

Vox Populi: Readers Comments Show anti-Putin Propaganda Not Working

By [Mike Whitney](#)

Global Research, November 24, 2014

[CounterPunch](#) 23 November 2014

Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [US NATO](#)

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Anyone who follows the news regularly, knows that the media has done everything in its power to smear Vladimir Putin and to demonize him as a tyrant and a thug. Fortunately, most people aren't buying it.

Yes, I've seen the polls that say that Putin and Russia are viewed "less favorably" than they were prior to the crisis in Ukraine. In fact, here's a clip from a recent PEW survey which seems to prove that I'm wrong:

"Across the 44 countries surveyed, a median percentage of 43% have unfavorable opinions of Russia, compared with 34% who are positive.

Negative ratings of Russia have increased significantly since 2013 in 20 of the 36 countries surveyed...

Americans and Europeans in particular have soured on Russia over the past 12 months. More than six-in-ten in Poland, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, the U.S. and the UK have an unfavorable image of Russia. And in all but one of these countries negative reviews are up by double digits since last year, including by 29 percentage points in the U.S., 27 points in Poland, 24 points in the UK and 23 points in Spain." ([Russia's Global Image Negative amid Crisis in Ukraine: Americans' and Europeans' Views Sour Dramatically](#), PEW Research)

These results strongly suggest that the public blames Moscow for the fighting in Ukraine and (presumably) agrees with the prevailing storyline that Putin is a vicious aggressor who seized Crimea in order to rebuild the Soviet Empire. The problem with the PEW survey is that the results are based random samples of nationwide face-to-face or telephone interviews.

Why is that a problem?

It's a problem because the man-on-the-street hasn't the foggiest idea of what's going on in Ukraine. All he knows is what he's heard on TV. So, naturally, when he's asked to offer his opinion on the matter, he's going to regurgitate some variation of the official version, which is that Putin is responsible.

But try asking someone who's actually been following events in Ukraine that same question, and you're going to get an entirely different answer. Among the people who follow the daily developments in Ukraine, roughly two out of three support the Russian position. This isn't something you're going to find in the survey data, but if you take the time to comb the

comments lines in the international media, you'll see what I'm saying is true.

I hadn't figured this out until last week's G-20 Summit in Brisbane when Canada's PM Stephen Harper brusquely greeted Putin saying, "I guess I'll shake your hand, but I only have one thing to say to you: you need to get out of Ukraine."

The incident immediately became headline news around the world as journalists for all the major media heaped praise on Harper for courageously "shirt-fronting" the dastardly Putin. What was left out in the media's account of the exchange, was Putin's crisp retort, which was, "Unfortunately it is impossible, (for us to leave Ukraine) because we are not there."

Touché. As you might expect, Putin's response did not fit with the media's narrative, so it was scrubbed from the coverage altogether.

The Harper incident was a particularly big deal in Canada where all the newspapers ran gushing articles lauding the prime minister for his righteousness and fortitude. Oddly enough, however, only a small percentage of the people who commented on the dust-up, saw Harper as the hero. Here's a few samples of what ordinary people had to say. This is from BobsOpinion:

"Harper embarrasses Canadians again on the international stage. It will take years for Canadians to re-build our international relationships and to re-build our reputation."

This comment is from redondex:

"Harper made a childish and baseless remark to Putin and walked off with a grin of a proud five year old spoilt kid. All Harper achieved was to ridicule himself in front of the rest of the world. That is our leaders usual behavior."

This is from Makman1:

"I was under the impression that a proper democracy would first use negotiating as a way to understand the divergent groups involved in the Ukrainian revolution and then apply a political solution, if possible. The present Ukrainian government immediately used force. PERIOD! The Harper government, instead of using its "influence" to attempt to defuse a complex situation blindly followed the actions of the USA. If Harper really cared at all he would ask his foreign minister to get directly involved with Russian and Ukrainian counterparts and help reach a compromise.... Hopefully, Harper is not supporting Ukrainian right wing fascists?"

