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Inciting Wars the American Way

By Todd E. Pierce
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The New York Times took notice recently of the role that so-called “think tanks” play in corrupting U.S. government policy. Their review of think tanks “identified dozens of examples of scholars conducting research at think tanks while corporations were paying them to help shape government policy.”

Unfortunately, and perhaps predictably, while their investigation demonstrates well that the US is even more corrupt, though its corruption is better disguised, than the many foreign countries whom we routinely accuse of corruption, it failed to identify the most egregious form of corruption in our system. That is, those think tanks that are constantly engaged in the sort of activities which the DOD identifies as “Information War” when conducted by foreign countries who are designated by the US as an enemy at any given moment.

Those are activities using disinformation and propaganda to condition a population to hate a foreign nation or population with the intent to foment a war, which is the routine “business” of the best known US think tanks.

There are two levels to this information war. The first level is by the primary provocateur, such as the Rand Corporation, the American Enterprise Institute, and the smaller war instigators found wherever a Kagan family member lurks. They use psychological “suggestiveness” to create a false narrative of danger from some foreign entity with the objective being to create paranoia within the US population that it is under imminent threat of attack or takeover.

Once that fear and paranoia is instilled in much of the population, it can then be manipulated to foment a readiness or eagerness for war, in the manner that Joseph Goebbels understood well.

The measure of success of such a disinformation and propaganda effort can be seen when the narrative is adopted by secondary communicators who are perhaps the most important target audience. That is because they are “key communicators” in PsyOp terms, who in turn become provocateurs in propagating the false narrative even more broadly and to its own audiences, and becoming “combat multipliers” in military terms.

It is readily apparent now that Russia has taken its place as the primary target within US sights. One doesn't have to see the US military buildup on Russia's borders to understand that but only see the propaganda themes of our “think tanks.”

A prime example of an act of waging information war to incite actual military attack is the Rand Corporation, which, incidentally, published a guide to information war and the need to condition the US population for war back in the 1990s. Rand was founded by, among others, the war enthusiast, Air Force General Curtis LeMay, who was the model for the character of Gen. Buck Turgidson in the movie *Dr. Strangelove*. LeMay once stated that he would not be afraid to start a nuclear war with Russia and that spirit would seem to be alive and well at Rand today as they project on to Putin our own eagerness for inciting a war.

The particular act of information warfare by Rand is shown in a recent Rand article: *How to Counter Putin's Subversive War on the West.* The title suggests by its presupposition that Putin is acting in the offensive form of war rather than the defensive form of war. But it is plain to see he is in the defensive form of war when one looks at the numerous provocations and acts of aggression carried out by American officials such as Victoria Nuland and General Breedlove, and the US and NATO military buildup on Russia's borders.

Within this Rand article however can be found no better example of psychological projection than this propagandistic pabulum that too many commentators, some witless, some not, will predictably repeat:

"Moscow's provocative active measures cause foreign investors and international lenders to see higher risks in doing business with Russia. Iran is learning a similar, painful lesson as it persists with harsh anti-Western policies even as nuclear-related sanctions fade.

Russia will decide its own priorities. But it should not be surprised if disregard for others' interests diminishes the international regard it seeks as an influential great power."

In fact, an objective, dispassionate observation of US/Russian policies would show it has been the US carrying out these “provocative active measures” as the instigator, not Russia.

Nevertheless, showing the success that our primary war provocateurs have had in fomenting hostility and possibly war is that less militaristic and bellicose Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), ostensibly working for “peace,” have adopted this false propaganda theme uncritically.

The Carnegie Moscow Center Foundation, which includes Russians on its staff, is a prime example. Lately, it has routinely echoed the more provocative and facially false accusations made against Russia by the outright militaristic and war instigating US think tanks. An example is in a recent article of Carnegie, entitled: Russia and NATO Must Communicate Better.

It begins: " The risk of outright conflict in Europe is higher than it has been for years and the confrontation between Russia and the West shows no sign of ending. To prevent misunderstandings and dangerous incidents, the two sides must improve their methods of communication."

Unfortunately, that is now true. But the article's author suggests throughout that each party, Russia and the US/NATO, had an equal hand in the deterioration of relations, by his evenhandedness. He wrote: "The West needs to acknowledge that the standoff with Russia is not merely the result of Russia turning authoritarian, nationalistic, and assertive," as if Western officials don't already know that that was only a propaganda theme for their own populations to cover up the West's aggressiveness.

So Americans, such as myself, must acknowledge and confront that the standoff with Russia is not only not "merely the result of Russia turning authoritarian, nationalistic, and assertive," but it is rather, that the US is "turning authoritarian, nationalistic," and even more "assertive," i.e., aggressive, toward the world

Suz Tzu wrote that a "sovereign" must know oneself and the enemy. In the case of the US sovereign, the people and their elected, so-called representatives, there is probably no "sovereign" in human history more lacking in self-awareness of their own nation's behavior toward other nations. So fanatics like the US General's we've seen at the recent political conventions and even worse, General Breedlove, are encouraged to be ever more threatening to the world's populations.

When that then generates a response from some nation with a tinpot military relative to our own, with ours paid for by the privileged financial position we've put ourselves into post WWII, our politicians urgently call for even more military spending from the American people to support even more aggression, all in the guise of "national defense."

Recognizing that must then be coupled with recognition of a US law passed in 2012 providing for military detention of journalists and social activists as the DOJ conceded in *Hedges v. Obama*. Add to that what the ACLU recently compelled the US government to reveal, the "Presidential Policy Guidance," and it is plain to see which nation has become most "authoritarian, nationalistic, and assertive." It is the United States.

The Presidential Policy Guidance "establishes the standard operating procedures for when the United States takes direct action, which refers to lethal and non-lethal uses of force, including capture operations against terrorist targets outside the United States and areas of active hostilities."

What other nation, besides Israel probably, has a governmental “Regulation” providing for assassinations outside “areas of active hostilities?”

It should readily be evident that it is the U.S. now carrying out the vast majority of provocative active measures and has the disregard for others complained of here. At least for the moment, however, the US can still hide much of its aggression using the vast financial resources provided by the American people to the DOD to produce sophisticated propaganda and to bribe foreign officials with foreign aid to look the other way from US provocations.

It is ironic that today, one can learn more about the US military and foreign policy from the Rand Corporation only by reading at least one of its historical documents, "The Operational Code of the Politburo." This is described as "part of a major effort at RAND to provide insight into the political leadership and foreign policy in the Soviet Union and other communist states; the development of Soviet military strategy and doctrine"

As this was when the Politburo was allegedly at its height in subverting and subjugating foreign countries as foreign policy, it should be exactly on point in describing current US foreign policy. This document can be found here:

That US think tanks such as Rand and the American Enterprise Institute put so much effort into promoting war should not come as a surprise when it is considered their funding is provided by the Military Industrial Complex (MIC) which Eisenhower warned us about. That this US MIC would turn against its own people, the American public, by waging perpetual information war against it just to enrich their investors, might have been even more than Eisenhower could imagine however.