

Chaos And Propaganda: Washington's "Reality-Based Order"

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

In 2011, Hilary Clinton announced the US was at war. She wasn't referring to the US's ongoing invasions, wars and occupations but an ideological war for hearts and minds. Clinton lamented the fact that, since the end of the cold war, US global ideological influence had weakened, especially with the advent of the Internet and TV channels like RT.

Of course, Hollywood still manages to propagate the 'great American myth' globally every day: the US as the beacon of freedom, as the flagship of democratic ideals, based on the great 'American Lie' of the great 'American Dream' whereby the individual can somehow miraculously overcome adversity and make it in life, just as long as s/he keeps his or her nose to the grind. US mass culture exported across the globe. The 'anyone can make it' syndrome sugar coated with a sprinkling of 'freedom and democracy' then rammed down the collective throat by Hollywood, which magics away into thin air the reality of capitalism and its deeply embedded [structural power relations](#). As the commentator and comedian George Carlin once stated: "The American Dream, you have to be asleep to believe it."

And let's not forget Hollywood's retelling of history with Uncle Sam the movie star, the liberator of the oppressed, the protector of universal good, the sweeper of its mass terror and atrocities away from the screen and conveniently under the carpet.

The internet, Press TV, RT and the 'alternative media' in all its forms have however eaten into Washington's Hollywoodesque version of reality and propaganda. Despite the ownership of the corporate media becoming [ever more concentrated](#) in the hands of massive conglomerates and it promoting a common news agenda, the US has had to face up to the harsh truth that it cannot dominate the debate to the extent it once did when it comes to shaping the analysis and reporting of news through its compliant media outlets.

Around the time Clinton was voicing her concerns, Edward Snowden was revealing what many of us had already strongly suspected - people across the world and foreign governments were being monitored by the US government. Before Snowden became public enemy number one, Julian Assange carried that mantle. The US state-corporate machine did almost everything in its power to destroy Assange and WikiLeaks. Most debilitating of all was the shutting down of WikiLeaks' access to finance, notably via PayPal, MasterCard, the Swiss bank PostFinance, Moneybookers, Bank of America and Visa Inc.

Bank of America was accused of being especially strident in attempting to discredit and destroy WikiLeaks with [various dirty tricks](#), including backing a smear campaign that involved the use of false documents, disinformation, and sabotage. These actions along with demands that Snowden be 'handed over' by the countries the US has been caught red handed of spying on, came as little surprise. The US deems it fit to break international laws

with impunity, yet bleats about legalities where Snowden or Assange is concerned.

But things are not always so straightforward. Not everyone can be banished to a foreign country or incarcerated in an embassy in London. As a result, former CIA boss General Petraeus is on record as saying US strategy is to conduct a [war of perceptions continuously](#) through the news media. We don't have to imagine much that the prevailing view of world conveyed through the mainstream media and swallowed by many people is based on 'a pack of lies' carefully crafted by men like Petraeus and the State Department's PR machine. British MP George Galloway's [powerful performance](#) in front of a US Senate committee in 2005 highlighted it as such in the case of the invasion of Iraq.

These days, despite state-corporate control and [manipulation of the mainstream media](#), many see through the charade of 'liberal democracy'. The more the US lacks control over 'the message', the more it has to resort restrictions on freedoms. The more paranoid it becomes, the more penetrating and widespread the surveillance and 'information gathering' is.

So it was quite revealing to see [this week the US House of Foreign Affairs Committee](#) discussing Russia's 'weaponisation' of information. Chairperson Ed Royce claimed that RT is part of a Russian disinformation campaign and asserted that if certain things are repeated over and over again, a conspiratorial theory begins to take on a life of its own.

The hypocrisy was palpable.

The US should know about such things. given its demonisation of Russia and the construction of a narrative of 'Russian aggression' in Ukraine that has been on continuous loop and churned out by the corporate media for quite some time now. This story of course has [no basis in reality](#) and is intended to mask a wider imperialist agenda to destabilise Russia.

Royce said that RT provides a platform for fringe and radical views worldwide and most broadcasters would not entertain people with such views. While it is correct to say that RT has a pro-Kremlin agenda, virtually all Western corporate media outlets adhere to a broadly defined economic and military 'Washington consensus'. Where Western outlets see little wrong with wheeling out pro-big business commentators and representatives from powerful thinks for their opinions, little opportunity is provided for trade unionists, the non-mainstream left or any other voices that offer radical critiques of the status to offer their views.

RT has a range of commentators and analysts, including Professor Michel Chossudovsky, Pepe Escobar, Max Keiser, [Paul Craig Roberts](#), William F Engdahl and Manuel Ochsenschlager, who tend to rarely appear on Western corporate mainstream media outlets. While some may not agree with their views or analyses, such people are academically well-qualified and recognised by many as being specialists in their fields. It is too convenient for them to be brushed aside with the 'deranged conspiracy theorist' accusation.

These commentators are highly critical of US-Western foreign policies but that does not mean they necessarily support Putin or Russia, as former RT presenter Liz Wahl seemed to imply during the committee hearing. If certain commentators are regarded as "fringe" figures or "extremists" as Wahl suggested, they are only regarded as such because their

views challenge the pro-Washington narrative conveyed by the Western corporate media and thus tend to be side-lined. She argued these ‘alternative’ voices now have platforms to voice their “deranged views” and whip up anti-US sentiment.

Royce claimed Russia’s propaganda machine is currently in overdrive and that part of the focus is to undermine “democratic stability” and foment violence. He went on to state that these tactics have helped stoke the situation in Ukraine and are laying the groundwork for a Russian invasion and asserted that this propaganda has the potential to destabilise NATO members.

Another contributor to the proceedings argued that “our” global order is a “reality based order” and that the likes of RT and the internet makes “reality based politics” impossible.

Washington wishes it had the monopoly on truth but it doesn’t. And the reality is that the US regards views that criticise it as intolerable. But while the internet can at times be a vehicle for churning out some ludicrous views (and in this respect What is correct), what could be more sinister than what the mainstream media churns out on a daily basis with its acceptance of and justifications for austerity, gross inequalities, the massive concentration of wealth in the hands of a few, secretive corporate-constructed trade deals, wars of aggression, a bogus war on terror and the rest of the stories designed to beat working people and opponents of Washington’s hegemony into submission?

You don’t have to be a conspiracy theorist to appreciate that the terms “reality based global order” and “democratic stability” are cynical euphemisms designed to conceal a completely different reality of imposed [chaos and disorder](#) around the world. Supporters of this reality are committed to misinforming the public, [creating regional destabilisations](#) and bending nations to Washington’s will.

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