

# WILLIAM BLUM: Sucking Liberals into a New Cold War

Out of fury against President Trump, many liberals have enlisted in the ranks of the New Cold War against Russia, seeming to have forgotten the costs to rationality and lives from the first Cold War, warned the late William Blum.

*A memorial service was held on Sunday in Washington for William Blum, a former State Department official whose disillusionment with the Vietnam War turned him into a fierce critic of U.S. foreign policy. In books such as Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II; Freeing the World to Death: Essays on the American Empire and Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower, as well as on his blog, [The Anti-Empire Report](#), Blum educated a generation of Americans about the rapacious aims of the U.S. abroad, debunking the myth of Washington's good intentions for the peoples of the world. Blum died on December 9, 2018. He was a contributor to **Consortium News** and we reprint one of his last articles that appeared here. Originally published on Dec. 6, 2017.*

By [William Blum](#)

Cold War Number One: 70 years of daily national stupidity.  
Cold War Number Two: Still in its youth, but just as stupid.

“He said he absolutely did not meddle in our election. He did not do what they are saying he did.” – President Trump re Russian President Vladimir Putin after their meeting in Vietnam. [*Washington Post*, Nov.e 12, 2017]

Putin later added that he knew “absolutely nothing” about

Russian contacts with Trump campaign officials. "They can do what they want, looking for some sensation. But there are no sensations."

Numerous U.S. intelligence agencies have said otherwise. Former Director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, responded to Trump's remarks by declaring: "The president was given clear and indisputable evidence that Russia interfered in the election."

As we'll see below, there isn't too much of the "clear and indisputable" stuff. And this of course is the same James Clapper who made an admittedly false statement to Congress in March 2013, when he responded, "No, sir" and "not wittingly" to a question about whether the National Security Agency was collecting "any type of data at all" on millions of Americans. Lies don't usually come in any size larger than that.

Virtually every member of Congress who has publicly stated a position on the issue has criticized Russia for interfering in the 2016 American presidential election. And it would be very difficult to find a member of the mainstream media who has questioned this thesis.

What is the poor consumer of news to make of these gross contradictions? Here are some things to keep in mind:

How do we know that the tweets and advertisements "sent by Russians" -- those presented as attempts to sway the vote -- were actually sent by Russians? The Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS), composed of National Security Agency and CIA veterans, recently declared that the CIA knows how to disguise the origin of emails and tweets.

The *Washington Post* has as well reported that Twitter “makes it easy for users to hide their true identities.”  
[Washington Post, Oct. 10, 2017]

### **Russians! Russians! Russians!**

Even if these communications were actually sent from Russia, how do we know that they came from the Russian government, and not from any of the other 144.3 million residents of Russia?

Even if they were sent by the Russian government, we have to ask: Why would they do that? Do the Russians think the United States is a Third World, under-developed, backward Banana Republic easily influenced and moved by a bunch of simple condemnations of the plight of blacks in America and the Clinton “dynasty”? Or clichéd statements about other controversial issues, such as gun rights and immigration? If so, many Democratic and Republican officials would love to know the secret of the Russians’ method. Consider also that Facebook has stated that 90 percent of the alleged-Russian-bought content that ran on its network did not even mention Trump or Clinton. [Washington Post, Nov. 15, 2017]

On top of all this is the complete absence of even the charge, much less with any supporting evidence, of Russian interference in the actual voting or counting of votes.

After his remark suggesting he believed Putin’s assertion that there had been no Russian meddling in the election, Trump – of course, as usual – attempted to backtrack and distance himself from his words after drawing criticism at home; while James Clapper declared: “The fact the president of the United States would take Putin at his word over that

of the intelligence community is quite simply unconscionable.” [Reuters, Nov. 12, 2017]

Given Clapper’s large-size lie referred to above, can Trump be faulted for being skeptical of the intelligence community’s Holy Writ? Purposeful lies of the intelligence community during the first Cold War were legendary, many hailed as brilliant tactics when later revealed. The CIA, for example, had phony articles and editorials planted in foreign newspapers (real Fake News), made sex films of target subjects caught *in flagrante delicto* who had been lured to Agency safe houses by female agents, had Communist embassy personnel expelled because of phony CIA documents, and much more.

The *Post* recently published an article entitled “How did Russian trolls get into your Facebook feed? Silicon Valley made it easy.” In the midst of this “exposé,” The *Post* stated: “There’s no way to tell if you personally saw a Russian post or tweet.” [Washington Post, Nov. 2, 2017]

### **A Case or Not?**

So ... Do the Cold Warriors have a case to make or do they not? Or do they just want us to remember that the Russkis are bad? So it goes.

An organization in Czechoslovakia with the self-appointed name of European Values has produced a lengthy report entitled “The Kremlin’s Platform for ‘Useful Idiots’ in the West: An Overview of RT’s Editorial Strategy and Evidence of Impact.” It includes a long list of people who have appeared on the Russian-owned TV station RT (formerly *Russia Today*), which can be seen in the U.S., the U.K. and other countries.

Those who've been guests on RT are the "idiots" useful to Moscow. (The list is not complete. I've been on RT about five times, but I'm not listed. Where is my Idiot Badge?)

RT's YouTube channel has more than two million followers and claims to be the "most-watched news network" on the video site. Its Facebook page has more than 4 million likes and followers. Can this explain why the powers-that-be forget about a thing called freedom-of-speech and treat the station like an enemy? The U.S. government recently forced *RT America* to register as a foreign agent and has cut off the station's Congressional press credentials.

The Cold War strategist, George Kennan, wrote prophetically: "Were the Soviet Union to sink tomorrow under the waters of the ocean, the American military-industrial establishment would have to go on, substantially unchanged, until some other adversary could be invented. Anything else would be an unacceptable shock to the American economy."

Writer John Wight has described the new Cold War as being "in response to Russia's recovery from the demise of the Soviet Union and the failed attempt to turn the country into a wholly owned subsidiary of Washington via the imposition of free market economic shock treatment thereafter."

So let's see what other brilliance the New Cold War brings us. ... Ah yes, another headline in the *Post* (Nov. 18, 2017): "British alarm rising over possible Russian meddling in Brexit." Of course, why else would the British people have voted to leave the European Union? But wait a moment, again, one of the British researchers behind the report "said that the accounts they analyzed – which claimed Russian as their

language when they were set up but tweeted in English – posted a mixture of pro-‘leave’ and pro-‘remain’ messages regarding Brexit. Commentators have said that the goal may simply have been to sow discord and division in society.”

Was there ever a time when the *Post* would have been embarrassed to be so openly, amateurishly biased about Russia? Perhaps during the few years between the two Cold Wars.

In case you don't remember how stupid Cold War Number One was ...