This is from Jörð:

"It's not wise for Harper to follow America's lead on every foreign policy. The USA government has a terrible track record when it comes to getting things right in foreign lands. Also Putin was correct when he responded to Harper's comment by saying "It's impossible, we are not there." Technically Russia is not "In" the Ukraine."

This is Time4Change:

“This is another example of Harper BLUSTERING backed with NO SUBSTANCE! Why are there NO SANCTIONS on the Russian Energy Giants Rosneft and Rostec? Could it be the hundreds of billions of \$s the Russians have invested in the tar sands have caused Harper to be the SOFTEST on ACTIONS while shouting the loudest.”

And this is from Mt Athabaska:

“ ...one day Harper will reach puberty on global affairs.”

It's worth noting that these comments were lifted from article that was published by the [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation](#). I was shocked at how harshly Harper was criticized by his own countrymen. I was also surprised that the author's obvious anti-Putin bias had virtually no impact on the opinions of the people who commented on the incident. In fact, it appeared to make many of them mad.

I should also mention that I omitted all of the comments that lambasted Harper for hiding in a broom closet “while a gun battle ensued in a nearby hallway of the Parliament building in Ottawa” in early October. ([See here](#): Needless to say, Harper's comical performance at the G-20 hasn't convinced anyone that he's the courageous leader he imagines himself to be.)

The media is increasingly worried that it's losing its ability to persuade people to support policies that only serve the interests of elites. The media has rolled out all the heavy artillery in its campaign to demonize Putin, but the strategy hasn't worked. In fact, it's backfired quite badly leading some publications to cancel their comments section altogether.

And the response from readers has been huge too, mainly because the standoff between two nuclear-armed adversaries has galvanized the publics' attention. For example, in the CBC article I cited above, more than 2,500 comments have been posted already, while many of the other articles on Ukraine or Putin have exceeded 6,000 comments. This just shows how closely people are following events and how passionate they feel about the policy.

And, as we said earlier, this isn't just a Canadian phenom either. For example, here are a few of the comments I picked up from an article in the conservative UK Telegraph in an article titled [Global economy to suffer as Putin quits G20 early](#).

Zeug Gezeugt:

“The US supports the neo-Nazi ethnic cleansing campaign in east Ukraine, Russia supports the Russian speaking Ukrainian majority in the east against it. Pretty simple really, and the US enforced sanctions can only harm EU Russian relations, a win-win all round for the neoconservative hawks.”

Pamela Cohen:

“So, the media tells us in the Title that Putin is to blame when the Global

economy suffers, because he left the G20 early. What stupidity. And what a statement in bringing warships as their targeted President attends yet another meeting. Good for Putin. Blame the US-backed coup and looting and 4000 deaths on Putin, and blame the Ukrainian plane that shot down a passenger flight on him, too. Then shun him at a world meeting, as if he doesn't have the right and responsibility to defend his country's borders, Naval base, pipeline and brothers in the Ukraine as they are shelled and killed by US manipulation.

Instead of shock and awe and intruding where they didn't belong like the US in all the Mid-Eastern countries according to long-ago made plans, Putin sends humanitarian aid and the people vote in Donetsk and Luhansk.

Putin-not all Americans are stupid sheep. My apologies for the onslaught of ignorance and imperialism. You are standing up to bullies of the worst kind. The world needs peaceful solutions to restore the harm of NWO fanaticism and corrupt bankers. Hold the line."

MP Jones: "The US never ended the cold war and the 'useful idiots' in this context are us in Europe and the UK."

Richard N:

"Most British people are deeply unconvinced by the flood of US and EU propaganda over Ukraine, trying to cast Russia as the villain - when the civil war there was caused directly by the US and their EU side kicks backing a coup to overthrow the elected government of a sovereign country, Ukraine."

timepass:

"With due respect to the author, you say that his (Putin's) popularity will rise at home as a consequence of this. Please read the message boards North American and European, you will find his popularity seems to have increased everywhere.

