

US Elections: The New York Times Says “Russians Are at It Again”

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According to the [New York Times](#) those naughty Russians are at it again. Today’s online lead story entitled “Russia Reactivates Its Trolls and Bots Ahead of Tuesday’s Midterms” with the subtitle “Researchers have identified a series of Russian information operations to influence American elections and, perhaps, erode support for Ukraine” marks a new low in what the Gray Lady, self-designated as one of America’s “newspapers of record,” prefers to call “journalism.”

*The author of the piece, clearly somewhat biased over Russia and Putin, is one “Steven Lee Myers [who] covers **misinformation** for The Times. He is also the author of “The New Tsar: The Rise and Reign of Vladimir Putin.”*

Here is what it is all about:

“The user on Gab who identifies as Nora Berka resurfaced in August after a yearlong silence on the social media platform, reposting a handful of messages with sharply conservative political themes before writing a stream of original vitriol. The posts mostly denigrated President Biden and other prominent Democrats, sometimes obscenely. They also lamented the use of taxpayer dollars to support [Ukraine in its war](#) against invading Russian forces, depicting Ukraine’s president as a caricature straight out of Russian propaganda.”

Per the Times,

“The goal, as before, is to stoke anger among conservative voters and to undermine trust in the American electoral system. This time, it also appears intended to undermine the Biden administration’s extensive military assistance to Ukraine.”

Well, one might object that Ukraine’s president is indeed a figure tailor-made for ridicule as

he used to play a piano with his penis, but that is perhaps a secondary issue.

The more significant theme is that people who oppose the Ukraine war, for any number of reasons, and, particularly if they are conservatives, are becoming trolls for Russia in part due to the disinformation efforts and are being influenced by way of discussion fora like Gab.

The targets “are generally US conservatives who are maybe more accepting of conspiratorial claims” according to one of the cybersecurity experts consulted by the author. The Times links Berka, who might indeed be a made-up identity “posing as an outraged American,” to the secretive Russian Internet Research Agency in St Petersburg which it claims was involved in interfering in both the 2016 and 2020 US elections.

The Times also cites another site that it links to Russia, electiontruth.net

“For its contact information, electiontruth.net lists a cafe inside a converted gas station in Cotter, Ark., a town of 900 people on a bend in the White River. The cafe has closed, however... No one at Election Truth responded to a request for comment submitted through the site.”

One might object that neither Berka nor election.truth would appear to be a major disinformation effort sponsored by a foreign government intended to bring down the Republic. Nevertheless, the article clearly adheres to the view that anyone objecting to the continuing war in Ukraine is a Russian dupe.

It cites **Liz Cheney**, who has called the few Republicans who want to cut funding for the war as “**the Putin wing of the Republican Party,**” and Myers observes that the disinformation unfortunately echoes “a theme that has gained some traction among Republican lawmakers and voters who have questioned the delivery of weapons and other military assistance.”

Another “expert” cited in the article, one Edward P. Perez, a board member with the OSET Institute, a self-described “nonpartisan election security organization,” called the Russian efforts “manufactured chaos” in the country’s body politic - in part because the divisions in American society are already such fertile soil for disinformation. “Since 2016, it appears that foreign states can afford to take some of the foot off the gas because they have already created such sufficient division that there are many domestic actors to carry the water of disinformation for them.”

So, there is the main point of the piece. Americans who oppose the involvement of the United States in the war against Russia are little more than “domestic actors” who are peddling disinformation provided by the Kremlin. Given that this article appeared two days before national elections, the intent is clear. The Russians are, per the Times, generating disinformation about Ukraine and Americans who go along with the lies are being manipulated. Moscow is again interfering in a US national election! Vote for the Democratic candidates as they will be the ones that can be relied upon to keep the war going! Three cheers for Joe Biden!

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