- 1948: The *Pittsburgh Press* published the names, addresses, and places of employment of about 1,000 citizens who had signed presidential-nominating petitions for former Vice President Henry Wallace, running under the Progressive Party. This, and a number of other lists of “communists,” published in the mainstream media, resulted in people losing their jobs, being expelled from unions, having their children abused, being denied state welfare benefits, and suffering various other punishments.
- Around 1950: The House Committee on Un-American Activities published a pamphlet, “100 Things You Should Know About Communism in the U.S.A.” This included information about what a communist takeover of the United States would mean: ?Q: What would happen to my insurance?? A: It would go to the Communists.? Q: Would communism give me something better than I have now?? A: Not unless you are in a penitentiary serving a life sentence at hard labor.
- 1950s: Mrs. Ada White, member of the Indiana State

Textbook Commission, believed that Robin Hood was a Communist and urged that books that told the Robin Hood story be banned from Indiana schools.

- As evidence that anti-communist mania was not limited to the lunatic fringe or conservative newspaper publishers, here is Clark Kerr, president of the University of California at Berkeley in a 1959 speech: "Perhaps 2 or even 20 million people have been killed in China by the new [communist] regime." One person wrote to Kerr: "I am wondering how you would judge a person who estimates the age of a passerby on the street as being 'perhaps 2 or even 20 years old.' Or what would you think of a physician who tells you to take 'perhaps 2 or even twenty teaspoonsful of a remedy'?"
- Throughout the cold war, traffic in phony Lenin quotes was brisk, each one passed around from one publication or speaker to another for years. Here's *S. News and World Report* in 1958 demonstrating communist duplicity by quoting Lenin: "Promises are like pie crusts, made to be broken." Secretary of State John Foster Dulles used it in a speech shortly afterward, one of many to do so during the cold war. Lenin actually did use a very similar line, but he explicitly stated that he was quoting an English proverb (it comes from Jonathan Swift) and his purpose was to show the unreliability of the bourgeoisie, not of communists. "First we will take Eastern Europe, then the masses of Asia, then we will encircle the United States, which will be the last bastion of capitalism. We will not have to attack. It will fall like an overripe fruit into our hands." This Lenin "quotation" had the usual wide circulation, even

winding up in the *Congressional Record* in 1962. This was not simply a careless attribution; this was an out-and-out fabrication; an extensive search, including by the Library of Congress and the United States Information Agency failed to find its origin.

- A favorite theme of the anti-communists was that a principal force behind drug trafficking was a communist plot to demoralize the United States. Here's a small sample: Don Keller, District Attorney for San Diego County, California in 1953: "We know that more heroin is being produced south of the border than ever before and we are beginning to hear stories of financial backing by big shot Communists operating out of Mexico City." Henry Giordano, Commissioner of the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, 1964, interviewed in the *American Legion Magazine*: Interviewer: "I've been told that the communists are trying to flood our country with narcotics to weaken our moral and physical stamina. Is that true?" Giordano: "As far as the drugs are concerned, it's true. There's a terrific flow of drugs coming out of Yunnan Province of China. ... There's no question that in that particular area this is the aim of the Red Chinese. It should be apparent that if you could addict a population you would degrade a nation's moral fiber." Fulton Lewis, Jr., prominent conservative radio broadcaster and newspaper columnist, 1965: "Narcotics of Cuban origin – marijuana, cocaine, opium, and heroin – are now peddled in big cities and tiny hamlets throughout this country. Several Cubans arrested by the Los Angeles police have boasted they are communists." We were also told that along with drugs another tool of



the commies to undermine America's spirit was fluoridation of the water.

- Mickey Spillane was one of the most successful writers of the 1950s, selling millions of his anti-communist thriller mysteries. Here is his hero, Mike Hammer, in "One Lonely Night," boasting of his delight in the grisly murders he commits, all in the name of destroying a communist plot to steal atomic secrets. After a night of carnage, the triumphant Hammer gloats, "I shot them in cold blood and enjoyed every minute of it. I pumped slugs into the nastiest bunch of bastards you ever saw. ... They were Commies. ... Pretty soon what's left of Russia and the slime that breeds there won't be worth mentioning and I'm glad because I had a part in the killing. God, but it was fun!"
- 1952: A campaign against the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) because it was tainted with "atheism and communism," and was "subversive" because it preached internationalism. Any attempt to introduce an international point of view in the schools was seen as undermining patriotism and loyalty to the United States. A bill in the U.S. Senate, clearly aimed at UNESCO, called for a ban on the funding of "any international agency that directly or indirectly promoted one-world government or world citizenship." There was also opposition to UNESCO's association with the U.N. Declaration of Human Rights on the grounds that it was trying to replace the American Bill of Rights with a less liberty-giving covenant of human rights.
- 1955: A U.S. Army 6-page pamphlet, "How to Spot a Communist," informed us that a communist could be

spotted by his predisposition to discuss civil rights, racial and religious discrimination, the immigration laws, anti-subversive legislation, curbs on unions, and peace. Good Americans were advised to keep their ears stretched for such give-away terms as "chauvinism," "book-burning," "colonialism," "demagogy," "witch hunt," "reactionary," "progressive," and "exploitation." Another "distinguishing mark" of "Communist language" was a "preference for long sentences." After some ridicule, the Army rescinded the pamphlet.

- 1958: The noted sportscaster Bill Stern (one of the heroes of my innocent youth) observed on the radio that the lack of interest in "big time" football at New York University, City College of New York, Chicago, and Harvard "is due to the widespread acceptance of Communism at the universities."
- 1960: U.S. General Thomas Power speaking about nuclear war or a first strike by the U.S.: "The whole idea is to *kill* the bastards! At the end of the war, if there are two Americans and one Russian, we win!" The response from one of those present was: "Well, you'd better make sure that they're a man and a woman."
- 1966: The Boys Club of America is of course wholesome and patriotic. Imagine their horror when they were confused with the Dubois Clubs. (W.E.B. Du Bois had been a very prominent civil rights activist.) When the Justice Department required the DuBois Clubs to register as a Communist front group, good loyal Americans knew what to do. They called up the Boys Club to announce that they would no longer contribute any money, or to threaten violence against them; and sure enough an

explosion damaged the national headquarters of the youth group in San Francisco. Then former Vice President Richard Nixon, who was national board chairman of the Boys Club, declared: "This is an almost classic example of Communist deception and duplicity. The 'DuBois Clubs' are not unaware of the confusion they are causing among our supporters and among many other good citizens."

- 1966: "Rhythm, Riots and Revolution: An Analysis of the Communist Use of Music, The Communist Master Music Plan," by David A. Noebel, published by Christian Crusade Publications, (expanded version of 1965 pamphlet: "Communism, Hypnotism and the Beatles"). Some chapters: Communist Use of Mind Warfare ... Nature of Red Record Companies ... Destructive Nature of Beatle Music ... Communist Subversion of Folk Music ... Folk Music and the Negro Revolution ... Folk Music and the College Revolution
- 1968: William Calley, U.S. Army Lieutenant, charged with overseeing the massacre of more than 100 Vietnamese civilians in My Lai in 1968, said some years later: "In all my years in the Army I was never taught that communists were human beings. We were there to kill ideology carried by – I don't know – pawns, blobs, pieces of flesh. I was there to destroy communism. We never conceived of old people, men, women, children, babies."
- 1977: Scientists theorized that the earth's protective ozone layer was being damaged by synthetic chemicals called chlorofluorocarbons. The manufacturers and users of CFCs were not happy. They made life difficult for the lead scientist. The president of one aerosol manufacturing firm suggested that criticism of CFCs was

“orchestrated by the Ministry of Disinformation of the KGB.”

