"Who are the Judges?!"

Last week, the US State Department presented yet another report on Russia's alleged steps in the “dispersion of fake news”. The report was released under a scandalous title: “Russia’s Pillars of Disinformation and Propaganda”, however, the creativity of those behind the report ended with that title. At first glance, it would seem that there would be a lot of substance in a 77-pages long paper that features a lot of colorful pictures. However, the low quality of the analysis presented outweighs the picturesque advantages of the report.

It's clear that this paper was prepared in a hurry in anticipation of the 2020 Democratic National Convention that is scheduled for August 17-20. The very topic of the report reeks of something stale. However, those behind the report have somehow come to a conclusion that their ability to release a colorful brochure would make their words sound more “scientific”. However, they fell short of fulfilling their aspirations.

From the very start of the paper its authors began leveling baseless accusations against the media sources that dare to voice opinions that contradict the views of those behind the brochure, that's why they are labelled as “propaganda outlets” and “disinformation operations.” How else can one explain the fact that a popular Canadian site Global Research was featured in this paper?

Our journal, New Eastern Outlook, has also ended up on that list, where it was for some reason described as a “pseudo-academic publication.” It's clear that those who wanted to frame our journal as
a “source of propaganda and disinformation” didn't know how to marry that notion with the fact that we're hosted at the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences. In that respect, one could hardly resist the temptation of quoting the renowned Russian diplomat, poet and writer Alexander Gribov, who wrote in his comedy Woe from Wit: “Who are the Judges?!“

On what grounds do those behind the aforementioned paper pass their judgement about a journal by only reading titles, without studying the articles themselves? We, for once, don't know anything about the scientific achievements of those behind the brochure, about their previous publications and presentations. We don't even know their names.

The content of the aforementioned report speaks volumes about the incredibly low level of analytical approach professed by those who tried to draft it. Back in the Cold War years, there were hundreds of analytical centres all across the United States that studied anything and everything Russia-related, however the foundation upon which they were built is all but destroyed these days. And it seems that this shallow approach has become the new normal for US foreign policy in different parts of the world. Our journal specializes in the study of Middle Eastern and African problems and we know a lot about the consequences of the policies that Washington pursued in these regions of the world. Even American media sources and American politicians are now forced to recognize the disastrous consequences of the short-sighted decisions of the United States. At the same time, they are the ones to recognize the success of the policies that Russia advances in these same parts of the world. This fact may serve as testament to the inability of those behind the brochure to tell an “academic publication” from a “pseudo-academic publication”.

As for the massive funds that the US State Department allocates on the release of such papers and the initiatives that are associated with such, it's an entirely different topic. However, the glaringly low quality of such studies shows that it's not a case of money being well-spent. But what else can one expect from those who can just print money?
Have we noticed anything new in the aforementioned paper from the point of view of the principles that guide the way media sources operate? It seems that if somebody replaced the word “Russia” with the word “US”, nobody would notice any difference. Now, look who's talking!

One wouldn't be surprised to learn that the massive US experience in spreading information that serves its interests the best was used to make the evaluation of Russian media sources.

However, our editorial board remains grateful to those readers and authors who remain committed to the principles that our journal professes, to the objective, intellectual, analytical approach to the coverage of international events.

The New Eastern Outlook editorial board.