

Wikileaks and Media Disinformation

North Korea, Iran and Belarus

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Much is being written in the mainstream press about the internet whistle-blowing website Wikileaks.

But the interpretation and significance of those Wikileaks stories disseminated throughout the corporate media must be subjected to careful and critical analysis.

As readers of Global Research and other alternative media outlets know, there is little that is particularly shocking about the recent Wikileaks. What is striking about many of the latest leaks is their conformity to the lies and disinformation regularly diffused by the mainstream media.

The upshot of this is that, while exposés of American war crimes should damage America's imperial ambitions, other 'leaks' could actually serve the opposite purpose, especially when they are uncritically reported as 'revelations'. In this article we are going to look at two examples of how Wikileaks stories could be used to further a US imperialist agenda.

Wikileaks on Belarus

The first example concerns the Republic of Belarus. In a Wikileaks document released on December 1 and reported in The Messenger Georgia's English language newspaper. The Wikileaks reports the statement of the Spanish prosecutor José Gonzalez who accuses Russia, Belarus and Chechnya of being 'mafioso' states. According to The Messenger 'The statement was made by Gonzalez on January 13 this year during a session of the Spanish-American working group on combating terrorism and organised crime.

Wikileaks reports that the information was sent by the US embassy in Madrid to the US government with the comment that the remarks were deep and valuable since the author had knowledge of the Euro-Asian mafia.' (1)

What is interesting here is the suggestion that the remarks are deep and valuable due to the author's so-called 'knowledge' of the Euro-Asian mafia. The inclusion of Belarus in this 'leak' is particularly puzzling. Belarus has one of the lowest crime rates in Europe. The President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko has been continuously re-elected since 1994, due to his progressive social policies and no one denies his obvious popularity.

Yet he is consistently slandered as a 'dictator'. While Belarus does have close connections with Russia, relations between the two countries have soured recently over energy disputes, geopolitical differences and Belarus's refusal to pursue free-market policies.

Belarus and Alexander Lukashenko in particular, has been indefatigably demonised in the international press for his refusal to privatise the Belarusian economy, opening up publicly owned industries to international, finance capital mafia.

President Lukashenko's refusal to indebted his country through IMF loans together with the robust performance of the Belarusian economy since the outbreak of the global economic crisis, have won the Belarusian leader the praise and close friendship of Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez, who has described Belarus as model socialist economy.

Yet Wikileaks considers a flippant and mendacious comment by a Spanish prosecutor to be 'deep and valuable'? Here we can see ideology masquerading as objective truth. A flippant opinion by a Spanish prosecutor is considered 'deep and valuable' because he should know such things.

The Wikileak is in reality not a revelation at all. It is simply the publication of a highly dubious statement with an ideological assumption appended. Here the Wikileak serves to bolster the negative view of the country engineered by the acolytes of the corporate media to demonise a respectable socialist democracy. Far from undermining US imperialism, this Wikileaks 'revelation' slanders a law-abiding country by associating it with criminality and terrorism.

Since the election of Alexander Lukashenko in 1994 the demonization of Belarus has taken the familiar route of 'human rights' violations and lack of 'liberal democracy', this in spite of the fact that Belarus has held more referenda in the last decade than any other country in Europe, and the so called Human rights violations are minimal in comparison to countries praised by the 'international community' such as Latvia, Lithuania, The Czech Republic, Romania, Britain, Poland and other countries praised by the EU and the US, that is to say 'the international community'.

Belarus has been called an 'authoritarian' regime by left liberals with a less than realistic understanding of socialism, and an outright 'dictatorship' by the corporate press, who view any regime that controls the excesses of individual greed a 'violation of human rights'. The problem with Belarus for the 'international community' is that it has not embraced capitalism and has some of the highest levels of social equality of any country in the world.

Belarus sets a bad example and that is why one never reads any articles in the bourgeois press that tell the truth about this country.

In a hostile policy paper the Polish academic Antoni Kaminski bluntly states international finance capital's principal problem with Belarus.

'The liberal-democratic transition in the post-communist world has, however, proven to be difficult because it embodies a social revolution: it is a move from one type of social order to its logical contradiction. The more successful a country had been in building its communist regime, the more difficult it is for it to carry out the liberal-democratic transformation.' (2)

The problem with Belarus, then, is that communism has been a success and the Belarusian people are not interested in opting for 'its logical contradiction' of mass unemployment, poverty, criminality and misery, unlike their Eastern European neighbours.

