

Mass Deception and the Prelude to World War

by Colin Todhunter via claire - Global Research *Tuesday, Apr 3 2018, 3:05am*

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In Libya, NATO bombed a path to Tripoli to help its proxy forces on the ground oust Gaddafi. Tens of thousands lost their lives and that country's social fabric and infrastructure now lies in ruins. Gaddafi was murdered and his plans to assert African independence and undermine Western (not least [French](#)) hegemony on that continent have been rendered obsolete.

In Syria, the US, Turkey, France, Britain, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have been helping to arm militants. The Daily Telegraph's March 2013 article "US and Europe in 'major airlift of arms to Syrian rebels through Zagreb'" reported that 3,000 tons of weapons dating back to the former Yugoslavia had been sent in 75 planeloads from Zagreb airport to the rebels. The New York Times March 2013 article "Arms Airlift to Syria Rebels Expands, With CIA Aid" stated that Arab governments and Turkey had sharply increased their military aid to Syria's opposition fighters. This aid included more than 160 military cargo flights.

Sold under the notion of a spontaneous democratic uprising against a tyrannical political leader, Syria is little more than an illegal war for capital, empire and energy. The West and its allies have been instrumental in organising the war as elaborated by Tim Anderson in his book 'The Dirty War on Syria'.

Over the last 15 years or so, politicians and the media have been manipulating popular sentiment to get an increasingly war-fatigued Western public to support ongoing wars under the notion of protecting civilians or a bogus 'war on terror'. They spin a yarn about securing women's rights or a war on terror in Afghanistan, removing despots from power in Iraq, Libya or Syria or protecting human life, while then going on to attack or help destabilise countries, resulting in the loss of hundreds of thousands of civilian lives.

Emotive language designed to instill fear about potential terror attacks in Europe or myths about humanitarianism intervention are used as a pretext to wage imperialist wars in mineral-rich countries and geostrategically important regions.

Part of the battle for the public's hearts and minds is to keep people confused. They must be convinced to regard these wars and conflicts as a disconnected array of events and not as the planned machinations of empire. The ongoing disinformation narrative about Russian aggression is part of the strategy. Ultimately, Russia (and China) is the real and increasingly imminent target: Moscow has stood in the way of the West's plans in Syria and both Russia and China are undermining the role of the dollar in international trade, a lynchpin of US power.

The countries of the West are effectively heading for war with Russia but relatively few among the public seem to know or even care. Many are oblivious to the slaughter that has already been inflicted on populations with the help of their taxes and governments in far-away lands. With the reckless neoconservative warmonger John Bolton now part of the Trump administration, it seems we could be hurtling towards major war much faster than previously thought.

Most of the public remains blissfully ignorant of the psy-ops being directed at them through the corporate media. Given recent events in the UK and the ramping up of anti-Russia rhetoric, if ordinary members of the public think that Theresa May or Boris Johnson ultimately have their best interests at heart, they should think again. The major transnational corporations based on Wall Street and in the City of London are the ones setting Anglo-US policy agendas often via the Brookings Institute, Council on Foreign Relations, International Crisis Group, Chatham House, etc.

The owners of these companies, the capitalist class, have off-shored millions of jobs as well as their personal and company tax liabilities to boost their profits and have bankrupted economies. We see the results in terms of austerity, unemployment, powerlessness, privatization, deregulation, banker control of economies, corporate control of food and seeds, the stripping away of civil liberties, increased mass surveillance and wars to grab mineral resources and ensure US dollar hegemony. These are the interests the politicians serve.

It's the ability to maximise profit by shifting capital around the world that matters to this class, whether on the back of distorted free trade agreements, which open the gates for plunder, or through coercion and militarism, which merely tear them down.

Whether it is the structural violence of neoliberal economic policies or actual military violence, the welfare of ordinary folk around the world does not enter the equation. In an imposed oil-thirsty, war-driven system of globalised capitalism and over-consumption that is wholly unnecessary and is stripping the planet bare, the bottom line is that ordinary folk – whether workers in the West, farmers in India or civilians displaced en masse in war zones like Syria – must be bent according to the will of Western capital.

We should not be fooled by made-for-media outpourings of morality about good and evil that are designed to create fear, outrage and support for more militarism and resource-grab wars. The shaping of public opinion is a multi-million-dollar industry.

Take for instance the mass harvesting of Facebook data by Cambridge Analytica to shape the outcomes of the US election and the Brexit campaign. According to journalist Liam O'Hare, its parent company Strategic Communications Laboratories (SCL) has conducted 'behavioural change' programmes in over 60 countries and its clients have included the British Military of Defence, the US State Department and NATO. According to O'Hare, the use of the media to fool the public is one of SCL's key selling points.

Among its activities in Europe have been campaigns targeting Russia. The company has "sweeping links" with Anglo-American political and military interests. In the UK, the interests of the governing Conservative Party and military-intelligence players are brought together via SCL: board members include "an array of Lords, Tory donors, ex-British army officers and defense contractors."

O'Hare says it is clear that all SCL's activities have been inextricably linked to its Cambridge Analytica arm. He states:

"International deception and meddling is the name of the game for SCL. We finally have the most concrete evidence yet of shadowy actors using dirty tricks in order to rig elections. But these operators aren't operating from Moscow... they are British, Eton educated, headquartered in the City of London and have close ties to Her Majesty's government"

So, what are we to make of the current anti-Russia propaganda we witness regarding the nerve

agent incident in Salisbury and the failure of the British government to provide evidence to demonstrate Russian culpability? The relentless accusations by Theresa May and Boris Johnson that have been parroted across the corporate media in the West indicate that the manipulation of public perception is everything and facts count for little. It is alarming given what is at stake – the escalation of conflict between the West and a major nuclear power.

Welcome to the world of mass deception à la Edward Bernays and Josef Goebbels.

US social commentator Walter Lippmann once said that ‘responsible men’ make decisions and have to be protected from the ‘bewildered herd’ – the public. He added that the public should be subdued, obedient and distracted from what is really happening. Screaming patriotic slogans and fearing for their lives, they should be admiring with awe leaders who save them from destruction.

Although the West’s political leaders are manipulating, subduing and distracting the public in true Lippmannesque style, they aren’t ‘saving’ anyone from anything: their reckless actions towards Russia could lead to a war that could wipe out all life on the planet.

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