

The Demonization of Russia's President Putin; NY Times Flubs the Facts on Ukraine and MH17

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As morally deplorable as Israel's relentless attacks on Gaza are and despite a massive financial appropriation for war weapons to be used on a defenseless Palestinian population, the odds are good that the US will not go directly to war in that conflict.

The odds, however, favor a more-than-proxy role for the US military (aka NATO) with regard to Ukraine that begins with the required demonization of Russian President Vladimir Putin. Just as the American government needed to thoroughly trash its history with Saddam Hussein and the name of Mummar Qaddafi in order to justify its attacks on their beleaguered nations, the first order of business for the US, prior to even a limited strike, is to make Putin an enemy of peace, a villain of democracy, a disreputable thug, a threat to the international order who needs to be permanently eliminated. Of the utmost importance is to eliminate any recollection of Putin's credit for stopping a US bombing campaign on Syria in August, 2013.

Alas, however, US and EU supporters of the Kiev government have to have been exceedingly frustrated that Putin has not taken the bait with the massacres in Odessa and Mariupol or the vicious attacks on the Donbas and Slavyansk or the ensuing humanitarian crisis with an estimated 40,000 refugees that have now crossed the border into Russia. Putin's reluctance to respond in kind with military force is rooted in the awareness that the US/NATO forces were crouched, waiting for a slip, an opportunity to pounce, if Russia committed itself to what would be construed as an 'invasion' of the sovereign country of Ukraine.

Even as the rebel strongholds of east Ukraine continued to suffer with [Luhansk](#), a city of 400,000 near the Russian border said to be [completely surrounded](#) by government forces, without electricity or running water and being shelled for more than the last week and as its link with Donetsk, a city of one million which has experienced heavy artillery shelling, has been broken, Putin continues to resist the provocation with [measured statements](#) and remains in the background.

What would it take, how hard would Putin need to be pushed to initiate a massive rescue of the Russian speaking population now under a vicious siege and respond with the Russian Army? If the appalling violence on civilians throughout east Ukraine was not sufficient to move Putin, then another scenario must be connived - preferably a hellacious deed where he could be universally reviled as the culprit.

And as the American mainstream media continues to inundate the public with a heightened

barrage of repetitious anti-Putin vitriol since the downing of Malaysia 17 on July 17th , media comments focus on a build up of Russian troops on the Ukrainian border but nary a mention of the carnage, suffering and critically [deteriorating](#) life - death conditions in Ukraine.

How the ground work is laid for creating public contempt against a leader who does not fall into the US orb can be found in the New York Times article of July 17th (within hours on the day of the crash) entitled [“Jetliner Explodes over Ukraine; Struck by Missile Officials Say”](#) . While the headline referred to ‘officials,’ the article actually quoted no such official while the “officials” in the headline remained anonymous throughout so the public not only does not know who the ‘officials’ were but whether, in truth, any such officials actually exists. Why would such ‘officials,’ Ukrainian or American, need to remain anonymous? If the proof is there, let’s have it and kudos to the officials who keep the public informed, right?

Here’s where it gets interesting – stay with me on this: The Times, again within hours of the crash, reported that the jet had been “blown out of the sky at 33,000 feet by what Ukrainian and American officials described as a Russian-made anti-aircraft missile.” Where did the unnamed Ukrainian official get his information that a Russian made missile was responsible? Presumably since Ukraine has yet to enter the space age with its own satellite resources, the Ukrainian official received his information from an American official within hours of the crash, both of whom then unambiguously assured the NY Times that a Russian made missile was responsible.

The Times goes on to state that “American intelligence and military officials said the plane had been destroyed by a Russian SA-series missile, based on surveillance satellite data that showed the final trajectory and impact of the missile but not its point of origin.” Aha! And so the Times informs us that here is the irrefutable evidence that hours after the crash and in an active war zone, there is confirmation that not only was a Russian made missile responsible but specifically that a Russian SA-series missile was responsible. Perhaps the aforementioned surveillance satellite data is able to detail exactly what type of missile is airborne.

