

The “Russian Influence” Stories Promote Russia’s Might - Is Putin Paying for Them?

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Global Research, October 02, 2017

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Region: [Russia and FSU, USA](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

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It was probably premature to write [The “Russian Influence” Story Falls Apart](#):

“The story about “Russian influence” was made up by the Democrats to explain Clinton’s loss of the election and to avoid looking at her personal responsibility for it. It also helps to push the new cold war narrative and to sell weapons. As no evidence was ever found to support the “Russian influence” campaign, Facebook and others come under pressure to deliver the “evidence” the U.S. intelligence services could not produce. The now resulting story of [Russia is] “sowing chaos” is out of la-la-land.”

The last nonsense of the “Russia hacked the election” campaign was a recent letter from the Department of Homeland Security which [warned](#) 21 states, a year too late, that their election systems were attacked by something “Russia”. So far three of the 21 states have debunked the DHS claim. [Wisconsin](#), [California](#) and [Texas](#) all say that their election systems were not attacked at all and DHS had to concede as much.

These states also pointed out that the only “attacks” DHS found were port-scans of some non-election systems. Port scans are requests from one server to another to check for the availability of certain services – some computer asking another computer if a web-service or mail-service is available on it. Such requests are not attacks but regular behavior of internet systems. Sometimes email-spammers use port scans to find unsecured email-servers they could potentially abuse. These are like small time thieves checking a parking lot for the one unlocked car with the expensive camera on the front seat.

But the need to build Russia up as the new enemy is still there. How else can Europe be kept down? How else can more money be spend for useless weapon systems?

Thus the campaign has changed from “Russia installed Trump” or “Russia influenced the election” to “Russian influence wants to destroy America”. The campaign has also grow more lunatic.

Consider the Republican senator James Lankford who’s claims of “Russian influence” have been picked up by [the Washington Post](#), [Reuters](#), [NPR](#) and others. They want you to believe that Russia is involved in the NFL protests:

“We watched, even this weekend, the Russians and their troll farms, their Internet folks, start hashtagging out ‘take a knee’ and also hashtagging out ‘boycott the NFL,’ ” Lankford said at a hearing of the Senate Homeland Security Committee on Wednesday.”They were taking both sides of the argument this past weekend ...”

Surely, taking both sides on an issue which is heavily debated is a trademark of Russian spies. That is at least what the NPR author implies:

That's the very same modus operandi that Senate Intelligence Committee investigators and others have detected in Russian influence-mongers' use of Facebook last year.

No one of course has detected anything like that. Partisans and warmongers simply assert that people discussing a widely discussed issue are part of a "Russian operation". They have not provided one bit of evidence to support their claims.

The Senator's claims about the NFL discussion are obviously nonsense. But dozens of media repeated them with no questions asked. Only Matt Taibbi at Rolling Stone took [a deeper look](#):

The Post reported that Lankford's office had cited one of "Boston Antifa's" tweets. But the example offered read suspiciously like a young net-savvy American goofing on antifa stereotypes:...

Matt digs into the "Boston Antifa" twitter account and finds the two funny nerds in Oregon who are behind it. They are known for pranks and had earlier been interviewed about such stunts:

They also did things like make claims that fidget spinners caused PTSD in hurricane victims. In short, two young people goofing on the Internet.

During the 60s and 70s the assertion of then "Communist influence" over one opinion was widely used to disparage and delegitimize it. Right wing groups like the John Birch Society claimed that that whole Civil Rights movement was a Kremlin plot. FBI investigation and suppression followed such assertions. History is now repeating itself.

Everyone should be concerned when the [Washington Post](#), [Reuters](#) and [CNN](#) all try to tie Black Lives Matters to "Russian influence". "The Russians", you know, bought ads [promoting and disparaging](#) that group:

The ads reportedly centered around racial, political, and economic rifts in the U.S., with some promoting groups like Black Lives Matter and others describing the groups as a threat.

Again - "the Russians" are taking both sides. What a wicked concept.

CNN [exclusively finds](#) an anonymous facebook and twitter account named Blacktivists that amplifies reports of crimes against black people. CNN tells us that the account looked suspiciously "Russian" because?

The Twitter account, @Blacktivists, provided several clues that in hindsight indicate it was not what it purported to be. In several tweets, it employed awkward phrasing that a native English speaker would be unlikely to use. It

also consistently posted using an apostrophe facing the wrong way, i.e. "it`s" instead of "it's."

Using the wrong apostrophe must, of course, mean that Putin personally paid whoever hides behind that account.

"Russian influence" is also [responsible](#) for activism against fracking. It [pushed](#) for voting for Jill Stein, Bernie Sanders and Trump. It even bought Facebook ads promoting Hillary Clinton.

Dozens if not hundreds of stories about "Russian hacking" and "Russian influence" have been published. Not one provided proof of any nefarious Russian involvement. All hacking claims [have been debunked](#). The "influence" issues are fantasies. But that does not make them less influential. They are part of an orchestrated campaign to construct a new Cold War and to build up a caricature of Russia as the a villain.

Looking from the outside the U.S. media have simply gone nuts. There seems to be no other way to explain the silliness of their "reporting".

Then again: Could they all be under Russian influence? Are Russian secret services paying for such stories?

Consider that all the "Russian hacking" and "Russian influence" stories are amplifying (the illusion of) Russian might.

Isn't that exactly what Putin wants?

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