

Uranium Coverup 15/21 - Behind the scenes

Public Affairs (PA) of Information Warfare "provides objective reporting without intent to propagandize" and disseminates information internationally. PA involves press releases, media briefings and statements by the military that "are based on projection of truths and credible message [that serve to discredit] adversary propaganda or misinformation against the operations of US/coalition forces [which] is critical to maintaining favorable public opinion."

PA use propaganda - white (telling the truth), gray (ambiguous) or black (lying) - often through Public Relations (PR). NATO spokesman Jamie Shea said "he won the war" in Kosovo by carrying out daily briefings in a PR style. A deep control of the global media by Information Operations to demonize the Serbs was perhaps the most "successful" aspect of that war.

Public Affairs units prepare information for news brokers, who send it to TV, radio, and the press. Independent journalists do not have a chance to publish in mainstream media, since NATO information operations subtly control chief editors. The structures of media seem corrupted top to bottom. The former president of CBS News Richard Salent said, "Our job is to give people not what they want, but what we decide they ought to have." John Swinton, the former New York Times Chief of Staff, whom colleagues named "The Dean of His Profession", confessed candidly before the New York Press Club: "I am paid weekly for keeping my honest opinions out of the paper I am connected with. Others of you are paid similar salaries for similar things, and any of you who would be so foolish as to write honest opinions would be out on the streets looking for another job [...] We are the tools and vassals of the rich men behind the scenes."

The media, reduced to a handful of conglomerates by deregulation, mold public's minds, profoundly affecting interpretation of reality. The largest conglomerates are growing even bigger by consuming competition, almost tripling in size during the 1990s. With the consolidation of the media empires, TV stations, newspapers and radio broadcasting are no longer independent. Only a handful are large enough to maintain independent reporters. The rest must depend on the chains for all of national and international news. It is also unsettling that one ethnic group dominates North American media ownership and staff, without reflecting the ethnic profiles of big business owners, officers and employees. The group refutes criticisms by intimidating the critic, based on historical prosecution of a radical part of the ethnic group [The National Alliance, 2002].

TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, books, motion pictures speak with a single voice, reinforcing each other. Despite apparent diversity, there are no alternative sources of information. The most prestigious and influential newspapers in the USA, New York Times, Wall Street Journal, and Washington Post illustrate the ability of the media masters to use the press as an unopposed instrument of policy. The papers set the trends and the guidelines for nearly all the others, and originate the news for the others to copy. In a joint venture with the New York Times, the Post publishes the International Herald Tribune, the most widely distributed English-language daily in the world.

The Washington Post has an inside track on news involving the federal government. Reference to "military sources", "senior administration officials", or "Pentagon analysts" reveal relations between media outlets and the military. Another clue of a single source of information for international press

agencies are standard phrases, beginnings and endings in all reports, in accord with Pentagon position. A November 10, 2002, Washington Post article provided an insight into media–Pentagon relations: “This article was discussed extensively in recent days with several senior civilian and military Defense Department officials.” Military censors at PA vetted the article, then the supposedly independent newspaper as a propaganda conduit published it. Major news corporations manufacture opinion polls to meet government specifications, which usually combine plans of the administration, the Pentagon and the business. The media lend themselves to what White House aides themselves have described as a campaign to “sell” the war to the American people, as was seen during 2002 preparations for war with Iraq.

Military control of the media extends to the battlefields, based on lessons from the Vietnam War, when coverage of atrocities against civilians and of US soldiers in body bags contributed to anti-war protests. A “pool system” would select daily a few out of hundreds of journalists, and would escort them to scenes deemed fit for the public. The coverage would then be “pooled” with their colleagues, so that the same controlled story comes from every major news outlet. Under this system an objective reporting from the scene about victims of acute exposure to uranium weapons would not be possible. Any incriminating leaks from independent war correspondents would be blacked out or distorted by Pentagon press briefings that blame any carnage on the “enemy”. Should independent media sources fail to observe this imposed censorship (as was the case with the Serb TV in 1999) their facilities are targeted with US precision-guided munitions, consistent with Special Operations integration of services to suit Information Warfare needs.

Cover-ups of chronic exposure and effects of uranium would be managed by a different set of information operations, including pressures on the executives of international organizations conducting studies of contaminated sites and victims.

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