- 1978: Life inside a California youth camp of the ultra anti-communist John Birch Society: Five hours each day of lectures on communism, Americanism and “The Conspiracy”; campers learned that the Soviet government had created a famine and spread a virus to kill a large number of citizens and make the rest of them more manageable; the famine led starving adults to eat their children; communist guerrillas in Southeast Asia jammed chopsticks into children’s ears, piercing their eardrums; American movies are all under the control of the Communists; the theme is always that capitalism is no better than communism; you can’t find a dictionary now that isn’t under communist influence; the communists are also taking over the Bibles.
- The Reagan administration declared that the Russians were spraying toxic chemicals over Laos, Cambodia and Afghanistan – the so-called “yellow rain” – and had caused more than ten thousand deaths by 1982 alone, (including, in Afghanistan, 3,042 deaths attributed to 47 separate incidents between the summer of 1979 and the summer of 1981, so precise was the information). Secretary of State Alexander Haig was a prime dispenser of such stories, and President Reagan himself denounced the Soviet Union thusly more than 15 times in documents and speeches. The “yellow rain,” it turned out, was pollen-laden feces dropped by huge swarms of honeybees flying far overhead.
- 1982: In commenting about sexual harassment in the Army, General John Crosby stated that the Army doesn’t care

about soldiers' social lives – “The basic purpose of the United States Army is to kill Russians,” he said.

- 1983: The U.S. invasion of Grenada, the home of the Cuban ambassador is damaged and looted by American soldiers; on one wall is written “AA,” symbol of the 82nd Airborne Division; beside it the message: “Eat shit, commie faggot.” ... “I want to fuck communism out of this little island,” says a marine, “and fuck it right back to Moscow.”
- 1984: During a sound check just before his weekly broadcast, President Reagan spoke these words into the microphone: “My fellow Americans, I am pleased to tell you I have signed legislation to outlaw Russia, forever. We begin bombing in five minutes.” His words were picked up by at least two radio networks.
- 1985: October 29 BBC interview with Ronald Reagan: asked about the differences he saw between the U.S. and Russia, the President replied: “I’m no linguist, but I’ve been told that in the Russian language there isn’t even a word for freedom.” (The word is “svoboda.”)
- 1986: Soviet artists and cultural officials criticized Rambo-like American films as an expression of “anti-Russian phobia even more pathological than in the days of McCarthyism.” Russian filmmaker Stanislav Rostofsky claimed that on one visit to an American school “a young girl trembled with fury when she heard I was from the Soviet Union, and said she hated Russians.”
- 1986: Roy Cohn, who achieved considerable fame and notoriety in the 1950s as an assistant to the communist-witch-hunting Sen. Joseph McCarthy, died, reportedly of AIDS. Cohn, though homosexual, had denied that he was

and had denounced such rumors as communist smears.

- 1986: After American journalist Nicholas Daniloff was arrested in Moscow for “spying” and held in custody for two weeks, New York Mayor Edward Koch sent a group of 10 visiting Soviet students storming out of City Hall in fury. “The Soviet government is the pits,” said Koch, visibly shocking the students, ranging in age from 10 to 18 years. One 14-year-old student was so outraged he declared: “I don’t want to stay in this house. I want to go to the bus and go far away from this place. The mayor is very rude. We never had a worse welcome anywhere.” As matters turned out, it appeared that Daniloff had not been completely pure when it came to his newsgathering.
- 1989: After the infamous Chinese crackdown on dissenters in Tiananmen Square in June, the U.S. news media was replete with reports that the governments of Nicaragua, Vietnam and Cuba had expressed their support of the Chinese leadership. Said the *Wall Street Journal*: “Nicaragua, with Cuba and Vietnam, constituted the only countries in the world to approve the Chinese Communists’ slaughter of the students in Tiananmen Square.” But it was all someone’s fabrication; no such support had been expressed by any of the three governments. At that time, as now, there were few, if any, organizations other than the CIA which could manipulate major Western media in such a manner. [Sources for almost all of this section can be found in William Blum, *Freeing the World to Death: Essays on the American Empire* (2005), chapter 12; or the author can be queried at [bblum6@aol.com](mailto:bblum6@aol.com) ]

**NOTE:** It should be remembered that the worst consequences of

anti-communism were not those discussed above. The worst consequences, the ultra-criminal consequences, were the abominable death, destruction, and violation of human rights that we know under various names: Vietnam, Chile, Korea, Guatemala, Cambodia, Indonesia, Brazil, Greece, Afghanistan, El Salvador, and many others.

**William Blum (1933-2018) was an author, historian, and renowned critic of U.S. foreign policy. He is the author of *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* and *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*, among others. [This article originally appeared at the Anti-Empire Report, <https://williamblum.org/> .]**

---

## Franken's Opportunism on the Iraq War

Sen. (and former comedian) Al Franken was a rising Democratic Party star before sexual harassment allegations brought him down to earth, but was he really ever a progressive hero, asks William Blum at Anti-Empire Report.

By William Blum

Poor Al, who made us laugh for years on Saturday Night Live, is now disgraced as a woman molester – not one of the worst of the current pathetic crop, but he still looks bad. However, everything is relative, and it must be pointed out that the Senator is guilty of a worse moral transgression.

The erstwhile comedian would like you to believe that he was against the war in Iraq since it began. But he went to that sad country at least four times to entertain American troops. Does that make sense? Why does the Defense Department bring entertainers to military bases? To lift the soldiers' spirits of course.

And why does the military want to lift the soldiers' spirits? Because a happier soldier does his job better. And what is the soldier's job? For example, all the charming war crimes and human-rights violations in Iraq that have been documented in great detail for many years. Didn't Franken know what American soldiers do for a living?

Country singer Darryl Worley, who leans “a lot to the right,” as he puts it, said he was far from pleased that Franken was coming along on the tour to Iraq. “You know, I just don’t understand – why would somebody be on this tour if they’re not supportive of the war? If he decides to play politics, I’m not gonna put up with it.”

A year after the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, Franken criticized the Bush administration because they “failed to send enough troops to do the job right.” What “job” did the man think the troops were sent to do that had not been performed to his standards because of lack of manpower? Did he want them to be more efficient at killing Iraqis who resisted the occupation? The volunteer American troops in Iraq did not even have the defense of having been drafted against their wishes.

Franken has been lifting soldiers’ spirits for a long time. In 2009, he was honored by the United Service Organization (USO) for his ten years of entertaining troops abroad. That includes Kosovo in 1999, as imperialist an occupation as you’ll ever want to see. He called his USO experience “one of the best things I’ve ever done.” Franken has also spoken at West Point (2005), encouraging the next generation of imperialist warriors. Is this a man to challenge the militarization of America at home and abroad?

