition, where the priority is to avoid appearing weak rather than achieving coherent goals. Under Putin's direction, the Russian military relies on relentless recruitment and haphazard mobilization, forcing undertrained and underequipped recruits into the frontlines with no regard for survival.

The Kremlin's refusal to adapt or retreat reflects a destructive obsession with projecting strength despite evidence of strategic and operational failures. Like leaders who once relied on perceived invincibility to crush enemies, Putin seems to operate under the illusion that his sheer will can override logistical realities, technological deficits, and tactical shortcomings. This delusion of grandeur renders Russian forces expendable in maintaining a powerful image, eroding military morale and hollowing out the nation's operational capabilities.

Repeated blunders, including failed assaults on fortified positions and an obstinate insistence on offensive maneuvers without proper support, reveal a disturbing indifference to the human cost of war. Putin's ego-driven warpath has created an environment where military objectives become secondary to preserving his image as a forceful, untouchable leader. The result is a wasteland of losses and suffering, where the lives of soldiers are discarded in service of a failing illusion of Russian dominance. This tragic pattern, born of narcissism, delusion, and disregard for human life, will leave scars on Russian society and military legacy for generations.

Back to the Recruitment

The Russian recruitment push, juxtaposed with soaring inflation and a devastated economy, paints a grim picture of desperation and coercion. Economic hardship, driven by stringent sanctions, has degraded the Russian standard of living and left many with

dwindling choices. Men across Russia face a harrowing decision - endure crushing poverty or enter a military where they are likely to be cast into the battlefield with minimal preparation. Rising inflation compounds these pressures, eroding the value of rubles and pushing many to seek financial reprieve in the only remaining avenue offering any economic promise—military service.

The recruitment strategy itself reflects the urgency of Russia's personnel crisis. The expansion of eligible ages for recruits, *extending enlistment to men up to 60 and officers up to 54*, speaks volumes about the severe depletion of trained personnel and an officer corps in disarray. With experienced leaders lost to prior engagements or disillusioned by the realities of the conflict, Russia must turn to aging veterans or untrained civilians to fill officer ranks. This extreme measure further highlights the deficit in capable leadership, leaving newly recruited soldiers under the command of inexperienced or inadequately trained officers ill-equipped to manage complex military operations.

This cycle exposes recruits to dangerous frontline conditions with inadequate gear, minimal support, and outdated resources. Basic equipment shortages persist, from body armor to functioning vehicles, leaving soldiers vulnerable and ill-prepared. Weak leadership compounds these risks, with limited guidance and flawed tactical oversight resulting in chaotic and costly engagements. The contrast between the promises of bonuses and benefits in recruitment ads and the stark battlefield reality reveals a grim bait-and-switch, where monetary incentives mask the true costs of those who enlist.

Sanctions and economic deterioration thus function as indirect yet powerful recruiting agents, driving individuals into service against their better judgment. This coercive enlistment strategy, rooted in financial despair, forces Russia's underprepared recruits into a "meatgrinder"—a brutal cycle of attrition that the Kremlin sustains not through traditional patriotism or military honor but out of pure economic desperation. Putin's strategies ensure that these men become not honored defenders of their homeland but expendable assets, mere statistics in a conflict their leaders refuse to assess or end rationally.

The outcome is that a military is increasingly composed of those who feel they have no choice but to serve under the command of officers chosen not for skill but for the willingness to obey. These conditions spell further failure and growing resentment as families across Russia witness the needless loss of their sons, brothers, and fathers sacrificed on the altar of Putin's reckless ambitions.

We prepared tables below that underscore the consequences of Russia's military and economic mismanagement, particularly reflecting the desperation, poor preparation, and

economic strains forcing Russian citizens into dangerous service. Each table conveys harsh realities, emphasizing the failures in military readiness and the exploitation of ordinary citizens.

Table 2 Comparison of Promised vs. Actual Conditions for Recruits

Aspect	Recruitment Promises	Battlefield Reality
Financial Incentives	High monthly salary, bonuses for combat actions, and destroyed equipment	Inflation reduces real value; bonuses are delayed or unfulfilled; salaries are undermined by economic instability
Training	"Professional training course" advertised.	Minimal training is often limited to a few days, and there is insufficient preparation for modern combat.
Equipment Quality	"Modern equipment" promised.	Recruits receive outdated gear shortages in body armor, helmets, and medical supplies.
Living Conditions	"Three meals a day, accommodation, and transportation."	Necessities are often unavailable; food and water shortages are common, and adequate shelter is lacking.
Leadership	Command by "experienced officers."	Officers aged up to 54 were recruited due to shortages; leadership was often untested and ineffective.
Safety and Security	Life insurance for injury and death	High casualty rates without adequate protection; families report missing or incomplete benefits

Table 3 Economic Coercion vs. Military Attrition - The Exploitation of Financial Desperation

Factor	Economic Reality	Military Consequence
Inflation Rate	Rapidly erodes the purchasing power of rubles, pushing families into financial hardship.	Desperation drives men to enlist for quick cash despite dangerous conditions.

