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Different Countries, Different Methods, Same Goal: Destroy Democracy

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Influence operations enable the Russian Federation to compensate for disadvantages in other areas of state power.¹ New technologies are making them cheaper and more potent, even if their principles haven't changed. This *Information Series* offers lessons for alliance management and for building resilience against Russia's malign operations, including the need to foster transparency, intelligence cooperation, and support for local independent journalists. It draws on a forthcoming *Occasional Paper* on Russia's influence operations in the Czech Republic, Poland, and Romania in the context of their missile defense cooperation with the United States.²

Case Study: The Czech Republic

In January 2007, the United States submitted a formal request to the Czech government to host an X-band radar as part of a U.S. missile defense system.³ Russia, vigorously opposed to U.S. missile defenses, activated its comprehensive network of agents and "useful idiots"⁴ to sway public opinion against the U.S. radar deployment and undermine the Czech government's pro-Western foreign policy.

Russia successfully built a friendly network of collaborators among Czech politicians, including Members of Parliament, their assistants, and members of political parties responsible for their party's foreign policy and security agendas.⁵ Some of them did not feel particularly

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loyal to the Czech state, which made them more susceptible to collaboration with Russia.⁶ Russia's intelligence services' extensive connections at all levels of Czech society provided multiple opportunities to wage a campaign against the U.S. radar deployment.

The execution of an "active measures" campaign against the radar, which included media events, publications, reports, and cultural and social events, became one of Russia's significant policy priorities in the Czech Republic in the 2007-2009 timeframe.⁷ In fact, the No Bases civic movement, founded to organize opposition against the radar, was suspected of accepting Russia's financing for these activities.⁸ Russia's intelligence operatives contacted, infiltrated, and manipulated groups and individuals active in anti-radar civic movements, politics, and the media.⁹

The Russians were successful in increasing the level of popular opposition against the radar, although their interference was not the only and perhaps not even the most important factor that contributed to the decrease in the radar deployment's popularity. After the Obama Administration cancelled the radar in 2009, the Russians refocused on traditional areas of interest: obtaining economic advantages for Russian businesses, particularly in the energy sector; improving Vladimir Putin's image among the Russian-speaking community in the Czech Republic; obtaining access to Czech research and development efforts; and accessing Czech or European Union (EU) funding for projects in Russia's interest.¹⁰

Case Study: Poland

Recently, Poland "has become one of the most important targets of Russia's state-funded information machinery."¹¹ Blatantly pro-Russian narratives do not find much support in Polish society because of historic Polish fears over Russia's expansion into the country.¹² Russia tries to influence Polish society by exploiting a series of loosely interrelated narratives. One of them is Pan-Slavism, a relatively popular 19th century idea that people with a common ethnic background in Central and Eastern Europe ought to unite to achieve political and cultural goals.¹³ Russia, of course, considers itself a leader of other Slavic countries and a counter to the West's "malign" influence.

Russia uses disinformation web sites in Poland to push its own narratives to the mainstream media without attributing this information to a source sympathetic to or otherwise affiliated with Russia.¹⁴ The broader objective is to undermine the public's trust in Polish democratic institutions and the public's positive perception of the United States (and NATO) as viable security partners.¹⁵ Russia also employs several other narratives "aimed at indirect subversion of the consensus, and at encouraging social discord,"¹⁶ including assertions that the West is morally bankrupt, pro-immigration and pro-Muslim at the expense of Western interests, and narratives that overemphasize historical animosity between Poland and Ukraine. Russia even exploits the 2010 Smolensk tragedy, during which 96 high-level Polish government officials



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and dignitaries including then-Polish President Lech Kaczyński died, to increase polarization within Polish society.¹⁷ Russia's anti-LGBT policies strike a particular chord among Poland's more conservative population.¹⁸ Its anti-Muslim and anti-immigration narratives also resonate with Poland's right-wing parties, including the Law and Justice party.¹⁹

Marches and protests against the United States, NATO, and the EU are among the most important events organized by pro-Russian influence networks in Poland.²⁰ They generate a measure of visibility that Russia can exploit for its own domestic propaganda purposes. But perhaps a more effective way in which the Russian Federation can influence how it is perceived in Poland is through cultural exchanges, concerts, language classes organized by the Russian embassy, and music festivals.²¹ These events also provide contacts that might prove useful in the furtherance of Russia's future goals because they generally tend to be attended by people who are likely to view Russia more positively than the general population.