Tom Hayden wrote this about Franken in 2005 when Franken had a regular program on the Air America radio network: “Is anyone else disappointed with Al Franken’s daily defense of the continued war in Iraq? Not Bush’s version of the war, because that would undermine Air America’s laudable purpose of rallying an anti-Bush audience. But, well, Kerry’s version of the war, one that can be better managed and won, somehow with better body armor and fewer torture cells.”

While in Iraq to entertain the troops, Franken declared that the Bush administration “blew the diplomacy so we didn’t have a real coalition,” then failed to send enough troops to do the job right. “Out of sheer hubris, they have put the lives of these guys in jeopardy.”

Franken was implying that if the United States had been more successful in bribing and threatening other countries to lend their name to the coalition fighting the war in Iraq the United States would have had a better chance of WINNING the war.

Is this the sentiment of someone opposed to the war? Or in support of it? It is actually the mind of an American liberal in all its depressing mushiness.

**William Blum is an author, historian, and renowned critic of U.S. foreign policy. He is the author of *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions***



*Since World War II* and *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*, among others. [This article originally appeared at the Anti-Empire Report, <https://williamblum.org/> .]

---

## The Strange World of Russian 'Trolls'

A big part of the Russia-gate hysteria is to accuse Russia of spreading U.S. dissension via Internet "trolling," but that's just one more wild exaggeration among many, as William Blum describes at Anti-Empire Report.

By William Blum

Webster's dictionary: *troll* – verb: To fish by running a baited line behind a moving boat; noun: A supernatural creature of Scandinavian folklore.

Russian Internet trolls are trying to stir up even more controversy over National Football League players crouching on one knee ("taking a "knee") during the national anthem, said Sen. James Lankford (R-Okla.), warning that the United States should expect such divisive efforts to escalate in the next election.

"We watched even this weekend," Lankford said, "the Russians and their troll farms, and their Internet folks, start hash-tagging out 'take a knee' and also hash-tagging out 'Boycott NFL'." The Russians' goal, he said, was "to try to raise the noise level in America to try to make a big issue, an even bigger issue as they're trying to just push divisiveness in the country. We've continued to be able to see that. We will see that again in our election time."

Russia "causing divisiveness" is a common theme of American politicians and media. Never explained is WHY? What does Russia have to gain by Americans being divided? Do they think the Russians are so juvenile? Or are the Americans the childish ones?

CNN on Oct. 12 claimed that Russia uses YouTube, Tumblr and the Pokemon Go mobile game "to exploit racial tensions and sow discord among Americans," while the *Washington Post* (Oct. 12) reported that "content generated by Russian operatives was not aimed only at influencing the election. Many of the posts and ads intended to divide Americans over hot-button issues such as immigration or race."

**Russia! Russia! Russia!**

Imagine ... the American public being divided over immigration and race ... How

could that be possible without Russian trolls?

The *Post* (Oct. 9) reported that the Russian trolling operation resides “in a large gray building north of the St. Petersburg city center ... There, young people work 12-hour shifts and make between \$800 and \$1,000 a month, “an attractive wage for former students and young people. It is impossible to get inside the building, and there are multiple entrances, making it hard to tell who is a troll and who is not.”

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest are amongst the many Internet sites that we are told have been overrun by Russian trolls. The last named is a site that specializes in home decor, fashion and recipes. Have the Russians gone mad? Or are the American accusations the kind of stuff that is usually called – dare I say it? – “propaganda”?

“How much the trolls affected the outcome of the U.S. election is unclear,” the *Post* had to admit. “But their omnipresence is evident on Twitter and in the comments section of publications like the *Washington Post*, where trolls can be found criticizing news stories, lambasting other posters and accusing one another of being trolls.” Are you starting to chuckle?

At one point the *Post* reported that Facebook “identified more than 3000 advertisements purchased in a Russian-orchestrated campaign to influence the American public’s views and exploit divisions around contentious issues.” And Congressional investigators said that some of the Facebook ad purchases had “obvious Russian fingerprints, including Russian addresses and payments made in rubles,” and that “accounts traced to a shadowy Russian Internet company had purchased at least \$100,000 in ads during the 2016 election season.”

However, at other times the *Post* told us that Facebook had pointed out that “most of the ads made no explicit reference in favor of Trump or Clinton,” and that some ads were purchased *after* the election. We’ve been told, moreover, that Facebook Chief Security Officer Alex Stamos’s team “had searched extensively for evidence of foreign purchases of political advertising but had come up short.”

In any event, we have to wonder: What political savvy concerning American elections and voters do the Russians have that the Democratic and Republican parties don’t have?

I have read numerous references to these ads but have yet to come across a single one that quotes the exact wording of even one advertisement. Is that not odd?

To add to the oddness, in yet another *Washington Post* article (Sept. 28) we are informed that “some of the ads promoted African American rights groups,

including Black Lives Matter, while others suggested those same groups posed a growing political threat, according to people familiar with the material.”

*Politico*, a Democratic-Party-leaning journal, reports that Russian-funded Facebook ads backed Green Party candidate Jill Stein, Democrat Bernie Sanders, and Republican Donald Trump.

Who and what is behind these peculiar goings-on?

More fun and games: the Department of Homeland Security in September notified Virginia and 20 other states about Russian efforts to hack their election systems in 2016.

Earlier this year, U.K. Foreign Minister Boris Johnson declared, apparently without embarrassment: “We have no evidence the Russians are actually involved in trying to undermine our democratic processes at the moment. We don’t actually have that evidence. But what we do have is plenty of evidence that the Russians are capable of doing that.”

At a Sept. 27 Congressional hearing, FBI Director Christopher Wray joined this proud chorus, testifying: “One of the things we know is that the Russians and Russian state actors are trying to influence other elections in other countries.” Mr. Wray forgot to name any of the other countries and the assembled Congressmembers forgot to ask him for any names.

Perhaps the main reason for questioning charges of Russian interference in the 2016 US election is that Russian President Putin would have been risking that the expected winner, Hillary Clinton, would have been handed a personal reason to take revenge on him and his country. But that’s just being logical and rational, two qualities Cold War II has no more use for than Cold War I did.

### **Know Thine Enemy**

The Pentagon’s Defense Intelligence Agency issued a report in June entitled “Russia: Military Power: Building a military to support great power aspirations.” Here’s an excerpt:

“Moscow seeks to promote a multi-polar world predicated on the principles of respect for state sovereignty and non-interference in other states’ internal affairs, the primacy of the United Nations, and a careful balance of power preventing one state or group of states from dominating the international order. To support these great power ambitions, Moscow has sought to build a robust military able to project power, add credibility to Russian diplomacy, and ensure that Russian interests can no longer be summarily dismissed without consequence. ... Russia also has a deep and abiding distrust of U.S. efforts to promote

democracy around the world and what it perceives as a U.S. campaign to impose a single set of global values.”

Great power aspirations, indeed. How dare those Russkis promote a multi-polar world, respect for state sovereignty, non-interference, the United Nations, and balance of power? It’s all straight out of Lenin’s playbook, 100th anniversary edition.

