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The Deep State is the State

By Ron Jacobs
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The deep state is not some enigmatic entity that operates outside the US government. It is the US state itself. Like all elements of that state, the so-called deep state exists to enforce the economic supremacy of US capitalism. It does so primarily via the secret domestic and international police forces like the FBI, CIA and other intelligence agencies. The operations of these agencies run the gamut from surveillance to propaganda to covert and overt military actions. Naturally, this so-called deep state operates according to their own rules; rules which ultimately insure its continued existence and relevance. Although it can be argued that it was the 1950 National Security Directive known as NSC-68 along with the Congressional Bill creating the Central Intelligence Agency that launched the “deep state” as we understand it, a broader understanding of the “deep state” places its genesis perhaps a century prior to that date. In other words, a structure designed to maintain the economic and political domination of certain powerful US capitalists existed well back into the nineteenth century. However, the centralization of that power began in earnest in the years following World War Two.

For those who don’t know what the NSC-68 actually was, it is essentially a directive that militarized the conflict between US capitalism and Soviet communism. It was based on the correct understanding that US capitalism required open access to the resources and markets of the entire planet and that the Soviet Union represented the greatest threat to that access. Not only did this mean the US military would grow in size, it also ensured that the power of the

intelligence sector would expand both in terms of its reach and its budget. When one recalls that this period in US history was also a period when the FBI and the US Congress were going after leftists and progressives in the name of a certain right-wing ideological purity, the power of the US secret police becomes quite apparent.

As the 1950s turned into the 1960s, the so-called deep state's power continued to grow. Some of its better known manifestations include the failed attempt to invade revolutionary Cuba that became known as the Bay of Pigs, the use of psychoactive drugs on unsuspecting individuals as part of a mind control study, and numerous attempts to subvert governments considered anti-American. Among the latter actions one can include covert operations against the Vietnamese independence forces and the murder of the Congolese president Patrice Lumumba. In terms of the "deep state's" domestic operations, this period saw the intensification of spying on and disrupting various groups involved in the civil rights and antiwar organizing. Many elements of the domestic operation would become known as COINTELPRO and were directed by the FBI.

Although the agencies of the so-called deep state operate as part of the US state, this does not mean that those agencies are of one mind. Indeed, like any power structure, there are various factions represented. This means that there are disagreements over policies, priorities, direction, and personnel. The only certainty is that all of its members agree on the need to maintain the supremacy of US capital in the world. At times, the seemingly absolute power of the CIA and FBI have caused the US Executive Branch to try and set up other means and methods in order to circumvent that power. Two examples of this that come quickly to mind are the establishment of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) by the Kennedy administration in 1961-1962 and the failed attempt (known as the Huston plan after its creator Tom Huston) by the Nixon White House to centralize the direction of all US government intelligence operations in the White House.

There is no soft coup taking place in DC. The entire government has been owned by big business and the banking industry for more than a century, if not since its inception. That ownership has been dominated by the military-industrial complex since about the same time as when the aforementioned agencies were created. That is no coincidence. However, their role in the current uproar over Russia and Michael Flynn is not because they are taking over the government. It is because their current leadership represents the factions of the US establishment that were removed from power in November 2016.

Donald Trump is not against the so-called deep state. He is against it being used against himself and his cohorts. . In the world of capitalist power, the factions Trump represents are not the same factions represented by the presidents former FBI director Comey served—the factions represented by Bush and Obama. He understands that if he can install individuals in key positions at the FBI, CIA, DHS and other security and military agencies, he and his allies will be more than happy to use the power of these agencies against their opponents. Indeed, he would most likely greatly enhance those agencies' power, making a further mockery of the US Constitution. If Trump is able to get the agencies of the deep state to work for the factions he represents—either by replacing those loyal to others not named Trump or by cajoling and coercing them to change their loyalty—he will think the deep state is a great thing. In this way he is no different than every other US president. He understands that whoever controls the deep

state controls the US. The struggle we are witnessing between the FBI and the Trump White House is part of a power struggle between US power elites.

When the ruling class is in crisis, as it is now, the job of the left is not to choose one side or the other. Nor is it to accept the narrative provided by one or other faction of the rulers, especially when that narrative supports the police state. Instead, it is the Left's job to go to the root of the crisis and organize resistance to the ruling class itself.