Factor	Economic Reality	Military Consequence
Sanctions' Impact on Jobs	Sanctions shutter businesses, especially in energy and manufacturing sectors	Displaced workers were forced to enlist to avoid poverty, leading to a militarized workforce.
Cost of Living	Basic needs are increasingly unaffordable for many	Recruits are drawn in by bonuses, often only to discover payments are unreliable and insufficient
Recruitment of Older Soldiers	Traditional workforce unable to meet needs; recruits up to age 60	Underqualified and older recruits impact military effectiveness and increase logistical burdens
Promise of Social Benefits	Promises of healthcare, housing, and other support if enlisted	Reality falls short, with promised benefits and pensions often delayed, unfulfilled, or inadequate

Table 4 Shortcomings in Military Command and Logistics

Military Aspect	Command Structure Reality	Impact on Operations
Officer Age Expansion	Recruiting officers for up to 54 years due to depleted leadership ranks	Limited physical and tactical ability, leading to lower morale and ineffective command
Inexperience of Officers	Younger, untrained individuals are promoted quickly to fill gaps	High-risk decision-making on the battlefield contributes to tactical blunders and increased casualties
Logistical Failures	Insufficient equipment and mismanagement of supplies	Frontline troops face ammunition and food shortages, limiting operational effectiveness and safety
Reliance on Conscripts	Conscription efforts continue amid low volunteer recruitment	Poor morale and lack of combat motivation, increasing desertion, and refusal to fight
Medical and Mental Health Care	Promised as a recruitment incentive	Field hospitals are overwhelmed; mental health issues are neglected, with high PTSD and injury recovery failures.

Table 5 The Impact of Economic Desperation on Enlistment and Retention

Economic Pressure	Effect on Enlistment	Effect on Retention and Morale
Food and Goods Shortages	Incentivizes enlistment through promises of food and shelter	Disillusionment when food supplies on the front are insufficient, lowering morale
High Unemployment	Forces jobless individuals to seek any financial solution	Retention difficulties as soldiers seek ways to exit service due to deteriorating conditions
Regional Economic Inequality	Recruits come disproportionately from poorer regions	Widening resentment as wealthier regions avoid enlistment, increasing desertion and refusal to serve
Devaluation of the Ruble	Salaries do not maintain value over time.	Morale plummets as recruits find real earnings insufficient to support their families back home
Lack of Civilian Opportunities	Few jobs outside the military, leading to conscription pressure	Volunteers stay hesitant, seeing no path for post-service reintegration or meaningful employment

Each table underscores the exploitation of Russian citizens through a strategy that prioritizes military quotas over genuine readiness or personnel well-being. The reckless gamble with lives and resources, combined with a damaged economy and mounting casualties, leaves recruits and their families facing a bleak reality. The tables highlight that, rather than achieving any meaningful goal, the strategy only deepens the divide between lofty promises and harsh realities, laying bear the cost of unchecked ambition and disastrous military mismanagement.

Wrap Up

Russia's military recruitment and mobilization efforts reveal the extent to which the leadership has sacrificed its people for a reckless and egocentric vision of power. The initial promises of financial stability and benefits, dangled in front of citizens enduring economic collapse and inflation, disintegrate once recruits are thrown into a chaotic, under-resourced, poorly-led battlefield. Each comparison, whether of pay and conditions or command and support, illustrates the vast gulf between the rhetoric of recruitment and the bleak reality awaiting these individuals—deployed not as honored defenders but as disposable assets in a leader's vain pursuit of dominance.



The tables expose the structural collapse of an economy unable to sustain its people outside military ranks, a command structure willing to elevate unprepared and aging officers to fill gaping voids, and a logistics system that leaves soldiers undersupplied and exposed. Elevating aging officers is not a strategy grounded in the principles of modern warfare; it is a crude exercise in desperation masked as patriotism, which forces Russian citizens to bear the cost of delusion and decay at the top. These shortcomings make clear the depth of the failures—from the exploitation of economic hardship to the assembly-line slaughter of recruits in a futile war machine—revealing a leader's willingness to gamble away an entire generation in pursuit of personal legacy, indifferent to the toll on lives, families, and the nation itself.

The outcome is unmistakable - a weakened, hollowed-out military and a populace driven to desperation, forced to serve as tools for a leader who values his image over their lives. These tables bare the pretense of strategy and strength, leaving only a bitter reality of broken promises, crushed spirits, and lives sacrificed for a doomed ambition, the legacy left by a leader so consumed with self-image that he gambles his nation's future for a war no one asked for and a victory that will never come.

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