As to the U.S. promoting democracy around the world ... Oh right, that’s what the Pentagon calls Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Egypt, the Philippines, Honduras, Turkey, et al.

William Blum is an author, historian, and renowned critic of U.S. foreign policy. He is the author of *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* and *Rogue State: A Guide to the World’s Only Superpower*, among others. [This article originally appeared at the Anti-Empire Report, <https://williamblum.org/> .]

---

## In Case You Missed...

Some of our special stories in September examined the risk of nuclear war over North Korea, the shifting power balance in the Middle East and the escalating hysteria over Russia-gate.

[“Seymour Hersh Honored for Integrity”](#) by Ray McGovern, Sep. 1, 2017

[“Galveston Bio-Lab Declared Safe”](#) by Joe Lauria, Sep. 1, 2017

[“The Reasons for Netanyahu’s Panic”](#) by Alastair Crooke, Sep. 1, 2017

[“Russia-gate’s Totalitarian Style”](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 2, 2017

[“The Risk of NATO’s H-Bombs in Turkey”](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Sep. 3, 2017

[“How ‘Regime Change’ Wars Led to Korea Crisis”](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 4, 2017

[“On the Brink of Nuclear War”](#) by William R. Polk, Sep. 5, 2017

[“A New Hole in Syria-Sarin Certainty”](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 7, 2017

[“Trump’s Confused Embrace of Egypt’s Sisi”](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Sep. 8, 2017

[“Syria’s Survival Is Blow to Jihadists”](#) by Alastair Crooke, Sep. 8, 2017

["U.N. Enablers of 'Aggressive War'"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 8, 2017

["The Dangerous Decline of U.S. Hegemony"](#) by Daniel Lazare, Sep. 9, 2017

["Echoes of Iraq-WMD Fraud in Syria"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 10, 2017

["The Military's Warning on Global Warming"](#) by Daniel C. Maguire, Sep. 11, 2017

["Has the NYT Gone Collectively Mad?"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 11, 2017

["Reagan Documents Shed Light on U.S. 'Meddling'"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 13, 2017

["America's Fragile Future"](#) by Gilbert Doctorow, Sep. 14, 2017

["How North Korea Outmaneuvered U.S."](#) by Daniel Lazare, Sep. 14, 2017

["The NYT's Yellow Journalism on Russia"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 15, 2017

["The Right's Made-up Constitution"](#) by Jada Thacker, Sep. 17, 2017

["Harvard's Cowardice on Chelsea Manning"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 17, 2017

["Trump Falls in Line with Interventionism"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 19, 2017

["PBS' 'Vietnam War' Tells Some Truths"](#) by Don North, Sep. 20, 2017

["More Holes in Russia-gate Narrative"](#) by William Binney and Ray McGovern, Sep. 20, 2017

["How Merkel's Win May Hide Rising Discontent"](#) by Andrew Spannaus, Sep. 21, 2017

["Civil Society Rises to Confront Disasters"](#) by Dennis J. Bernstein, Sep. 21, 2017

["The Killing of History"](#) by John Pilger, Sep. 21, 2017

["The Crazy Imbalance of Russia-gate"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 22, 2017

["Trump Threatens a Genocide"](#) by David Marks, Sep. 23, 2017

["Vote by Iraqi Kurds Adds to Tensions"](#) by Joe Lauria, Sep. 24, 2017

["WPost Pushes More Dubious Russia-bashing"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 25, 2017

["North Korea's Rational Nuclear Strategy"](#) by Ted Snider, Sep. 26, 2017

["The Rise of the New McCarthyism"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 26, 2017

["Trump's Generals Fatten the Pentagon"](#) by J.P. Sottile, Sep. 27, 2017

["The MSM's Anti-Russia Bias"](#) by William Blum, Sep. 27, 2017

["The Slimy Business of Russia-gate"](#) by Robert Parry, Sep. 28, 2017

["Russia-gate's Shaky Foundation"](#) by Daniel Herman, Sep. 29, 2017

["How Syria's Victory Reshapes Mideast"](#) by Alastair Crooke, Sep. 30, 2017

To produce and publish these stories – and many more – costs money. And except for some book sales, we depend on the generous support of our readers.

So, please consider a tax-deductible donation either by [credit card online](#) or by [mailing a check](#). (For readers wanting to use PayPal, you can address contributions to our PayPal Giving Fund account, which is named "The Consortium for Independent Journalism").

---

## Trump and His 'Beautiful' Weapons

It's easy to understand why some of President Trump's senior advisers privately consider him a "moron," with a limited vocabulary and stunning lack of normal human empathy, as William Blum explains at Anti-Empire Report.

By William Blum

Capturing the wisdom and the beauty of Donald J. Trump in just one statement escaping from his charming mouth: "Our military has never been stronger. Each day, new equipment is delivered; new and beautiful equipment, the best in the world – the best anywhere in the world, by far." [Washington Post, Sept. 8, 2017]

Here the man thinks that everyone will be impressed that the American military has never been stronger. And that those who, for some unimaginable reason, are not impressed with that will at least be impressed that military equipment is being added EACH DAY. Ah yes, it's long been a sore point with most Americans that new military equipment was being added only once a week.

And if that isn't impressive enough, then surely the fact that the equipment is NEW will win people over. Indeed, the newness is important enough to mention twice. After all, no one likes USED military equipment. And if newness doesn't win everyone's heart, then BEAUTIFUL will definitely do it. Who likes UGLY military equipment? Even the people we slaughter all over the world insist upon good-looking guns and bombs.

And the best in the world. Of course. That's what makes us all proud to be Americans. And what makes the rest of humanity just aching with jealousy. And in case you don't fully appreciate that, notice that he adds that it's the best ANYWHERE in the world.

And in case you still don't fully appreciate that, notice that he specifies that our equipment is the best in the world BY FAR! That means that no other country is even close! Just imagine! Makes me choke up.

Lucky for the man ... his seeming incapacity for moral or intellectual embarrassment. He's twice blessed. His fans like the idea that their president is no smarter than they are. This may well serve to get the man re-elected, as it did with George W. Bush.

William Blum is an author, historian, and renowned critic of U.S. foreign policy. He is the author of *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* and *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*, among others. [This article originally appeared at the Anti-Empire Report, <https://williamblum.org/> .]

---

## In Case You Missed...

Some of our special stories in August focused on Official Washington's growing hostility toward dissent, the Trump administration's drift toward more endless warfare, and the worsening crises in Korea and Mideast.

