



SATELLITE IMAGES: MEDIA AND PROPAGANDA

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KEYWORDS :

War, media and propaganda go hand in hand; the three are intricately connected with one another and contribute not only to the global destruction of civilizations but also the political and social order around the world. Modern technology especially, the satellite communication and satellite images are extensively used by the western nations to nail down other countries politically and economically (Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Somalia). People and governments around the world are made to believe in the images taken by the satellites orbiting the earth hundreds of kilometers above. Though it is just the broadcast media that may be used to generate a false opinion about the individuals and nations, today they use the media and the 'images' to generate an opinion among the countries and people in general.

The satellite images released by the US and the military officials with regard to Ukraine and Russian conflict, and before that the images taken from Iraq during the Saddam regime and many other images from Iran are the images the western countries and especially the US leak to the world media before attacking a nation, and we have seen such tactics before by the western powerful nations. Releasing the satellite images to the press during the Russia and Ukraine conflict the United States said "Intelligence now indicates that up to 1,000 Russian troops have moved into southern Ukraine with heavy weapons, and are fighting there, a U.S. official told CNN" I wonder why only the images published by United States first. Why not other western countries satellite images? And why the allied countries believe in these images and start to react the way the United States want. Soon after the US statement the NATO releases its own evidence briefing the media that "satellite images showing Russian troops engaged in military operations inside Ukraine" this was followed by the statement from the British "security source with detailed knowledge of UK intelligence estimates, One image that British intelligence has analyzed, dated Tuesday, shows 15 heavy trucks, at least seven armored vehicles and at least nine artillery positions are engaged in it" (August 29, 2014CNN). We know how military/army and other organizations can divert the attention of the enemies by using inflated artillery balloons, especially during the war periods. Why can't we assume that these so called trucks and other equipment that the satellite captured are inflated balloons used by the pro-Russian rebels to divert the attention?

We have history on our side to prove as to how these images could be misleading at times, and how in the recent past the United States has used the satellite images to misguide the allied countries and the people around the world for attacking Iraq in 2003, and other countries. It is reported that, the pharmaceutical companies in Iraq were shown as companies producing weapons of mass destruction (satellite images) time and again these satellite images were shown in different media to gain support for an attack.

The White House, Defense Department, and State Department released over seventy images, most obtained by satellite, of portions of Iraq. One objective, in the time before the beginning of military operations, was to provide evidence to support U.S. claims about the nature of Saddam Hussein's regime as well as claims about Iraq's failure to comply with U.N. resolutions concerning its weapons of mass destruction programs (Jeffrey 2003).

The satellite images released by the United States has destroyed the

political and social order in countries like Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia, Syria, Libya, and many more, this include killing of innocent civilians with drone attacks. The propaganda carried by the United States and other western countries is not new; it seems as if they have mastered the act of propaganda by using the satellite images for their advantage. After two years of search "the CIA's top weapons inspector in Iraq said Monday that the hunt for weapons of mass destruction has "gone as far as feasible" and has found nothing" (April 25, 2005 Associated Press) Many countries have suffered economically, politically, culturally due to these satellite images taken by the United States followed by the impositions that are supported by the allied nations. Countries like North Korea, Iran, Iraq, Russia, Syria, Pakistan, including India have suffered great economic losses. The media on its part played a vital role in spreading the information far and wide, making people and countries to believe in these images and act. The satellite images become the headlines in most of the national, regional, including the local and vernacular press. The construction of a 'Rouge State' image is achieved with the publication of these satellite images through different media. Having these images on the front page may sell a few copies more, but the impact created is huge, as the perception of the people change when they see these images, and also the over exaggerated text below. Noam Chomsky has very well written in his book as to how the American political system and media have coordination with regard to execution of certain tasks. How the media is very selective in publishing certain images and texts to make people believe within and outside the country in the book *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. Talking about the media he says

Among their other functions, the media serve, and propagandize on behalf of, the powerful societal interests that control and finance them. The representatives of these interests have important agendas and principles that they want to advance, and they are well positioned to shape and constrain media policy. This is normally not accomplished by crude intervention, but by the selection of right-thinking personnel and by the editors' and working journalists' internalization of priorities and definitions of news worthiness that conform to the institution's policy.

We know how the United States and the allied countries went wrong, when they armed the Afghans against Russia, when they armed the moderate radical groups in Syria, Libya and in Iraq and other countries in the African continent. The groups that were once supported with the ammunition and other equipment by the United States and other countries now threaten the existence of neighboring countries including their own. The wars waged, and the killings that the United States and its allied nations have undertaken in the name of "War against Terrorism" having serious implications on the world over. In the recent past the United States has been appealing to the nations to come forward to defeat the ISIS (Islamic State), United States wants more nations to support in eliminating the ISIS militants. We have seen how nations have been torn apart on the basis of religion and sect (Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria,). It is in the interest of the democratic and secular nations to be out of this group and not to join hands in the present conditions that are unfolding world over. We have seen what is happening in Pakistan that has not only joined hands with United States but actively participated in its activities.

May be the time has come for countries and the media in general, not to copy, report and sensationalize the issues that the American political and media propaganda wants. May be the political system and the media in various countries can ignore the gobbles propaganda carried by the United States and concentrate on other issues that are of serious concerns in their own countries. Media to a large extent can shape the opinion with regard to political, social and religious opinions, especially in secular nations like India. We have a larger threat looming in our neighboring country, apart from that the leader of the al-Qaida has recently announced that it would be recruiting the jihadist from the subcontinent and spread the Islamic rule. The national media and the local media can selectively ignore the issues that are not in the interest of the nation and its people. Images and messages of militant leaders and other radical groups on the front cover of the magazines and newspapers would attract the young minds and make them walk the path of death and destruction. Giving importance and making these issues public, attracts more attention and that is what the groups involved in the propaganda want. The national, regional and local media can avoid such news by giving less importance. And though we cannot stop the information we can selectively ignore the issues that are put forward by the militant leaders, groups and other terrorist organizations including the propaganda carried out by the western nations.

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