After the end of the Cold War, Russia's goals in Poland included securing Russia's economic interest, maintaining political influence, and preventing Eastern European countries' integration into Western political and military structures--efforts in which Russia has not been altogether successful.²² Today, Russia's activities on Polish territory include efforts to stir-up Polish-Ukrainian animosities (and therefore strip the Ukrainian government of as much Polish government support as possible), raise questions about the Polish interpretation of historical events, and replace these historical narratives with pro-Russian versions.²³ But Russian activities can include acts of political sabotage and can involve kinetic actions that are intended to impact other allied states.²⁴

Personal connections between Russian agents and Polish politicians, businessmen, and intelligence officers have proven critical to advancing Russia's interests. In 1997, then-Interior Minister Zbigniew Siemiatkowski warned of increasing Russian penetration of Polish political and business circles, which led to efforts to strengthen the reliability of the Polish intelligence community, left largely intact after the fall of the Soviet Union.²⁵ Attempts to rebuild the intelligence community from scratch were abandoned due to a lack of trained professionals.

Case Study: Romania

Russia has a long history of exercising its influence in Romania, although Romania sees the Russian Federation as a threat today.²⁶ The successors of Romanian communists retained power in the country even after the end of the Cold War and did not reform until 2000, although they were not directly beholden to Moscow, even during the Cold War.²⁷ Russia opposed Romania's efforts join NATO and the EU but ultimately was unable to prevent it.

Romania is one of the EU's least energy-dependent states due to its large domestic gas and oil reserves.²⁸ The Russian Federation has been intent on expanding its influence over Romania's



energy and transportation sectors, particularly by purchasing and increasing its share in Romania's energy companies. The Russian Federation also does not appear hesitant to involve itself in Romania's domestic politics on occasion, including by covertly supporting organized protests.²⁹

Corruption has been a persistent problem in Romania and has given Russia another means to influence events in the country.³⁰ Romania ranks 69th in Transparency International's annual Corruption Perception Index, among the lowest ranking in the EU.³¹ In a survey, 20 percent of public service users "paid a bribe in the previous 12 months."³² Personal connections and networks are an important enabling factor for bribery. This is not so different from personal connections through which Russian agents can spread Russian disinformation and propaganda or generate materials potentially useful for blackmailing.

Some experts reportedly consider Romania "Russia-proof," or immune to Russia's propaganda.³³ That assessment appears counterintuitive because Romania's political instability and corruption create an environment in which Russian influence operations thrive. On the other hand, there is no fondness for the Russian Federation in Romania. Romania's public sees Russia as a threat to national security and both countries compete for influence in neighboring Moldova.³⁴ U.S.-Romanian missile defense cooperation enjoys extensive public support.³⁵

In Romania, as in Poland, Russia's influence operations exploit existing societal divisions and tensions. Post-Cold War economic liberalization created as many winners as losers, creating swaths of society dissatisfied with their economic conditions and the personal costs incurred by citizens whose governments joined the EU.³⁶ These groups of people happen to share Russia's goals and are easily targeted by tailored messages.³⁷ Russia's influence operations thrive on Romania's clientelist and incompetent public administration.³⁸ Russia's carefully concealed activities in the country were a "source of concern" for the U.S. embassy in Bucharest in 2019.³⁹ They included attempts to influence local politicians, weaken relations with the West, and delegitimize Romania's electoral system and democratic institutions while presenting Russia as a viable alternative model to Western democracies.⁴⁰ Russia maintains a "solid" intelligence presence in Romania, according to Teodor Melescanu, former Romanian Minister of Foreign Affairs.⁴¹

