

Rebuilding Ukrainian Armed Forces: Commanders Complain “Fresh Recruits” Being Sent “to Simply Die”

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A US report points to significant problems in rebuilding the Ukrainian Armed Forces, especially as front line commanders will lead poorly trained recruits, who will be called up under the new conscription law, “to just die.” The same report also indicates that Ukraine is now recruiting prisoners as manpower shortage is evidently having a crippling effect on the front lines.

“We had guys that didn’t even know how to disassemble and assemble a gun,” a deputy battalion commander with the call sign Schmidt told [The Washington Post](#) on June 2 when complaining that weeks were wasted on teaching new recruits basic skills, including shooting.

Schmidt also complained that commanders “are wasting a lot of time [on the front lines] with basic training [of] new infantry” and that fresh recruits were being sent to combat Russian forces “to simply die.”

According to The Washington Post,

“With Russia on the offensive, the persistent complaints are a reminder that a newly adopted mobilisation law intended to widen the pool of draft-eligible men is just one step in solving the military’s personnel problems.”

However, the situation is evidently desperate as **prison inmates are now able to join the Ukrainian military “in exchange for a chance of parole,”** a policy first adopted by Moscow but that Kiev and the West had initially propagated as a sign of the Russian

military's struggle. Rather, the Russian program, first headed by **Yevgeny Prigozhin**, was to recruit for the Wagner private military group and an opportunity for prisoners to achieve redemption, whilst the Ukrainian program is obviously a desperate attempt to deal with crippling manpower shortages.

The new mobilisation law tightens military conscription conditions to replenish the Ukrainian Army, depleted by two years of conflict with Russian troops. Ukrainian **President Volodymyr Zelensky** signed the law in April, which reduces the enlistment age from 27 to 25, expands the powers of enlistment officers, and introduces penalties for deserters with massive fines and/or prison.

Ukrainian troops are significantly outnumbered and exhausted and are being overrun by Russian forces, and although it is impossible to reverse this situation, the Kiev regime insists on continuing the war, even if conscripts, including prisoners, are inexperienced and do not have the necessary training.

“There is competition between military commanders to hire (prisoners) since there is a lack of manpower, so they really want to have access to these people,” Ukrainian **Justice Minister Denys Maliuska** told reporters visiting a prison in Kiev on May 30.

A 5th Brigade representative, using the call sign Vladyslav, told Reuters his brigade had recruited “around 90 people from the prison and was recruiting others.” Although Vladyslav said that those who joined his brigade would be “put into separate, prisoner-only units and that commanders would keep a close eye on them,” he admitted that “there was little scope for them to desert considering the amount of fire Russia could aim at a disorderly withdrawal.”

Maliuska also expressed concern on the issue of desertion, saying that prisoners will be shamed by the media, “if there is a single deserter or a single crime, that would be the type of thing in the media that would be bad PR for us.”

In fact, the manpower situation is so desperate that the Security Service of Ukraine (SSU) is forcing priests and parishes of various Christian denominations to urge the faithful to join the Ukrainian Army, a representative of the pro-Russian resistance in Kherson told Russian media.

“The SSU officials supervising churches and other religious organisations, after the publication of the new mobilisation law, forced the clergy of the denominations they supervise to convince parishioners to join the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The instructions were received in the Evangelical Christian Baptist Church, the Evangelical Faith Church, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church of Ukraine,” according to the representative.

“SSU officials constantly harass Ukrainian clergy to cooperate through the threat of forced mobilisation of the clergy themselves,” the representative said, adding that military commissars are on duty near Ukrainian churches to detain men of military age during religious services, including weddings and funerals.

Although many Ukrainians enthusiastically volunteered at the beginning of the war, the initial fervour waned as the reality of war was exposed and the acknowledgement of Russia's inevitable victory set among ordinary citizens. These manpower shortages have

sealed Ukraine's fate, and not even a fresh supply of Western military aid can reverse the tide, let alone untrained men forced to fight on the front lines. It appears that in all of Ukraine, only the Kiev regime refuses to accept this reality, meaning that inexperienced and unmotivated conscripts will continue to "simply die."

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