Belarus is anything but a Mafia state. If there is Mafia activity in Belarus, it is, to a large extent, emanating from countries attempting to destabilise its socialist economy. That is to

say, youth groups financed by the National Endowment for Democracy in the USA or other crime gangs from Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia and Poland.

It is indeed surprising that Wikileaks has not yet revealed much about the CIA torture chambers in the US client-states surrounding Belarus. If such stories are leaked, they are unlikely to find their way on to the pages of the liberal bourgeois media.

This slanderous accusation released by Wikileaks against Belarus is a cogent example of how mass disseminated Wikileaks reports could operate in the coming months. The point here is not that the statement was manufactured by Wikileaks in order to demonise Belarus. Rather a statement published by Wikileaks is being used by the mainstream press to corroborate the lies which it itself has been spreading about the Republic of Belarus.

Wikileaks on the North Korean and Iranian Threat.

Another notable example of dubious wikileaking concerns North Korea. On the website, Zcommunications, journalist Christopher Hope in an article entitled ' Wikileaks sparks world diplomatic crisis' writes:

'One report said that Wikileaks had 251,287 cables from 270 US embassies and consulates from a single computer server.

The leaked documents went on to make further allegations. They claimed that Iran had obtained missiles from North Korea to give it the capacity to launch strikes on capitals in Western Europe for the first time.

According to a cable dated last Feb 24, North Korea sent to Iran 19 of the missiles, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead. Intelligence agencies believe Tehran is some way from developing a nuclear warhead. The officials said the deal had significantly advanced Iran's development of intercontinental ballistic missiles' (3)

This 'leak' (a US State Department cable) is simply reported here but there is no comment on the veracity of this allegation by the US state department. Is this Wikileak likely to be true?

The same report was carried by the Jerusalem Post on 29th of November with the headline:

'Iran obtained 19 advanced North Korean missiles'. Again, we are told that 'capable of hitting major cities in Western Europe and Russia, according to documents in the latest release by Wikileaks on Monday'.

Neither of the two articles questions the veracity of these Wikileaks.

Does any of this sound familiar? Have we forgotten the media hysteria about weapons of mass destruction during the run-up to the Iraq war? Saddam's WMDs, we were told, could target cities in Western Europe and Britain in 40 minutes!

Now similar claims are being made in the Israeli press, the Western media and several

alternative media outlets. The veracity of the leaks is not questioned., with the mainstream press giving full coverage to Assange.

North Korea has never had any intentions of attacking other countries with nuclear weapons.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been defending itself against US aggression for over 60 years. It has been the longest anti-imperialist resistance in modern history. North Korea might seem strange to outside observers but they are not crazy.

The American historian Bruce Cummings in his revealing book North Korea quotes an American official who met the DPRK leader Kim Jong Il in 2000 who had this to say about the North Korean leader " he's amazingly well-informed and extremely well-read.. he is practical, thoughtful, listened very hard. He has a sense of humour. He's not the madman many people portrayed him as." This is a far cry from the psychotic, Charles Manson-like madman universally propagated by the mainstream media. The DPRK has never been a threat to international security. It is simply a country that has refused to be colonised by the United States. (4)

The same corporate media outlets that lied about WMDs and much else, the media of embedded journalists, think tank hacks, and career swindlers has now suddenly become a radical debunker of US imperialist lies, and yet this debunker of US lies is also corroborating US claims about the grave danger presented to civilisation from North Korea and Iran, two states from Bush's Axis of Evil. How should we interpret this?

All the cables prove is that US state department officials 'believe' North Korea and Iran are a threat. It is highly likely that they do believe such things. But this does not mean that their beliefs correspond to reality. US officials also believe that America wants to spread democracy. It is highly likely that most US officials believe their own lies.

Such reported beliefs can be manipulated by real rogue states such as the United States and Israel for their own political purposes.

Israel and Wikileaks

Israel has been pushing the supposed connection between North Korea and Iran for some time. In 2006 the Israeli columnist with the Jerusalem Post, right-wing extremist Caroline Glick wrote an article calling for the bombing of Iran on the pretext that North Korea was supplying the Islamic Republic with long-range nuclear weapons. None of these claims have ever been independently verified.

The latest Wikileaks has added grist to Glick's belligerent mill. In an article on her blog entitled 'The Wikileaks Challenge' she writes

'In spite of proof that North Korea is transferring advanced ballistic missiles to Iran through China, again confirmed by the illegally released documents, the US continues to push a policy of engagement based on a belief that there is value to China's vote for sanctions against Iran in the UN Security Council. It continues to push a policy predicated on its unfounded faith that China is interested in restraining North Korea.' (5)

Here the Wikileaks reports are accepted as constituting 'proof' that North Korea has long-range nuclear missiles capable of targeting European cities and that those missiles have been supplied to the Islamic Republic of Iran. While Miss Glick huffs and puffs about the 'attack on America' initiated by Assange, the real point of her article is that the US must crack down on dissident media at home and bomb Iran.

