

New York Times renews propaganda campaign against Russia over MH17

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The *New York Times* published a scurrilous editorial Thursday, titled “Russia’s Fictions on Malaysia Flight 17,” that distorts the contents of the Dutch Safety Board’s (DSB) recent report and blames Russian President Vladimir Putin for shooting down the passenger jet over eastern Ukraine last July.

Without any evidence to back up its claim, the *Times* provocatively declares that Putin “sees no reason to come clean for the shooting down of the Boeing 777.”

The DSB report concluded that the Malaysian jetliner was shot down by a Russian-made BUK surface-to-air missile and identifies an area in eastern Ukraine from where the missile was most likely fired. However, it does not ascribe blame for the attack. To date, no concrete evidence has been presented that confirms who was responsible.

The Dutch report’s conclusion that a Russian-made missile was used to shoot down MH17 has been presented in the media as evidence against the Russian government. However, much of the military equipment in Ukraine was made in Russia, and the Ukrainian military also fields BUK missile systems.

Neither does the report’s identification of the general area in eastern Ukraine where it was fired constitute conclusive evidence, since the territory in eastern Ukraine was being actively contested by Kiev-backed forces and pro-Russian militias at the time the passenger plane was shot down.

No one objectively and honestly looking at the contents of the DSB report could conclude that Russia was responsible for the attacks. In fact, the harshest criticism in the report was reserved for the Ukrainian government, which failed to close its eastern airspace to civilian aircraft even though multiple military planes had been shot down in the days leading up to the downing of MH17.

Despite *Times*’s ~~definitive~~ ^{definitive} the DSB report as confirming the official narrative spun by American government officials and the media in the immediate aftermath of the tragedy. The newspaper rules out any alternatives, in particular those put forward by Russian officials.

At the time of the attack, leading US officials, including Secretary of State John Kerry, blamed Putin and the Russian-backed separatists, using the incident to push for the imposition of harsh economic sanctions against Russia.

While condemning Putin, the *Times* proclaims its concern that the Russian public does not accept that the Russian government is responsible, for which the newspaper blames a “propaganda” campaign promoted by Putin which has created an “alternate reality” in the minds of Russians.

The *Times* is the last media outlet that should accuse others of peddling propaganda. The paper has played a central role in using misinformation to promote every criminal intervention and war waged by the United States over the last twenty-five years, from the bombing of Kosovo and Bosnia to the Iraq war. *Times* journalist Judith Miller played a particularly noxious role in promoting lies about Iraqi WMDs that served as the official justification for the invasion and destruction of that country by the American military.

Among the more recent examples of the *Times*’ role as mouthpiece for the State Department is its cover-up of the US intervention in Ukraine, in which the Obama administration has allied with far-right elements in an attempt to undermine Russian influence in the country.

The *Times*’ staff has worked tirelessly to obscure the fact that fascistic groups such as Right Sector and Svoboda were the spearhead of Kiev’s military campaign against Russian-backed separatists, instead

blaming all of the unrest in Ukraine on Russian military aggression.

In April of 2014, the *Times* propaganda campaign was exposed after it published low-resolution photos that it claimed were proof that Russian Special Forces were fighting in eastern Ukraine. It quickly came to light that the photos published by the *Times* had been down-sampled from higher resolution images and that the entire story was a fabrication. The *Times* was forced to retract the story. (See, “New York Times propaganda photos on Ukraine exposed”)

In May of this year, the paper published an article by its Moscow correspondent Andrew E. Kramer that consciously falsified the country’s history in order to sanitize Ukrainian nationalist and World War II Nazi collaborator Stepan Bandera, who has been elevated as a national hero by the current government in Kiev.

Times columnists often serve as direct conduits for the White House, CIA and other elements in the military-intelligence complex, loyally spinning the official government line as truth to their readers.

Thursday’s editorial blaming Putin for the downing of MH17 is only the latest in a long line of propaganda pieces produced by the *Times*. There is no lie that the *New York Times* will not tell in its efforts to defend and promote US imperialism.



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