Guess the Brains behind 5 eyes and snooping will now have to move into the new reality of the power of the internet to provide information which they would not like others to get. Just a question of time before they make their next move - Censorship!"

Busufi:

"If, the 'Seven Dwarfs' (US, UK, EU, Japan, Australia, Canada, and South Africa) like bullies, weren't so obsessed with beating Russia or China into a corner, rather than bringing Russia or China into their corner; the world would be a better place. Co-operation works better than devastation."

John Derbyshire :

"Why all this Anti Russian propaganda. The fools who run the West keep creating bogeymen Bin Laden, ISIS, oddly both had connections to Western Powers. So as we face an economic down in the world economy we need another bogeyman, and up pops Putin in the Capitalist controlled media!"

People seem to have short memories of pre Putin era, when Yeltsin backed by the West led the country to economic meltdown. Maybe he has scant regard for democratic institutions, but do Western governments support the views of the people!

All of this came about when the United States pushed Nato's borders eastward and involved themselves in the Ukraine, particularly Mr Kerry. Russia felt itself threatened not by demands of democracy a device used by the worlds superpower, but the growing influence of the United States in the region. The fact that the USA exploited ethnic tensions only shows what was their intention in the region."

petergardener:

"If the objective is to make Mr Putin appear isolated on the world stage in order to make him less popular at home, it isn't working and also shows a profound misunderstanding of the Russian mind-set. '

Our Western political leaders also have a profound misunderstanding of strategy. Just about everything they do in relation to Russia is wrong and gains the West nothing. But they do like willy waving. Just a pity they do so much damage while they are at it."

RedBaron9495: "With the public, the effect is rebounding and probably starting to gain Putin more support and worldwide sympathy. This British news forum is good example of that. They made the mistake of going into overkill.....and the public are wising up to the propoganda. They seen this all before prior to Iraq 2003 invasion...and again with Gaddafi."

Circle of DNA :

"Well, the lives of average folks in Russia has been drastically improved since Putin took the reins of power. He defends Russian interests, fights the empire of chaos, and is massively supported by his people. He is also well educated and a first class statesmen. What is there not to like about him?"

Alltaxationistheft: "The Russian people appreciate how lucky they've been for Vladimir Putin to be around at the right time to resist the Neocon supremacist Wolfowitz doctrine..."

Since the 1990s , the war mongering maniacs in the West have been planning to asset strip, and plunder Russia via "liberal democracy", claiming its natural resources while funding serial inter-ethnic tribal wars via US allies Qatar and Saudi Arabia...

In the 1990s, Russian people were driven into starvation ,prostitution and suicide under pro American "Liberal" US corporate puppet Yeltsin... but Putin kicked the CIA EU Mossad lunatics out and has been re-building a Russia into a world power ever since."

anonymous:

"The classless western free (loading) world that produces very little except paper currency, lies and bullshit. I am surprised Mr. Putin came and surrounded himself with such low life scum.

When all the western oligarchs hate someone as much as they hate President Putin, you know he has to be doing something right."

There's no need to be selective. Curious readers should go to any editorial platform that covers the crisis in Ukraine and judge for themselves if what I'm saying is true or not. The comments above are in no way extraordinary. What they do show, however, is that the media is losing the propaganda war in pretty stunning fashion, and that's a huge victory for ordinary people. It's very difficult for elites to prosecute their criminal wars or implement their rip-off economic policies when people can clearly see what they're up to.

Now check out this article in the German paper Zeit Online where the author bemoans the media's loss of influence. The article is titled "How Putin Divides":

"Why do so many German citizens judge the crisis in Crimea in a completely different way than politicians and the media?

In my 30 years of experience with debates, I have never seen anything like what is now happening in Germany in the dispute over Russia and Crimea....

