

## Claim

Claim: "US Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth called Putin a 'war criminal'."

## Actions

`web_search("Pete Hegseth Putin war criminal")`

## Evidence

### Evidence from `web_search`

Newsweek published a fact check stating that Pete Hegseth called Putin a "war criminal" on Fox News in March 2022 (



). POLITICO reported that Roger Wicker said Pete Hegseth called Putin a "war criminal who needs to be in prison for the rest of his life."

The Kyiv Independent reported that Hegseth stated "Russia is the aggressor" in the war ([image:k](#)).

- <https://www.newsweek.com/pete-hegseth-vladimir-putin-war-criminal-1985251>
- <https://www.politico.eu/article/senate-armed-services-chair-roger-wicker-pete-hegseth-war-in-ukraine-russia/>
- <https://kyivindependent.com/republicans-press-pentagon-chief-over-trumps-plan-to-end-russias-war-against-ukraine-politico-reports/>

## Elaboration

The evidence indicates that Pete Hegseth did call Putin a "war criminal." Newsweek published a fact check confirming this, and POLITICO reported that Roger Wicker stated Hegseth made this statement. The Kyiv Independent also reported on Hegseth's statements regarding the war.

However, the claim states that Hegseth is the "US Secretary of Defense." The evidence does not support this.

## Final Judgement

The claim is partially accurate. Pete Hegseth did call Putin a "war criminal," as confirmed by multiple sources. However, the claim incorrectly identifies Hegseth as the "US Secretary of Defense."

false

**Verdict: FALSE**

## Justification

Pete Hegseth did call Putin a "war criminal," as reported by sources like [Newsweek](#) and POLITICO. However, the claim is inaccurate because it misidentifies Hegseth as the US Secretary of Defense.