Countering Russia's Influence Operations: Recommendations

The United States and its allies do not have to be passive recipients of Russia's influence operations. They can and should take the following steps to counter such activities:

1) *Expose an adversary's influence operations.* Russia's activities are hiding in plain sight. Making public authoritative and comprehensive assessments of Russia's activities on an annual



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basis would improve the quality of public debate on the issue. The United States and its allies ought regularly to publish comprehensive reports on Russia's influence operations, ideally in multiple languages because transparency is one of the key components of countering Russia's influence operations. For example, the Czech Security Service publishes such annual reports, written in a way that does not compromise intelligence sources and methods but that allows an informed reader to develop a picture of hostile actors' activities in allied countries. The United States can do much to shed light on Russia's activities in allied countries, not just through government circles but also by supporting U.S. or local nonprofit organizations.⁴² The Department of State's Global Engagement Center (GEC) – specifically set up to recognize, understand, expose, and counter foreign propaganda and information – contributed to this effort by publishing a report on Russia's disinformation in August 2020 and January 2022.⁴³ But two reports are not enough. The Administration should make more of GEC's work publicly available.

2) *Know your enemy – and your ally.* Over six decades ago, U.S. strategist Herman Kahn made the following observation about U.S. arms control negotiations: “[W]e must do our homework. We must know what we are trying to achieve, the kinds of concessions that we can afford to give, and the kinds of concessions that we insist on getting.... All of this will require, among other things, much higher quality preparations for negotiations than have been customary.”⁴⁴ The observation about the necessity of increasing the quality of the U.S. government's preparation for negotiations is applicable to other areas of U.S. diplomacy. Russia's influence operations in allied countries are aimed at advancing Russia's interests, which are fundamentally incompatible with U.S. goals. To understand how the Russian Federation operates, the United States must not only better understand Russia's influence operations, but also the modalities of the environment in which Russia conducts its business.

3) *Increase transparency.* The Russian Federation's influence operations are conducted by a variety of intelligence services. Counterintelligence is a critical component of revealing and disrupting them and making the public aware of foreign manipulation. Not all disclosures of Russia's activities have to be made public – as long as they are securely shared with allies. The United States should not think about Russia's intelligence activities and influence operations as two separate activities; rather they represent a continuum. Especially in Poland and Romania, the Russian Federation goes the extra mile to conceal its activities – because they would lose their potency once it was revealed they originated in Russia. Additionally, the degree of transparency ought to be increased in the nonprofit sector in allied countries.⁴⁵ Many nonprofits do not have to reveal sources of their funding. Unless they are conducting illegal activities, it would not be proper to try to restrict their activities. The goal is to increase transparency, not limit freedom of speech – an essential component of a democratic society.

4) *Revitalize the U.S. communications and public diplomacy campaign.* The West needs a plan to counter Russia's disinformation narratives. Due to the shared language and cultural heritage



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between Central and Eastern Europeans and the Russians, these narratives are more appealing to some segments of the population in Central and Eastern Europe. Efforts to counter Russia's disinformation and influence activities were more prevalent during the Cold War. The United States aired its messaging to Soviet citizens and the citizens of captive nations, distributed books that the Soviet Union prohibited, and generated large quantities of public diplomacy material in various languages.⁴⁶ The United States ought to resurrect the United States Information Agency (USIA), a government agency that was responsible for generating U.S. public diplomacy content until its breakup in 1999. The agency's functions were subsumed most recently by the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM, formerly known as the Broadcasting Board of Governors), which runs several entities including the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. The USAGM is not considered a particularly effective successor to its Cold War predecessor.⁴⁷ The United States must recognize that the media landscape today is very different from the media landscape during the Cold War and that modern technologies require adaptation of old approaches to new conditions.

