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America Goes Insane

By Rob Urie
December 16, 2016

The charge of ‘fake news’ currently at the fore of American political chatter is held forward on its own and is tied to the related charge that the Russian government ‘hacked’ the recent presidential election. Both charges proceed from the oppositional premise that some functioning state of affairs, some normalcy, preceded these onslaughts. The follow-on premise is that this hallowed state of affairs was diminished by ‘external’ malevolent forces.

Functionally, the use of such oppositional reasoning serves to delimit the realm of related discourse. The term ‘fake news’ infers that there exists ‘real’ news. The charge of a hacked election infers that said election was otherwise free from untoward influence. In political terms the charge of illegitimacy infers, and is intended to confer, legitimacy upon the purveyors of ‘real’ news and those levying the charges of political interference.

Cui bono? In a broad political sense national Democrats need to explain how they lost an election to Donald Trump. After all, Mr. Trump was the Democrats’ choice to run against. Given their apparent incapacity for introspection, they need to explain it first and foremost to themselves. Secondly, they need to explain it to their patrons on Wall Street, in executive suites and in the military establishment lest resources for perpetual advantage flow toward Republicans.

A central explanation for the rise of ‘alternative’ news has been the abject failure of traditional sources. Mainstream reporting on the run-up to George W. Bush’s war in Iraq was a watershed

of sorts with gullible ‘reporters’ from the New York Times and the Washington Post dutifully passing on bogus stories of weapons of mass destruction in exchange for ‘access.’ Apparently unbeknownst to these storied cocktail party attenders is that a whole lot of American kids and a million plus Iraqis had their lives destroyed as a result.

The anti-democratic premise of controlling information through delegitimizing competing sources is that information is somehow unrelated to experience. To be clear, this is not the claim that all social explanation deserves equal credence. For instance, eight years of ‘economic recovery’ headlines have hardly erased the diminished facts by which many people are experiencing life. In addition to the Case and Deaton paper on declining life expectancies for White males, other research corroborates and broadens these findings.

The failure of traditional sources of state-sponsored news to keep control of the narrative ties directly to the failures of governance that just got national Democrats booted from office. Hare-brained bullshit must eventually tie to the lived experience of enough of the electorate to dominate social explanation. While an apparent mystery of the universe to the bubble-residing minions of establishment Washington and ‘billionaires’ row’ in Manhattan, human misery has been ascendant in the rest of the country for some years now.

With neoliberal tool Barack Obama set to provide ‘evidence’ of Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq, I mean Russian interference in the interminable recent election, the broader question of who, exactly, has conspired to turn the U.S. into a neo-impooverished, plutocrat-led, environmental catastrophe creating, auto-militarized, privatized, gangster-state, there is nary a mirror in front of national Democrats to be found. Donald Trump was a plutocratic ‘friend’ of national Democrats before he became the explicit version of their very-own crony-capitalism gone wild.

Upon learning that the excrementitious Donald Trump had won election Mr. Obama’s primary objective reportedly became to pass the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) to secure his ‘legacy.’ The ‘agreement’ could have been put forward sans the ISDS (Investor-State Dispute Settlement) provisions had the objective been other than to affect a crony-capitalist coup. Democrat consternation that Mr. Trump’s Cabinet is full of executives from dirty industries demonstrates their own inability to conceive the world in the level of abstraction of the Democrat leadership’s ‘trade’ agreements.

Reflexive recourse to Red-baiting is the natural home for national Democrats because it places them on the side of their donor base against the people they claim to represent. After four decades of siding with industrialists, Wall Street and the military establishment against the interests of the vast majority of Americans and citizens of the world these lost souls so despise the victims of their policies that they can only conceive of political pushback in terms of ‘foreign’ intervention.

The question of the moment is: who created the conditions that this new McCarthyism is being manufactured to draw attention away from? Before it was the Russians it was deplorable Americans, the biased national media and home grown ‘traitors’ whose tendencies to disseminate inconvenient truths were ..., inconvenient. And assuming for a moment that these

neo-McCarthyite tactics are successful, are these really the people that Democrat Party constituents intend to vote for in future elections?

Should this not have been considered by the clever folks trying to overturn the election results through the Electoral College, around half of those who voted were apparently well-enough swayed by devious Russian propaganda to have actually voted for Mr. Trump. This is to suggest that calling these voters easily-duped stooges is roughly akin to calling them deplorable. And should the effort be successful, prepare yourselves for cocktail party interruptus. How well do stock prices respond to civil war again?

It is worth remembering that the original Cold War was as much a business enterprise as it was a battle of ideologies. The main beneficiaries were military industries and American industrialists who used the 'communist threat' to invade, subvert, manipulate and control other peoples and nations to gain wealth and power. The ultimate result was the creation of human misery on a previously only rarely imagined scale. By the 1970s the U.S. military was gratuitously carpet-bombing innocents in Laos and Cambodia because it had bombs to drop.

By early 2010 every economically-inclined public commenter I was in contact with was worried about the rise of a right-wing demagogue because of the Democrats' feckless and servile attention to Wall Street during a time of mass need. Washington, led by national Democrats, fiddled while the nation burned. The political establishment, led by national Democrats, either didn't see political blowback coming or didn't care. And should this have been forgotten, Joe McCarthy was a corrupt thug who ultimately self-destructed, but not before destroying a lot of lives. That this is all that the American political establishment apparently has to offer in present circumstance is instructive.