Washington Seeks Ways of Bringing Some "Iraqi Freedom" to Moscow

The closer we approach the presidential election in Russia, the more hysterical the Western propaganda machine gets in a desperate bid to somehow discredit Vladimir Putin and his closest associates, as otherwise Washington is clueless about ways of keeping Russia's growing influence in check. That is pretty much the sole gole of the investigation that is being led by the US Special Counsel, Robert Mueller, aimed at establishing the degree of the alleged Russian interference in the US presidential election in 2016. Additionally, Washington is planning to introduce new sanctions against specific certain Russian politicians and businesses.

At the same time, Western media sources tend to agree that before indulging in the yet another witch hunt, Washington must honestly admit that the US has been doing exactly what it accuses Russia of for decades in other countries.

Just take a look at the New York Times stating that:

“If you ask an intelligence officer, did the Russians break the rules or do something bizarre, the answer is no, not at all,” said Steven L. Hall, who retired in 2015 after 30 years at the C.I.A., where he was the chief of Russian operations. The United States “absolutely” has carried out such election influence operations historically, he said, “and I hope we keep doing it.”
Furthermore, it would present a statement made by Loch K. Johnson, the dean of American intelligence scholars, who began his career in the 1970s investigating the CIA as a staff member of the Senate’s Church Committee. The dean would add that the alleged Russia's 2016 operation was simply the cyber-age version of standard United States practice for decades, adding that the CIA has been doing this kind of "thing" to other states since the moment when it was created in 1947.

In the run-up to the presidential election in Russia, one can't help but notice the striking similarity of Washington's actions aimed at removing the Russian leader from the political arena with those the CIA and the Pentagon were taking in the course of its Shock and Awe operation in Iraq that would latter be relabeled as the Operation Iraqi Freedom. The sole goal of this operation, no matter how it's now called, was the downing of the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

In this regard, it must be recalled that long before the armed invasion of Iraq in 2003, the CIA and the Pentagon would be taking every effort of discréditing of Saddam Hussein himself along with his closest associates.

Among the initial steps Washington would take against Iraq was the controlled destruction of the Iraqi banking system, triggered via NGO-sponsored opposition forces and a series of acts of sabotage, that would bring Iraqi economy at a screeching halt. struck the country's economy, the introduction of malicious viruses into vital systems management. Additionally, Western media sources would start bashing Iraqi political and military figures, thus discrediting them.

High-profile cyber attacks against Iraq that started as early as 2002 were accompanied by the use of terror attacks, blackmail, and intimidation aimed at disheartening the Iraqi political and economic elite. By abusing its top-of-line hacking tools, the CIA and the Pentagon would infiltrate Iraqi governmental networks to bombare the ruling Baath party and the military brass with faxes, e-mails and phone calls, urging them to launch a coup d'état in exchange for handsome rewards that would be handed out afterwards.

Those who agreed to betray their country wouldn't be mentioned in the daming Western media reports for a while, while those refusing to assist would be invaders were subjected to daily provocations, that went as far as to publish anti-Saddam articles in various blogs signed by those who remained loyal to him till the bitter end.

A month after the end of the Iraqi war, the then Commander of the US Central Command, Tommy Ray Franks would reveal in one of his interviews that the anti-Iraqi operation started in 2002, more than a year before the actual invasion, with the CIA and the Pentagon spreading disinformation in Iraq, while bribing its officials, businessmen and military figures. The now retired US General was particularly pleased with the fact that he accumulated a mountain of receipts in which bribed Iraqi officials would provide written consent to a bet the United States.

On top of the bribed Iraqi officials and generals, Washington would pay handsomely to all sorts of liberal thinkers for them to spread calls to "overthrow the tyrant" at local parties and assemblies. Among those who fell victims of American meddling were prominent artists, prominent thinkers, political scientists and leading journalists alike, that were now able to rent condos in Miami and other resorts while enjoying their multimillion dollar accounts in Western banks that they received in exchange for "selling themselves to the rich and influential people. " The imminent US success was ensured by the unprecedented level of corruption that reached an all-time high in Iraq back in 2002. For sure, this process was facilitated by the corrupt practices that existed in local oil producing countries for decades, which would become an environment which citizens of such states would face on the dialy basis.

What we're witnessing today is the image of the Operation Iraqi Freedom in Russia, with similar tactics being applied to the local elite, including publications of damning reports about Vladimir Putin's closest entourage, countless cyber attacks being launched against the Russian banking sector and local companies, accompanied by arrests of foreign accounts of Russian businessmen, columns "and their use in information anti-Russian campaigns. We are witnessing various figures across Russia being bribed into submission, as was the case with the delirious "doping scandal" on the eve of the Winter Olympics.

Additionally, Washington has made sure to announce to various political leaders across the globe that any instance of economic cooperation with Russia may result in US sanctions. The US Department of State acknowledged that American ambassadors around the world were instructed to discourage from cooperating with Russia, as it was revealed by the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov.

At the same time Washington is engaged in saber-rattling activities along Russia's borders, while increasing its its "strategic military presence" in the Black Sea, while persuading Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia to join an anti-
Russian bloc. It's no wonder Western think tanks argue there's a real possibility of military clashes between the US and Russia, as they were instructed to do so.

It's curious that the apocalyptic prophecies released by Stratfor are no different from predictions made by US official bodies that all seems to agree that the world is doomed to die in a nuclear conflict with Russia.

Therefore, one cannot help but to agree with the course of action taken by the Russian president aimed at ensuring his country's defense capabilities in the face of ongoing US provocations.

As for the propaganda and cyber attacks aimed at bring Russia down, it is clear to everyone that they are unable to undermine the determination of the absolute majority of Russian citizens to elect a president that would remain faithful to his country and its people, and Vladimir Putin has proven time and time again that he fits the description.

*Grete Mautner is an independent researcher and journalist from Germany, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook.”*