5) *Go on the offensive.* The United States and its allies ought to produce material that delegitimizes Vladimir Putin and his regime in the eyes of the Russian population and Russia's sympathizers in allied countries. Russia has many self-generated problems – from widespread corruption to human rights violations to poor living standards for the population – and the Russian government can be put on the defensive. The United States and its allies should try to complicate Russian disinformation efforts, not acquiesce to them.

6) *Build capacities to counter Russian propaganda, disinformation, and influence operations.* The United States has tremendous expertise and advantages in the technology and communication fields that can be used effectively to counter Russia's malign efforts. With its prosperity, rule of law, personal freedom, and individual opportunity, the United States can also offer a much more appealing image for the future than can Vladimir Putin. As former Secretary of Defense James Mattis stated during his confirmation hearing before the Senate, "The power of inspiration of America at times has got to be employed just as strongly."⁴⁸ There is no better time than now to use America's power of inspiration.

7) *Create compelling narratives as a part of rollout of strategies and policy announcements.* Important policy announcements must be accompanied by communication roll out strategies that anticipate and preemptively blunt an adversary's counter-narratives. Adversaries should not be allowed to set the terms of the debate. No team wins by being only reactive and defensive.

8) *Strengthen allied cooperation in the area of counterintelligence and countering Russia's influence operations.* The United States has a network of allies that Russia does not have, which provides the United States with strategic and tactical advantages. The United States should leverage its relationships with allies to allow greater information-sharing and closer counterintelligence



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cooperation. While the Czech Republic, Poland, and Romania cannot apply the same amount of resources to countering Russian disinformation that Russia can to propagating it, cooperating with the United States can help mitigate the disparity.

9) *Do not relativize the threat.* The United States and its allies must be clear eyed about threats to their interests. The absence of well-reasoned arguments that show how the Russian Federation is manipulating narratives about the West will make it more difficult to counter them—as the United States demonstrated with its ill-advised pursuit of the Russia “reset” policy. The Obama Administration’s effort to “reset” the relationship with Russia had a chilling effect on allies speaking out about the true nature of Russia’s threat until Russia invaded Ukraine and seized Crimea in 2014.

10) *Support local independent journalists and non-government organizations focused on countering influence operations.* New technologies and the new media environment require new ways to address and counter the spread of disinformation and Russian propaganda. They must be tailored to their respective audiences, which requires a deep understanding of the local realities on the ground. That is why the United States and its allies ought to support local independent journalists, even if they are not in support of all U.S. goals and policies.⁴⁹

Conclusion

In the battle to counter Russia’s influence activities, alliances are the most important advantage that the United States has. The views and values that allies share allow for cooperation on a much deeper level than would be the case among non-allies. This is particularly true with regard to cooperation on intelligence matters and provides one of the most important synergies that is not available to Russia. While Russia has an intelligence and resource advantage vis-à-vis the Czech Republic, Poland, and Romania, U.S. allies cooperating within a NATO framework or bilaterally and with strong U.S. backing can mitigate that advantage. Improving this cooperation and making it more effective will continue to be a critical element of any future efforts to counter Russia’s influence operations and its malign activities on NATO member states’ territories.

¹ While there is no established definition of influence operations, the term generally “includes the collection of tactical information about an adversary as well as the dissemination of propaganda in pursuit of a competitive advantage over an opponent.” See RAND Corporation, “Influence Operations,” available at <https://www.rand.org/topics/information-operations.html>. Another potential definition is “organized attempts to achieve a specific effect among a target audience,” in Elise Thomas, Natalie Thompson, and Alicia Wanless, “The Challenges of Countering Influence Operations,” *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, June 2020, p. 1, available at https://carnegieendowment.org/files/Thomas_Thompson_Wanless_-_PCIO_-_Influence_Ops.pdf.