["How US Policy Helps Al Qaeda in Yemen"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Aug. 1, 2017

["A Blacklisted Film and the New Cold War"](#) by Robert Parry, Aug. 2, 2017

["How the World May End"](#) by John Pilger, Aug. 4, 2017

["Neocons Leverage Trump-Hate for More Wars"](#) by Robert Parry, Aug. 5, 2017

["Playing Politics with the World's Future"](#) by Alastair Crooke, Aug. 6, 2017

["Endangering a Landmark Nuclear Treaty"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Aug. 6, 2017

["A New Twist in Seth Rich Murder Case"](#) by Joe Lauria, Aug. 8, 2017

["The Russia-Did-It Certitude Challenged"](#) by Randy Credico and Dennis J. Bernstein, Aug. 10, 2017

"Hurtling Toward 'Fire and Fury'" by Jonathan Marshall, Aug. 10, 2017

"Education or Brainwashing?" by Lawrence Davidson, Aug. 11, 2017

"Russia-gate's Fatally Flawed Logic" by Robert Parry, Aug. 12, 2017

"Hillary Clinton Promised Wars, Too" by James W. Carden, Aug. 15, 2017

"A Ukraine Link to North Korea's Missiles?" by Robert Parry, Aug. 15, 2017

"The Agony of 'Regime Change' Refugees" by Andrew Spannaus, Aug. 16, 2017

"Photographing a White-Supremacist Attack" by Dennis J. Bernstein, Aug. 17, 2017

"Refusing to Learn Lessons from Libya" by James W. Carden, Aug. 17, 2017

"President Trump's 'White Blindness'" by Robert Parry, Aug. 17, 2017

"The Goal of 'Not Losing' in Afghanistan" by Jonathan Marshall, Aug. 18, 2017

"Russia-gate's Evidentiary Void" by Robert Parry, Aug. 18, 2017

"Truth and Lives vs. Career and Fame" by Ray McGovern, Aug. 20, 2017

"Covering Up the Massacre of Mosul" by Nicolas J.S. Davies, Aug. 21, 2017

"The New Trump: War President" by Jonathan Marshall, Aug. 22, 2017

"Israel's Alarm over Syrian Debacle" by Daniel Lazare, Aug. 22, 2017

"Donald Trump's Defining Moments" by Lawrence Davidson, Aug. 23, 2017

"The Mystery of the Civil War's Camp Casey" by Chelsea Gilmour, Aug. 24, 2017

"The Possible Education of Donald Trump" by Robert Parry, Aug. 25, 2017

"The 'Human Side' of War Criminals" by William Blum, Aug. 26, 2017

"How History Explains the Korean Crisis" by William R. Polk, Aug. 28, 2017

"Inflating the Russian Threat" by Jonathan Marshall, Aug. 28, 2017

"More Misleading Russia-gate Propaganda" by Robert Parry, Aug. 29, 2017

"Bias in Arizona's Reaction to Immigrants" by Dennis J. Bernstein, Aug. 29, 2017

"The Alt-Right's Alternative Reality" by J.P. Sottile, Aug. 29, 2017

"Worries about a Galveston Bio-Lab" by Joe Lauria, Aug. 30, 2017



[“A Victory Seen Over ‘State-Sponsored Racism’”](#) by Dennis J, Bernstein, Aug. 31, 2017

[“The Last of the Mad Pirates?”](#) by David Marks, Aug. 31, 2017

To produce and publish these stories – and many more – costs money. And except for some book sales, we depend on the generous support of our readers.

So, please consider a tax-deductible donation either by [credit card online](#) or by [mailing a check](#). (For readers wanting to use PayPal, you can address contributions to our PayPal Giving Fund account, which is named “The Consortium for Independent Journalism”).

---

## The MSM’s Anti-Russia Bias

The U.S. mainstream media (MSM) presents itself as the arbiter of truth-telling and journalistic professionalism – the global gold standard – but its deep-seated biases, especially on Russia, belie that self-image, notes William Blum.

By William Blum

The anti-Russian/anti-Soviet bias in the American media appears to have no limit. You would think that they would have enough self-awareness and enough journalistic integrity -- just enough -- to be concerned about their image. But it keeps on coming, piled higher and deeper.

One of the latest cases in point is a review of a new biography of Mikhail Gorbachev in the *New York Times Book Review* (September 10). The review says that Gorbachev “was no hero to his own people” because he was “the destroyer of their empire.”

This is how the *New York Times* avoids having to say anything positive about life in the Soviet Union or about socialism. They would have readers believe that it was the loss of the likes of Czechoslovakia or Hungary et al. that upset the Russian people, not the loss, under Gorbachev’s *perestroika*, of a decent standard of living for all, a loss affecting people’s rent, employment, vacations, medical care, education, and many other aspects of the Soviet welfare state.

Accompanying this review is a quote from a 1996 *Times* review of Gorbachev’s own memoir, which said: “It mystifies Westerners that Mikhail Gorbachev is loathed and ridiculed in his own country. This is the man who pulled the world several

steps back from the nuclear brink and lifted a crushing fear from his countrymen, who ended bloody foreign adventures [and] liberated Eastern Europe. ... Yet his repudiation at home could hardly be more complete. His political comeback attempt in June attracted less than 1 percent of the vote.”

Thus is Gorbachev’s unpopularity with his own people further relegated to the category of “mystery”, and not due to the profound social changes.

It should be noted that in 1999, *USA Today* reported: “When the Berlin Wall crumbled [1989], East Germans imagined a life of freedom where consumer goods were abundant and hardships would fade. Ten years later, a remarkable 51% say they were happier with communism.” [*USA Today*, October 11, 1999, p.1]

Earlier polls would likely have shown even more than 51% expressing such a sentiment, for in the ten years many of those who remembered life in East Germany with some fondness had passed away; although even 10 years later, in 2009, the *Washington Post* could report: “Westerners [West Berliners] say they are fed up with the tendency of their eastern counterparts to wax nostalgic about communist times.” [*Washington Post*, May 12, 2009; see a similar story November 5, 2009]

It was in the post-unification period that a new Russian and Eastern Europe proverb was born: “Everything the Communists said about Communism was a lie, but everything they said about capitalism turned out to be the truth.”

The current *New York Times* review twice refers to Vladimir Putin as “authoritarian”, as does, routinely, much of the Western media. None of the many such references I have come across in recent years has given an example of such authoritarian policies, although such examples of course exist, as they do under a man named Trump and a woman named May and every other government in the world. But clearly if a strong case could be made of Putin being authoritarian, the Western media would routinely document such in their attacks upon the Russian president. Why do they not?

### **Double Standards**

The review further refers to Putin to as “the cold-eye former K.G.B. lieutenant colonel”. One has to wonder if the *New York Times* has ever referred to President George H.W. Bush as “the cold-eye former CIA Director.”

Just as in the first Cold War, one of the basic problems is that Americans have great difficulty in believing that Russians mean well. Apropos this, I’d like to recall the following written about George Kennan, one of the most prominent American diplomats ever:

Crossing Poland with the first US diplomatic mission to the Soviet Union in the winter of 1933, a young American diplomat named George Kennan was somewhat astonished to hear the Soviet escort, Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov, reminisce about growing up in a village nearby, about the books he had read and his dreams as a small boy of being a librarian.

“We suddenly realized, or at least I did, that these people we were dealing with were human beings like ourselves,” Kennan wrote, “that they had been born somewhere, that they had their childhood ambitions as we had. It seemed for a brief moment we could break through and embrace these people.” [Walter Isaacson & Evan Thomas, *The Wise Men* (1986), p.158]

It hasn't happened yet.

Kennan's sudden realization brings George Orwell to mind: “We have now sunk to a depth at which the restatement of the obvious is the first duty of intelligent men.”