So the Times further informs that not only a “Russian SA-series missile” caused the crash but that information on the day of the crash was “based on surveillance satellite data’ and that the presumably irrefutable satellite data even ‘showed the final trajectory and impact of the missile.” Double Aha! This is not only significant that very specific, detailed satellite imagery exists but even somewhat earth-shattering news because to date, no ‘surveillance satellite data’ has ever been released by the US government. And yet if the satellite data existed, why didn’t the Times publish the images? Where is that surveillance satellite data and why has any further reference to that data disappeared from public discourse?

The significance here is that accusations against Putin continue from a wide assortment of US and international corporate media elites based on the erroneous, if not deceptive fabrications reported by the NY Times as fact.

Not only did the NY Times fail to fulfill its journalistic responsibility to print the facts but they obviously did not bother to confirm the source for their surveillance satellite data quote or request copies of that data for their own independent review. They literally took the word of a government official whose identity the Times chose to withhold from the public that such data existed; inflammatory information which can only serve to directly escalate

tensions in that already war-torn part of the world. And what consequences, if any, lie ahead for a conveniently unnamed US 'official' who spread totally irresponsible, unsubstantiated hogwash as fact? Will any Congressional committee investigate before the launching of any missiles occur?

Now if those 'officials' actually had the goods on Russia, you can bet that the surveillance satellite data would have dominated prime time, a front page story for days with great fanfare on MSNBC, maybe even a President Obama power point presentation out of the Oval Office. Just imagine the hullabaloo but it's not going to happen because it may be safe to assume that those satellite images do not prove what those anonymous US 'officials' claimed.

One noteworthy example of the west's character assassination on Putin appeared in the July 26th edition of the well-respected British periodical The Economist in an (unsigned) editorial entitled [A Web of Lies](#) . While the date of the article was 9 days after the July 17th downing of MH 17, the article had to, given editorial and bureaucratic necessities, have been written at least several days prior to July 26th, less than a week after the crash and without adequate time to determine what had occurred, to conduct a fact-based research effort and to prepare a credible assortment of possible options - but that would have been a journalism of critical thinking and required a commitment to unraveling government spin.

Instead the Economist initiated a hatchet job on Putin accusing the Russians of a 'concocted propaganda about [fascists running Kiev](#)." Seriously. Are Economist editorial writers so far out of the loop that they are unaware that neo-nazis hold [high level positions](#) like Deputy Prime minister and Secretary of National Security among others within the Kiev government? With no mention of the February coup that ousted a democratically elected President, the Economist suggested that a 'high court's worth of circumstantial evidence points to the conclusion that pro-Russian separatists fired a surface-to-air missile' thereby holding Putin responsible for the alleged actions of the 'separatists'. Apparently the periodical's legal counsel failed to inform its editorial writers that circumstantial evidence is still circumstantial regardless of the court of jurisdiction. Inflammatory comments like the Russian people are 'intoxicated by his brand of anti-western propaganda' and 'Mr. Putin's Russia is fundamentally antagonistic' failed to provide any specifics to support their allegation - appearing without any sense of responsibility that its editorial was provoking a situation which needs no further provocation.

If there was any thought that the prestigious Economist with a partial ownership by the Rothschild, Cadbury and Agnelli families was above stooping, consider its support for the Vietnam war, the Iraq invasion, military action in Afghanistan, Bill Clinton's impeachment, free trade and globalization and as a neoliberal economic journal, a central bank to support the vagaries of an international financial industry.

While the article's blueprint may be from a boilerplate file of insults and repudiations that might be applied to any demon the US/UK/EU/NATO identify as worthy of assault, in its rush to judgment, the Economist implemented an unprofessional technique of name calling and personal attacks while The Times presented unsubstantiated fiction as fact, both flagrant attempts to damage Putin's public standing. Both publications unabashedly used their prestige to assail one man's reputation as more important than a respect for the integrity of its own publication and psyching its reader base to disproportionately alter previously held opinions or to so blatantly manipulate public opinion is what propaganda is all about. The readership of both the Economist and The Times deserve a better quality of reporting than

that of a gossip rag off the supermarket rack and, most importantly, reflects poorly on the democratic ideals that both publications purport to support.

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