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² This article is based on an upcoming monograph on Russia's influence operations in Poland, Romania, and the Czech Republic. Some of its parts draw on already published works, namely Michaela Dodge, *U.S.-Czech Missile Defense Cooperation: Alliance Politics in Action* (Fairfax, VA: National Institute Press, 2020); and Michaela Dodge, "Russia's Influence Operations in the Czech Republic during the Radar Debate," *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 39, Issue 2, pp. 162-170, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01495933.2020.1718989>. The author is grateful to the National Institute for Public Policy for a permission to draw on this material.

³ The United States announced its withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in December 2001. The Bush Administration officials briefed allies (and other countries) on the rationale for the U.S. withdrawal. The Czech media noticed the withdrawal with a passing interest.

⁴ This phrase, often attributed to Vladimir Lenin, refers to people who propagandize on behalf of a cause without understanding its true goals or recognizing they are being used for propaganda purposes.

⁵ "Bezpečnostní informační služba: Zpráva o činnosti za rok 2008" (Czech Security Information Service, 2009), p. 5, available at <https://www.bis.cz/public/site/bis.cz/content/vyrocnizpravy/2008-vz-cz.pdf>.

⁶ Czech Security Information Service, "Bezpečnostní informační služba: Zpráva o činnosti za rok 2012" (Annual Report of the Security Information Service for 2012), 2013, p. 13, available at <https://www.bis.cz/public/site/bis.cz/content/vyrocnizpravy/2012-vz-cz.pdf>.

⁷ Czech Security Information Service, "Bezpečnostní informační služba: Zpráva o činnosti za rok 2006" (Annual Report of the Security Information Service for 2006), 2007, p. 5, available at <https://www.bis.cz/public/site/bis.cz/content/vyrocnizpravy/2006-vz-cz.pdf>.

⁸ ČTK and Jan Markovič, "Rusko nás neplatí, popírají odpůrci radaru reportáž ČT" (The Russians Are Not Giving Us Money, Opponents of the Radar Dispute Czech Television's News Segment), *MF Dnes*, November 27, 2007, available at https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/rusko-nas-neplati-popiraji-odpurci-radaru-reportaz-ct.A071127_124402_domaci_mr.

⁹ Czech Security Information Service, "Bezpečnostní informační služba: Zpráva o činnosti za rok 2007" (Annual Report of the Security Information Service for 2007), 2008, p. 4, available at <https://www.bis.cz/public/site/bis.cz/content/vyrocnizpravy/2007-vz-cz.pdf>; and Czech Security Information Service, "Bezpečnostní informační služba: Zpráva o činnosti za rok 2008" (Annual Report of the Security Information Service for 2008), 2009, op. cit., p. 5.

¹⁰ Czech Security Information Service, "Bezpečnostní informační služba: Zpráva o činnosti za rok 2009" (Annual Report of the Security Information Service for 2009), 2010, p. 5, available at <https://www.bis.cz/public/site/bis.cz/content/vyrocnizpravy/2009-vz-cz.pdf>; and Czech Security and Information Service, "Bezpečnostní informační služba: Zpráva o činnosti za rok 2014" (Annual Report of the Security Information Service for 2014), 2015, p. 10, available at <https://www.bis.cz/public/site/bis.cz/content/vyrocnizpravy/2014-vz-cz.pdf>.

¹¹ Stanisław Żaryn, "How Poland Views the Kremlin's Creeping Aggression," *Washington Examiner*, January 2, 2019, available at <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/op-eds/how-poland-views-the-kremlins-creeping-aggression>.

¹² Péter Krekó and et al., "The Weaponization of Culture: Kremlin's Traditional Agenda and the Export of Values to Central Europe" (Budapest, Hungary: Political Capital Institute, August 4, 2016), p. 8, available at https://www.politicalcapital.hu/wp-content/uploads/PC_reactionary_values_CEE_20160727.pdf.