**William Blum is an author, historian, and renowned critic of U.S. foreign policy. He is the author of *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* and *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*, among others. [This article originally appeared at the Anti-Empire Report, <https://williamblum.org/aer/read/151> .]**

---

## The ‘Human Side’ of War Criminals

War criminals and sociopaths often have a “human side” that can obscure how heinous their actions are, as in ex-President George W. Bush's budding career as an artiste, writes William Blum.

By William Blum

A few years ago, when George W. Bush came out as a painter, he said that he had told his art teacher that “there's a Rembrandt trapped inside this body.” Ah, so Georgie is more than just a painter. He's an *artiste*.

And we all know that *artistes* are very special people. They're never to be confused with mass murderers, war criminals, merciless torturers or inveterate liars. Neither are they ever to be accused of dullness of wit or incoherence of thought or speech.

*Artistes* are not the only special people.

Devout people are also special: Josef Stalin studied for the priesthood. Osama bin Laden prayed five times a day. And animal lovers: Herman Goering, while his *Luftwaffe* rained death upon Europe, kept a sign in his office that read: "He who tortures animals wounds the feelings of the German people."

Adolf Hitler was also an animal lover and had long periods of being a vegetarian and anti-smoking. Charles Manson was a staunch anti-vivisectionist.

And cultured people: This fact Elie Wiesel called the greatest discovery of the war: that Adolf Eichmann was cultured, read deeply, played the violin. Mussolini also played the violin. Some Nazi concentration camp commanders listened to Mozart to drown out the cries of the inmates.

Former Bosnian Serb politician Radovan Karadzic, convicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia for war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity, was a psychiatrist, specializing in depression; a practitioner of alternative medicine; published a book of poetry and books for children.

Members of ISIS and Al Qaeda and other suicide bombers are genuinely and sincerely convinced that they are doing the right thing, for which they will be honored and rewarded in an afterlife. That doesn't make them less evil; in fact it makes them more terrifying, since they force us to face the scary reality of a world in which sincerity and morality do not necessarily have anything to do with each other.

**William Blum is an author, historian, and renowned critic of U.S. foreign policy. He is the author of *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* and *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*, among others. [This article originally appeared at the Anti-Empire Report, <http://williamblum.org/> .]**

---

## In Case You Missed...

Some of our special stories in February focused on the contentious beginning of the Trump presidency, the growing hysteria over Russia and the dangers of the New Cold War.

**"Dangers of Democratic Putin-Bashing"** by Robert Parry, Feb. 1, 2017

**"Ukraine Sabotages Trump's Russia Detente"** by Jonathan Marshall, Feb. 1, 2017

**"'Deflategate' Cloud over the Super Bowl"** by Robert Parry, Feb. 2, 2017

["The Irony of Trump's Immigration Ban"](#) by Lawrence Davidson, Feb. 2 2017

["Trump Veers Off Course with Iran Threats"](#) by Alastair Crooke, Feb. 2, 2017

["A Reprise of the Iraq-WMD Fiasco?"](#) by James W Carden, Feb. 3, 2017

["Trump Bends to Neocon Pressures"](#) by Andrew Spannaus, Feb. 3, 2017

["Steering Trump Back to Endless War"](#) by Daniel Lazare, Feb. 4, 2017

["How US Believes Impossible Things"](#) by William Blum, Feb. 5, 2017

["What Trump's 'Great Wall' Misses"](#) by William Blum, Feb. 6, 2017

["Castigating Trump for Truth-Telling"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 7, 2017

["Trump's 'Great Wall' and the 'Drug War'"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Feb. 8, 2017

["A Deadly Legacy: CIA's Covert Laos War"](#) by Don North, Feb. 8, 2017

["Trump's Foreign Policy at a Crossroads"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 9, 2017

["The Neocons' Back-Door to Trump"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 10, 2017

["Amnesty International Stokes Syrian War"](#) by Rick Sterling, Feb. 11, 2017

["Deciphering Trump's Opaque Foreign Policy"](#) by Alastair Crooke, Feb. 11, 2017

["A Documentary You'll Likely Never See"](#) by James DiEugenio, Feb. 13, 2017

["The Negotiation Option with North Korea"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Feb. 14, 2017

["Trump Caves on Flynn's Resignation"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 14, 2017

["Trump's Dysfunctional White House"](#) by Lawrence Davidson, Feb. 15, 2017

["A Dangerous Hysteria on Russia"](#) by James W Carden, Feb. 15, 2017

["German Intel Clears Russia on Interference"](#) by Ray McGovern, Feb. 15, 2017

["Toxic Policies of 'President Agent Orange'"](#) by Marjorie Cohn, Feb. 16, 2017

["Tulsi Gabbard vs. 'Regime Change' Wars"](#) by Col. Ann Wright, Feb. 16, 2017

["Making Puppy Mills Great Again"](#) by JP Sottile, Feb. 16, 2017

["'Deep State' Has Trump on the Menu"](#) by Alastair Crooke, Feb. 17, 2017

["Democrats, Liberals Catch McCarthyistic Fever"](#) by Daniel Lazare, Feb. 17, 2017

["The Did-You-Talk-to-Russians Witch Hunt"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 18, 2017

["Democratic Ex-Dove Proposes War on Iran"](#) by Nicolas J S Davies, Feb. 19, 2017

["Challenging Klobuchar on Ukraine War"](#) by Mike Madden, Feb. 19, 2017

["Was Thomas Jefferson a Rapist?"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 20, 2017

["Trump's Foreign Policy: Retreat or Rout?"](#) by Gilbert Doctorow, Feb. 20, 2017

["The West's Moral Hypocrisy on Yemen"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Feb. 21, 2017

["NYT's Fake News about Fake News"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 22, 2017

["California Resists Trump on Immigration"](#) by Dennis J Bernstein, Feb. 22, 2017

["How Trump Could Be a Truth-teller"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 23, 2017

["Israel's Dead-End Dilemma"](#) by John Chuckman, Feb. 23, 2017

["Syrian War Propaganda at the Oscars"](#) by Rick Sterling, Feb. 24, 2017

["Who's Behind US Downward-Mobility?"](#) by JP Sottile, Feb. 24, 2017

["How 'New Cold Warriors' Cornered Trump"](#) by Gareth Porter, Feb. 25, 2016

["A Nazi Skeleton in the Family Closet"](#) by Arina Tsukanova, Feb. 27, 2017

["The Risk of Baiting Trump on Russia"](#) by Norman Solomon, Feb. 27, 2017

["NATO's Strange Addition of Montenegro"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Feb. 28, 2017

["Mainstream Media's 'Victimhood'"](#) by Robert Parry, Feb. 28, 2017

To produce and publish these stories – and many more – costs money. And except for some book sales, we depend on the generous support of our readers.

So, please consider a tax-deductible donation either by [credit card online](#) or by [mailing a check](#). (For readers wanting to use PayPal, you can address contributions to our PayPal Giving Fund account, which is named "The Consortium for Independent Journalism").