Unless surveys are misleading, two-thirds of German citizens, voters and readers stand opposed to four-fifths of the political class - in other words, to the government, to the overwhelming majority of members of parliament and to most newspapers and broadcasters. But what does "stand" mean? Many are downright up in arms. And from what one can gauge from letters to the editor, the share of critics seems significantly higher now than what was triggered by Sarrazin's inflammatory book back then." (Zeit Online)

Did you catch that part about the "two-thirds of German citizens.. stand opposed to four-fifths of the political class...and to most newspapers and broadcasters"?

That's a triumph in itself, isn't it? And what is the issue they disagree about?

They disagree "about the conflict between an aggressive autocrat (Bad Vlad) and Western democracies."(the Washington-led troublemakers)

Here's more from the same article:

"...the legitimacy of international law is being questioned in an offensive manner, while the legitimacy of Putin's nationalist-imperialist ideology is being seriously considered..... It doesn't do any good to accuse the majority of sheepishness or base economic selfishness, even if that seems to be the driving motive of some business leaders... The issue goes deeper, much deeper." ([How Putin Divides](#), Von Bernd Ulrich, Zeit Online)

"The legitimacy of international law is being questioned"?!?

Have you ever read such crybaby gibberish in your life?

Why is "the legitimacy of international law is being questioned"? Because people don't accept blindly what they read the papers and hear on the news anymore? Because corporate editors no longer control how people think about issues? Because people are using their critical thinking skills to see through the lies and bullshit that idiots like the

author ladle out in heaping doses every day? Is that why?

It seems to me that that's a positive development, that people should question whatever they read in the papers and look for other sources of information before they form an opinion.

The bottom line is that no one believes the goofy propaganda the western media is trying to ram down the everyone's throat anymore.

As kyle555 at Zero Hedge says: "India, China, Brazil and a host of other countries, representing more than half the world's population, aren't buying the western imperialist narrative on Ukraine. Nor are major segments of the domestic populations of the countries that are warmongering against Russia."

Nor do they believe that US wars are a force for good in the world. Here's strannick at Zero Hedge:

"Russia has seen firsthand the American dream for other nations, as American backed Oligarchs pillaged Russia while it's people starved and were impoverished. Putin loves his country, and won't sit on his thumbs while America attempts to encircle it through proxies while rationalizing its actions through corrupt MSMedia propaganda."

Nor are they buying the "Putin is Hitler" crappola.

This is from smacker:

"People see in Putin a proud national leader who has the guts to stand up to our own criminals and who has over 80% support from his own population. That is enough to admire the guy, whatever else he might be."

This is from Gaius frakkin':

"A lot of the hatred from the political puppets in the West is due to Putin's popularity. They're jealous sociopaths who yearn to be respected and admired as much as him. The fact that Putin's popularity is never mentioned is the key tell."

And this from Joe Tierney:

"Vladdy-Poot is hammering home the point that the euros need to stop being America's bitches, think for themselves, consider the terrible "costs" accruing to them for "wearing the blue dress" for America.

...America's "global chaos ploy" is failing. Its cynical, "throw everyone under the bus" strategy just to cut across the rise of Russia-China is exposed for what it is - America cares nothing about the euros or anyone else. All it cares about is its own global dominance in perpetuity, no matter the "costs" to the rest of the world, including its friends and allies.

Putin has balls the size of the moon, and you can damn well bet that right now

Russia and Putin are secretly being cheered on a grand scale around the globe.”

There’s a reason why, according to Gallup, [Trust in Media \(is at an\) All-Time Low](#). It’s because the corporate media is the most perfidious, double-dealing, hypocritical institution in the country today. That’s why the anti-Putin propaganda has fallen on deaf ears. It’s because most people know you can’t believe anything you read in the news.

*Mike Whitney lives in Washington state. He is a contributor to [Hopeless: Barack Obama and the Politics of Illusion](#) (AK Press). *Hopeless* is also available in a [Kindle edition](#). He can be reached at fergiewhitney@msn.com.*

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