¹³ Vladislava Vojtišková, Vít Novotný, Hubertus Schmid-Schmidfelden and Kristina Potapova, "The Bear in Scheep's Clothing," *Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies*, 2016, p. 25, available at https://www.martenscentre.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/russia-gongos_0.pdf.



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¹⁴ Juan Pablo Cardena, Jacek Kucharczyk, Grigorij Mesežnikov, and Gabriela Pleschová, *Sharp Power: Rising Authoritarian Influence*, National Endowment for Democracy, December 2017, p. 103, <https://www.ned.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Sharp-Power-Rising-Authoritarian-Influence-Full-Report.pdf>.

¹⁵ Krekó and et al., "The Weaponization of Culture: Kremlin's Traditional Agenda and the Export of Values to Central Europe," August 4, 2016, op. cit., p. 10.

¹⁶ Juan Pablo Cardena, Jacek Kucharczyk, Grigorij Mesežnikov, Gabriela Pleschová, "Sharp Power: Rising Authoritarian Influence," December 2017, op. cit., p. 100.

¹⁷ Ibid: p. 100-101.

¹⁸ Carlie Porterfield, "Anti-LGBTQ Rhetoric Is Ramping Up In Eastern Europe, Human Rights Advocates Say," *Forbes*, June 10, 2020, available at <https://www.forbes.com/sites/carlieporterfield/2020/06/10/anti-lgbtq-rhetoric-is-ramping-up-in-eastern-europe-human-rights-advocates-say/?sh=6425bfe231ee>.

¹⁹ Juan Pablo Cardena, Jacek Kucharczyk, Grigorij Mesežnikov, Gabriela Pleschová, "Sharp Power: Rising Authoritarian Influence," December 2017, op. cit., p. 95.

²⁰ Krekó and et al., "The Weaponization of Culture: Kremlin's Traditional Agenda and the Export of Values to Central Europe," August 4, 2016, op. cit., p. 59.

²¹ Juan Pablo Cardena, Jacek Kucharczyk, Grigorij Mesežnikov, Gabriela Pleschová, "Sharp Power: Rising Authoritarian Influence," December 2017, op. cit., p. 105.

²² Artur Gruszczak, "The Polish Intelligence Services," 2009, p. 140, available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/241032145_The_Polish_Intelligence_Services.

²³ Stanisław Żaryn, "Poland's Internal Security Service is critical to hunting down spies," *Defense News*, December 2, 2019, available at <https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2019/12/02/polands-internal-security-service-is-critical-to-hunting-down-spies/>.

²⁴ Stanisław Żaryn, "Russia's hybrid warfare toolkit has more to offer than propaganda," *Defense News*, August 9, 2019, available at <https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2019/08/09/russias-hybrid-warfare-toolkit-has-more-to-offer-than-propaganda/>.

²⁵ Artur Gruszczak, "The Polish Intelligence Services," 2009, op. cit., p. 140.

²⁶ Marcin Zaborowski, "Central European security: history and geography matter," *NATO Defense College Policy Brief*, p. 4, May 7, 2021, available at https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep29575.pdf?ab_segments=0%2Fbasic_search_gsv%2Fcontrol&refreqid=fastly-default%3A618559717f2aa16e878c602d35b47ab4.

²⁷ Theodor Tudoroiu, "From Spheres of Influence to Energy Wars: Russian Influence in Post-Communist Romania," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (August 14, 2008), p. 388, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13523270802267922>.

²⁸ Felix Heilmann, et al., "The Political Economy of Energy in Central and Eastern Europe: Supporting the Net Zero Transition," *The E3G Report*, 2020, p. 26, available at www.jstor.org/stable/resrep21847.

²⁹ Theodor Tudoroiu, "From Spheres of Influence to Energy Wars: Russian Influence in Post-Communist Romania," August 14, 2008, op. cit., p. 398.