Glick summarises the Wikileaks problem thus:

'THE MOST important question that arises from the entire WikiLeaks disaster is why the US refuses to defend itself and its interests. What is wrong with Washington? Why is it allowing WikiLeaks to destroy its international reputation, credibility and ability to conduct international relations and military operations? And why has it refused to contend with the dangers it faces from the likes of Iran and North Korea, Turkey, Venezuela and the rest of the members of the axis of evil that even State Department officers recognize are colluding to undermine and destroy US superpower status? '(6)

Glick calls Juan Cole, professor of history at the University of Michigan, a 'conspiracy theorist' for daring to claim in a recent article for the Guardian Newspaper that Israel was responsible for Saudi Arabia's desire to have Iran bombed! This would be funny were it not from a writer who is the Deputy Managing Editor of the Jerusalem Post and Senior Fellow for Middle Eastern Affairs at the Centre for Security Policy in Washington DC.

It is well known that Saudi Arabia and Iran are enemies. Saudi Arabia fears the Iranian model of "Islamic democracy". It also fears Iran's growing economic and political power in the region. The Saudi oligarchy is propped up by Israel and the United States. These are well documented facts. But well documented facts must be denounced as 'conspiracy theories', the post-modern term for heresies.

One could argue that Wikileaks has, in fact, done Israel and US imperialism a favour. He has highlighted the problem of internet control and has also provided 'proof' that North Korea and Iran are a threat to the world. I am not claiming that Assange has done this deliberately to deceive the public. But the Israeli press is pushing the idea that these 'revelations' of US policy maker's opinions constitute 'proof' of Iran's threat to the world and internet censorship could soon become a reality.

Cables supposedly 'leaked' by an internet website containing such dangerous allegations that could serve as a pretext for a global nuclear war should be subjected to the most stringent expert analysis. This will be the job of the alternative media in the coming months as the corporate media is likely to prevent such 'revelations' as facts in an effort to drum up support for the annihilation of Iran and North Korea.

Spurious claims about connections between North Korea and the Islamic world have been made before. In 2009, the French journalist Guillaume Dasquié published an article in Intelligence Online, claiming that Hassan Nasrallah, leader of the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah had been trained in North Korea. The article, widely distributed throughout the US Congress, was later proved to be a hoax. (7)

In 2002, Dasquié and Jean Charles Brisard admitted having invented allegations implicating certain individuals from Saudi Arabia in the 911 terrorist attacks on New York. (8)

Professor Noam Chomsky of MIT has written an article for Znet with the heading ' Why Wikileaks won't stop the war'(9). But his approach assumes that Wikileaks serves the function of stopping the war. While Wikileaks has revealed many US war crimes, the possibility of covert intelligence penetration of the whistle-blowing site cannot be overlooked.

The question that needs to be asked now is: whose interests does Wikileaks really serve? Wikileaks can be made serve the cause of peace if a full and critical analysis is carried out every time the corporate press misuses it to trick the public into supporting an imperialist agenda.

The three 'enemies' of America mentioned in this article Belarus, North Korea and Iran, all have one thing in common. They have largely state-owned economies. This is what makes them a 'threat to international security'. The final phase in the War on Terrorism will be to destroy the last obstacles to total US economic and political control of the planet.

Wikileaks could yet become the disinformation tool used by Israel and the United States to justify a nuclear war, finally bringing about what the pentagon has referred to as 'full spectrum dominance'. But it could also be a tool to undermine this project provided people read and analyse its so-called revelations with extreme caution, exposing their mass disseminated misuse.

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Notes

1 http://www.messenger.com.ge/issues/2249_december_6_2010/2249_econ_one.html

2. Belarus as an object of Polish Security Concerns in Belarus at the Crossroads (Washington DC.Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.1999) p.41

3

<http://www.zcommunications.org/wikileaks-releases-state-department-cables-by-christopher-hope>

4 North Korea (London/New York: The New Press,2004) p.47

5 <http://www.carolineglick.com/e/2006/06/>

6<http://www.jpost.com/Headlines/Article.aspx?id=197228>

7<http://www.voltairenet.org/article154278.html>

8 <http://www.voltairenet.org/article143901.html>

9 <http://zcommunications.org/why-wikileaks-won-t-stop-the-war-by-noam-chomsky>

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