---

## Democrats and Trump Bid Up Militarism

With Democrats lusting for a new and costly Cold War with Russia – and President Trump countering by hiring generals and shoveling more money into the Pentagon –

the prospects for peace and rationality are dim, notes William Blum.

By William Blum

Conservatives have had a very hard time getting over President Trump's much-repeated response to *Fox News* anchor Bill O'Reilly's calling Russian president Vladimir Putin "a killer." Replied Trump: "There are a lot of killers. We have a lot of killers. You think our country is so innocent?"

One could almost feel a bit sorry for O'Reilly as he struggled to regain his composure in the face of such blasphemy. Had any American establishment media star ever heard such a thought coming from the mouth of an American president? From someone on the radical left, yes, but from the President?

Senator John McCain on the floor of Congress, referring to Putin, tore into attempts to draw "moral equivalency between that butcher and thug and KGB colonel and the United States of America."

Ah yes, the infamous KGB. Can anything good be said about a person associated with such an organization? We wouldn't like it if a U.S. president had a background with anything like that. Oh, wait, a president of the United States was not merely a CIA "colonel", but was the Director of the CIA! I of course speak of George Herbert Walker Bush. And as far as butchery and thuggery ... How many Americans remember the December 1989 bombing and invasion of the people of Panama carried out by the same Mr. Bush? Many thousands killed or wounded; thousands more left homeless. Try and match that, Vladimir!

And in case you're wondering for what good reason all this was perpetrated? Officially, to arrest dictator Manuel Noriega on drug charges. How is that for a rationalization for widespread devastation and slaughter? It should surprise no one that only shortly before the invasion Noriega had been on the CIA payroll.

It's the "moral equivalency" that's so tough to swallow for proud Americans like O'Reilly and McCain. Republican Senate Majority leader Mitch McConnell also chipped in with: "And no, I don't think there's any equivalency between the way the Russians conduct themselves and the way the United States does." Other Senators echoed the same theme, all inspired by good ol' "American exceptionalism", drilled into the mind of every decent American from childhood on ... Who would dare to compare the morals of (ugh!) Russia with those of God's chosen land, even in Moscow's current non-communist form?

The communist form began of course with the October 1917 Russian Revolution. By the summer of 1918, some 13,000 American troops could be found in the newly born state, the future Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Two years and thousands

of casualties later, the American troops left, having failed in their mission to “strangle at its birth” the Bolshevik state, as Winston Churchill so charmingly put it.

## **A Historical Summary**

U.S. foreign policy has not been much more noble-minded since then. I think, dear students, it’s time for me to once again present my concise historical summary:

Since the end of World War 2, the United States has:

–Attempted to overthrow more than 50 foreign governments most of which were democratically-elected.

–Dropped bombs on the people of more than 30 countries.

–Attempted to assassinate more than 50 foreign leaders.

–Attempted to suppress a populist or nationalist movement in 20 countries.

–Grossly interfered in democratic elections in at least 30 countries.

–Though not as easy to quantify, has also led the world in torture; not only the torture performed directly by Americans upon foreigners, but providing torture equipment, torture manuals, lists of people to be tortured, and in-person guidance by American instructors.

Where does the United States get the nerve to moralize about Russia? Same place they get the nerve to label Putin a “killer” ... a “butcher” ... a “thug”. It would be difficult to name a world-renowned killer, butcher, or thug – not to mention dictator, mass murderer, or torturer – of the past 75 years who was not a close ally of Washington.

So why then does the American power elite hate Putin so? It can be dated back to the period of Boris Yeltsin.

During the Western financial looting of the dying Soviet Union, the U.S. could be found meddling in favor of Yeltsin in the election held in 1996. Under Yeltsin’s reign, poverty exploded and life expectancy for men actually decreased by five years, all in the name of “shock therapy.” The U.S./Western-backed destabilization of the Soviet Union allowed global capitalism to spread its misery unfettered by any inconvenient socialism. Russia came under the control of oligarchs concerned only for their own enrichment and that of their billionaire partners in the West.



The transition of power to Vladimir Putin in the Twenty-first Century led to a number of reforms that curbed the disastrous looting of the nation by the oligarchic bandits. Putin and his allies vowed to build an independent, capitalist Russia that was capable of determining its own affairs free from U.S. and Western domination. Such an orientation placed Putin in direct confrontation with U.S. imperialism's plans for unipolar global hegemony.

Washington's disdain for Putin increased when he derided U.S. war propaganda leading up to the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Then, the Russian leader played a crucial role in getting Iran to curtail its nuclear program and arranging for Syria to surrender its stockpiles of chemical weapons. Washington's powerful neoconservatives had been lusting for direct U.S. military strikes against those two countries, leading to regime change, not diplomatic agreements that left the governments in place.

Lastly, after the United States overthrew the Ukrainian government in 2014, Putin was obliged to intervene on behalf of threatened ethnic Russians in Crimea and eastern Ukraine. That, in turn, was transformed by the Western media into a "Russian invasion".

### **Who Murders Journalists?**

The same Western media has routinely charged Putin with murdering journalists but doesn't remind its audience of the American record in this regard. The American military, in the course of its wars in recent decades, has been responsible for the deliberate deaths of many journalists.

In Iraq, for example, there's the WikiLeaks 2007 video, exposed by Chelsea Manning, of the cold-blooded murder of two Reuters journalists; the 2003 U.S. air-to-surface missile attack on the offices of Al Jazeera in Baghdad that left three journalists dead and four wounded; and the American firing on Baghdad's Hotel Palestine, a known journalist residence, the same year that killed two foreign news cameramen.

(It's also worth remembering how President Bill Clinton authorized the deliberate bombing of the Serb TV station in Belgrade during NATO's intervention in Yugoslavia in 1999, killing at least 16 people and wounding many others. The rationalization was that NATO considered the Serb TV broadcasts to be "propaganda.")

The Trump honeymoon is over for me. It was never actually love; hardly more than an intriguing curiosity; mainly that he wasn't Hillary Clinton; that he was unlikely to start a war with Russia or close down the *Russia Today* (RT) TV station in the U.S., which I and many others depend on daily; and that he was

not politically correct when it came to fighting the Islamic State.

Trump's "moral equivalency" remark above gave me some hope. But this all vanished with his appointment to high office of one war-loving, bemedalled general after another, intermingled with one billionaire Goldman-Sachs official after another; his apparent confirmation of his Mexican Wall; and, worst of all, his increasing the military budget by \$54 billion (sic, sick) ... this will certainly be at the expense of human life and health and the environment. What manner of man is this who walks amongst us?

The word is "narcissism." *New York Times* columnist Frank Bruni (Feb. 28) captures this well: "Why do I get the sense that fighter jets are Donald Trump's biceps, warships are his pectorals and what he's doing with his proposed \$54 billion increase for the Pentagon is flexing?"

Will there ever be an end to the never-ending American wars?

**William Blum is an author, historian, and renowned critic of U.S. foreign policy. He is the author of *Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* and *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*, among others. [This article originally appeared at the Anti-Empire Report, <http://williamblum.org/> .]**

---