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The U.S. Government Is Waging Psychological War on Its Citizens: Inside the Deep State's PsyOps Machine

From viral memes to military-grade influence operations, the government is waging a full-spectrum psychological war — not against foreign enemies but against its own citizens.

The goal? Compliance. Control. Conformity.

The battlefield is no longer physical — [it is psychological](#) — and the American people are the targets.

From AI-manipulated narratives and National Guard psyops to loyalty scorecards for businesses, the Deep State's war on truth and independent thought is no longer covert. It is coordinated, calculated, and by design.



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Yet while both major parties — long in service to the Deep State — have weaponized mass communication to shape public opinion, the Trump administration is elevating it into a new art form that combines [meme warfare, influencer psyops, and viral digital content](#) to control narratives and manufacture consensus.

In doing so, President Trump and his influencers are capitalizing on a propaganda system long cultivated by the security-industrial complex.

What we're witnessing is not just propaganda. It is [psychological warfare](#).

[Psychological warfare](#), as defined by the Rand Corporation, "involves the planned use of propaganda and other psychological operations to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes, and behavior of opposition groups."

Today, those "opposition groups" include the American public.

For [years](#), the government has been bombarding the citizenry with propaganda and psychological operations aimed at conditioning us to be compliant, easily manipulated and supportive of the police state's growing domestic and global power.

The government is so confident in its Orwellian powers of manipulation that it's taken to bragging about them. For example, the U.S. Army's 4th Psychological Operations Group, the branch of the military responsible for [psychological warfare](#), released a recruiting [video](#) that touts its efforts to [pull the strings, turn everything they touch into a weapon, be everywhere, deceive, persuade, change, influence, and inspire](#).

This is the danger that lurks in plain sight: a government so immersed in the art of mind manipulation that it no longer sees its citizens as individuals, but as targets.

Of all the weapons in the government's vast arsenal, psychological warfare may be the most insidious.



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As the military journal *Task and Purpose* explains, “[Psychological warfare is all about influencing governments, people of power, and everyday citizens.](#)” PSYOP soldiers aim to influence “emotions, notices, reasoning, and behavior of foreign governments and citizens,” and “deliberately deceive” enemy forces.

Yet increasingly, these operations are being used not just abroad — but at home.

The government has made clear in word and deed that “we the people” are domestic enemies to be targeted, tracked, manipulated, micromanaged, surveilled, viewed as suspects, and treated as if our fundamental rights are mere privileges that can be easily discarded.

Aided by technological advances and behavioral science, the U.S. government has become a master manipulator of minds, perception, and belief — an agitator of the masses.

As J. Edgar Hoover once observed: “It is the function of mass agitation to exploit all the grievances, hopes, aspirations, prejudices, fears, and ideals of all the special groups that make up our society, social, religious, economic, racial, political. Stir them up. Set one against the other. Divide and conquer. That’s the way to soften up a democracy.”

Here are just a few ways [psychological warfare](#) is being waged against the American people:

- Weaponizing violence.
- Weaponizing surveillance and pre-crime.
- Weaponizing digital tools and censorship.
- Weaponizing compliance.
- Weaponizing entertainment.
- Weaponizing behavioral science and nudging.
- Weaponizing desensitization.
- Weaponizing fear.
- Weaponizing genetics.
- Weaponizing the future.

None of this is speculative. It’s well-documented.

In 2022, the Pentagon was forced to investigate reports that the [military was creating fake social media profiles with AI-generated photos and fictitious news sites](#) to manipulate users.

These are the modern tools of psychological warfare. But the blueprint goes back decades to the CIA’s MKUltra program.

The end goal of these mind control campaigns — packaged in the guise of the greater good — is to see how far the American people will allow the government to go in re-shaping the country in the image of a totalitarian police state.

Today’s psyops rely on mass media, AI, algorithmic censorship, and behavioral economics, but the goal remains the same: shape thought, induce obedience, silence dissent.

In 2014, for example, a Fusion Center in Washington State [mistakenly released records detailing government interest in “psycho-electronic” weapons](#) — remote mind control tactics allegedly capable of controlling people or subjecting them to varying degrees of pain from a distance.

More recently, COVID-19 gave the government a global platform to deploy fear-based compliance strategies. Science writer David Robson explains: “[Fears of contagion lead us to become more](#)



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[conformist and tribalistic](#)... [we] value conformity and obedience over eccentricity or rebellion.”

That is precisely the point.

By constantly invoking crisis, the government keeps us reactive, not rational. Fear shuts down the brain’s prefrontal cortex — our center for reasoning and critical thought. A population that stops thinking for itself is one easily led.

This is how the government persuades people to surveil themselves, police their neighbors, and conform to shifting norms: through fear, repetition, and psychological fatigue.

It’s classic Orwell: through censorship, disinformation crackdowns, and hate crime laws, speech becomes thoughtcrime and conformity becomes patriotism.

Edward Bernays, the father of modern propaganda, warned of this nearly a century ago: “We are governed, our minds are molded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of.” They are, he concluded, “[the true ruling power of our country](#).”

This “invisible government” — the Deep State — has perfected the art of psychological control.

With the approach of the 2026 midterm elections, this psychological warfare will only escalate: more fear-based narratives, more digital manipulation, more pressure to conform.

But the battlefield is not lost — not yet.

As I stress in my book [Battlefield America: The War on the American People](#) and in its fictional counterpart [The Erik Blair Diaries](#), the first step in resisting tyranny is recognizing its tools: fear, deception, division, and control.

We must reject the Deep State’s mind games in order to reclaim sovereignty over our mental space and remind the government that “we the people” are not puppets to be manipulated or threats to be neutralized.

We are the rightful rulers of a free republic, and that starts with the right to think for ourselves.

About John & Nisha Whitehead:

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