

## All.Net Analyst Report and Newsletter

### Welcome to our Analyst Report and Newsletter

#### Countering mass propaganda and surveillance in the “war on terrorism”

Propaganda is used increasingly and with more sophistication as we move further into the information age. The use of software to measure and predict emotion is in its infancy, but its exploitation to advantage points of view is already in widespread use and being exploited to new heights on an almost daily basis.

#### Now the excuse

ISIL – no ISIS – no Daesh – is using Internet-based recruiting and propaganda to attempt war on the West. Therefore, in the name of winning the war on terrorism, just as “we” *had to torture to save lives* (even if this has been almost entirely refuted) and *had to invade Iraq because they were about to use weapons of mass destruction* (even if this was refuted), and *had to surveil its citizens to detect and interdict terrorist acts* (even if no such advantage has yet been shown) and [you name it] other memes, you can bet that we will *have to use propaganda on the Internet to save us all from recruitment*. Never mind that emotion sensing and control technology doesn't actually work and undermines the very notion of freedom.

#### And the action

I have no actual knowledge of facts here, but I am going to speculate, or rather extrapolate, that (1) an enormous classified program is underway for detecting propaganda and exploiting the knowledge gained to affect the hearts and minds of our enemies and that (2) even if the people working on it believe in it and are intelligent and sincere, there is a covert version used to influence everything from elections around the world to decisions to spend more money and boost the economy. I predict an upcoming scandal (or lots of them) in this regard as the populace discovers they are being played, followed by a sequence of revelations, a so-called backlash, escalations, and eventually, settling on a new norm that today we would be incredibly offended by, but by then we will see as a compromise we grudgingly accept.

#### What can we do to stop them from controlling the rest of us?

The real answer is probably nothing. The war for the hearts and minds of everyone is probably lost unless and until they push far too hard too fast. But they are sophisticated and know how far to push without breaking their system and when to back off and how far. And who are “they”? Wouldn't you like to know! They are pulling the strings from behind the curtains and don't want you or I to know... When one of them is revealed, the others walk away from them and the don't talk because they know better – it won't work and they will get propaganda used against them.

They are not benevolent, they are merely power hungry and think they know more than the rest of us. Ayn Rand's power elite are out there, pulling the strings from afar. They may live in islands among us, but they are not off on their own. They are pulling the strings...

#### I hope you enjoyed that twist at the end

By going just a bit over the line from serious analyst and predictor of the future to demagogue rallying against the evil right (or is it left), I have shown a hand that will make many readers

walk away. And it would make me walk away as well. That's the job of the editors. You should know that stories in the media essentially always go through editorial process – for good and valid reasons – except when the editorial process is influenced by the folks in charge.

Editorial content can be subtly applied, and anyone in the big-time media knows that the stories will be changed outside of their control before final printing or posting. They may have to “walk it back” if it goes too far. Their stories won't be retweeted as much, of counter-memes will be released to obviate the message, or the story will run its course and be lost in the sea of other stories while the author loses access and influence over time. That's the job of the editor, and the editor is hired by the owner, so guess who wins hearts and minds in the end.

### **Come the Trump card**

Every once in a while the truth is revealed. Donald Trump is an example. I won't express a political view here. I merely note that he seems to say whatever he wants to say and he has a lot of fans. A lot of what he says is probably true as far as he knows, if only because his ego limits his willingness and ability to lie, and perhaps because he is actually sincere. What we see and clearly now understand if we watch, is that wealth and power do not imply knowledge of truth or lead to inevitable conclusions. There is no single “best” answer and even if there was such a thing, being rich, powerful, influential, famous, or (self-)important doesn't mean you know what's right, or true, or anything else.

### **Power corrupts, money is power → money corrupts**

Don't you just love it when capitalism is attacked! If you believe in money as a religion, any attack on the notion that wealth associates with holiness (or at least holier than thou-ness) is sinful and must be suppressed and destroyed. Money does not equate to smart or skilled. Rich can come from luck, circumstance, hard work, intellect, lineage, or any number of other things, and because of the sequential nature of getting rich or poor, one early win can make an Elon Musk or break a ..... we don't know her name because she never made it. Not everyone can be at the right place at the right time. But luck does seem to favor the prepared.

### **The most important thing to understand about propaganda, power, and influence**

To counter propaganda the first best rule to remember and hold close is that no human being is really all that smart. They may be or seem smarter than you, depending on how you measure it, but even if they seem to really know a lot, neither they, you, nor I know all that much about all that much. The best experts in the world who have spent a lifetime learning and studying and understanding specific subjects are usually the people who know more about what they don't know than anyone else. The folks who know less than the top experts often think they know more, but when encountering the top expert, they often find out a few things they don't know, and this is the path to their education.

### **Summary:**

People are not very smart, even if they are smarter than any other creature we are aware of. If you were really smart, you would likely not reveal it to the rest of us, knowing you would be destroyed by us out of fear or hatred or whatever. When you believe in the charismatic leader, you are supporting a fundamental untruth about the world – that they know a whole lot more than you do. You can bet they don't. Rule 1 in countering propaganda:

**Seek truth, test it regularly, and be skeptical of those who claim to know it.**