³⁰ Jim Compton, "The struggle for civil society in post-revolution Romania," *The Seattle Times*, October 22, 2006, available at <https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/the-struggle-for-civil-society-in-post-revolution-romania/>.

³¹ "Corruption Perceptions Index," *Transparency International*, 2020, available at <https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/romania#>.

³² Ibid.



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³³ Stephen Flanagan and Irina Chindea, *Russia, NATO, and Black Sea Security Strategy: Regional Perspectives from a 2019 Workshop* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2019), p. 8, available at https://www.rand.org/pubs/conf_proceedings/CF405.html.

³⁴ Dimitar Bechev, "The Russian Challenge in Southeast Europe," in Mai'a Cross and Paweł Karolewski (eds.), *European-Russian Power Relations in Turbulent Times*, p. 196, (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2021), available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3998/mpub.10202357.10>.

³⁵ Stephen Flanagan and Irina Chindea, *Russia, NATO, and Black Sea Security Strategy: Regional Perspectives from a 2019 Workshop*, 2019, op. cit., p. 8; and Irina Marica, "Study: Romanians Are pro-US, Most See Russia as the Greatest Enemy of National Interests," *Romania Insider*, October 29, 2018, available at <https://www.romania-insider.com/study-romanians-pro-us-russia-enemy>.

³⁶ Oana Popescu and Rufin Zamfir, eds., "Propaganda Made-to-Measure: How Our Vulnerabilities Facilitate Russian Influence," *Global Focus*, February 2018, p. 15, available at <https://grass.org.ge/uploads/other/2019-02-22/359.pdf>.

³⁷ Loc. cit.

³⁸ Ibid, p. 18.

³⁹ "Russia Wants to Divide Romanian Society," *Warsaw Institute*, February 27, 2019, available at <https://warsawinstitute.org/russia-wants-divide-romanian-society/>.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ "Foreign Affairs Minister: Russian Espionage, Present in Romania," *Romania Insider*, April 2, 2018, available at <https://www.romania-insider.com/russian-espionage-present-romania>.

⁴² For an example of a good non-government product contributing to transparency see Heather Conley et al., "The Kremlin Playbook," *Center for Strategic and International Studies*, October 13, 2016, available at <https://www.csis.org/analysis/kremlin-playbook> and its second iteration from March 2019 that can be found at https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/190326_KP2.pdf.

⁴³ U.S. Department of State, "GEC Special Report: Russia's Pillars of Disinformation and Propaganda," August 2020, available at <https://www.state.gov/russias-pillars-of-disinformation-and-propaganda-report/>; and U.S. Department of State, "GEC Special Report: Kremlin-Funded Media: RT and Sputnik's Role in Russia's Disinformation and Propaganda Ecosystem," January 2022, available at https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Kremlin-Funded-Media_January_update-19.pdf.

⁴⁴ Herman Kahn, *On Thermonuclear War* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2007), p. 576.

⁴⁵ This idea is advanced in Vladislava Vojtíšková, Vít Novotný, Hubertus Schmid-Schmidfelden and Kristina Potapova, "The Bear in Sheep's Clothing," 2016, op. cit., p. 66.

⁴⁶ For a brief review of U.S. Cold War public diplomacy activities and their importance see James Critchlow, "Public Diplomacy during the Cold War: The Record and Its Implications," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (2004): pp. 75-89, available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26925348>.

⁴⁷ Loc. cit.

⁴⁸ Jamie McIntyre, "Top 11 Mattis Quotes from His Senate Confirmation Hearing," *Washington Examiner*, January 12, 2017, available at <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/top-11-mattis-quotes-from-his-senate-confirmation-hearing>.

⁴⁹ Thomas Kent, *Striking Back: Overt and Covert Options to Combat Russian Disinformation* (Washington, DC: The Jamestown Foundation, 2020) elaborates on the idea in greater detail.

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