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STRATEGY AND PRACTICE OF INFORMATION SECURITY OF THE USA: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The article deals with strategies and practices of information security in the USA during the presidencies of George W. Bush, Barack Obama and Donald Trump considering the concepts of hard, soft/smart and sharp power; explains opinions of the US political leaders regarding the issues of protection of national interests in the information sphere, analyzes the instruments for conducting special information and psychological operations by the USA in different regions of the world. The conclusion is made that the US information security strategies focus on counteracting information threats in the field of critically important infrastructure as well as creating mechanisms for preventing information aggression within the political competence of international security and defence institutions.

Keywords: information security, cybersecurity, hard power, soft/smart power, sharp power, information operations, the USA.

Information security as a factor influencing international relations and is always considered in shaping foreign and security policy of international actors, engenders transformation of the very understanding of security issues after the collapse of bipolar system, changes approaches to of the major actors regarding information warfare, determines revision of principles of function of international and national institutions that deal with security as a whole and also introduces information component into modern security doctrines. The issues of information security are widely represented in the studies of American scholars demonstrated high attention to scientific and technological progress as well as the consequences of using information and communication technologies in military and civil spheres. The evolution of the concept of information security, different approaches to information security and ways to protect national interests in information sphere where discussed in studies of Richard Armitage, Donald Arquilla, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Martin C. Libicki, Joseph Nye Jr., William Owens, David F. Ronfeldt, Donald Stein, Alvin Toffler, Renee Shafransky, Kurt Walker, Peter Isaacson and others. Such approaches differentiate specifics of scientific theories regarding the implementation of hard, soft/smart and sharp power, and special information operations via viewing changes in security potential as new trends in shaping the modern system of world order^{1;2; 3;4}.

Development of modern strategies of the USA information security has been in progress during the last decades of XX century and the first quarter of XXI century and was determined by the necessity of taking into account the new approaches of presidential administrations to the protection of the USA national interests after the Cold War. The strategy of hard power in international context, that is being regarded as the capacity of a state to achieve its goals through duress, intimidation and imposition of its interests with the help of economic and military power, was mentioned in such works as 'The Prince' by Niccolo Machiavelli who perceived hard power as powerful military potential; 'Leviathan: or the Matter, Form and Power of a Commonwealth Ecclesiastical and Civil' by Thomas Hobbes who defined hard power as an aggregate of military, economic and financial power;

¹ Nye, J. S. (2004). *Power in the Global Information Age: Realism to Globalization*. London, New York: Routledge.

² Макаренко, С. А., Рижков, М. М., Ожеван, М. М., Кучмій, О. П., Фролова, О. М. (2016). *Міжнародна інформаційна безпека: теорія і практика*. Київ: Центр вільної преси.

³ Toffler, A. and H. (1995). *War Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century*. Boston: Grand Central Publishing.

⁴ Walker, Ch., Kalathil, Sh., Ludwig, J. (2018). Soft power is out; sharp power is in. Here's how to win the new influence wars. *Foreign Policy* <<https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/09/14/forget-hearts-and-minds-sharp-power/>>. (2019, May, 28).

and the works of Hans Morgenthau who considered hard power to be political power since military force is crucial for political power¹.

Authors of 'Hard Power: The New Politics of National Security' Kurt Campbell and Michael O'Hanlon defined hard power as use of military force for reaching the vital national goal through the deployment of the land force, navy and precision-guided munitions². At the same time, the basic fundamentals of the USA information security in the context of hard power concept were presented in the National Security Strategy by the Bush's administration (1990) where was emphasized the key role of information revolution as a guarantee for fostering democratic world order and public diplomacy instruments, nevertheless the priority of the activity was the supporting traditional military potential of the USA³. Specialists agree that American dependency on hard power led to the military removal from power of Saddam Hussein and the handling of the Iraqi crisis afterwards becoming the priority of the US foreign policy in the Middle East region. Experts emphasize that the combination of military pressure and information and psychological influence, synchronized in time and place of hostilities, were first used by the US Special Operations Forces in Iraq (1990-1991) during the operations 'Desert Storm' and 'Desert Shield'⁴.

As a result, the Gulf War between Iraq and the military coalition led by the United States demonstrated the effectiveness of using information instruments against the enemy's troops, since it was used as a means of propaganda and psychological influence (29 million leaflets were dropped) and the means of technological influence (the transistors worked only on one wave). The leaflets were designed in consultation with Arab psychologists in an invitation form and built on arguments that the Arab world wins the best prospects as a result of the conflict.

Within the operation 'Enduring Freedom' (Afghanistan, 2001), the purpose of the US specialized centres responsible for conducting information operations was to plan psychological campaigns, respond to the situation, support information resources and the security of the military forces and the civilian population. In general, this operation was not only the destruction of terrorism but also the conviction of certain regimes, supported the policy of terrorism, that such a strategy was not in line with their interests.

The reaction of the world community and the political leaders was also indicative of their opinion regarding the US proposals for a global fight against terrorism. Thus, for the first time in history of the Northern Alliance, it has applied Article 5 of NATO that seeks to ensure the general protection of the countries of the Organization against external threats; the EU states have confirmed support for the US operation 'Enduring Freedom'; USA Today commented on the model of the information war against the Taliban regime that included conducting a psychological operation in Afghanistan's information space with the simultaneous blockade of national radio stations, the dissemination of propaganda materials with excerpts from the Koran, designed to counter the calls for jihad and the formation in the public consciousness of the inevitable victory of the anti-terrorist Alliance⁵.

Further study of the USA force strategies is related to such scientific research by Joseph S. Nye as 'Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power' and 'Soft Power: Means for Success in World Politics'^{6 7}. The concept of soft power was defined as the state's foreign policy, aimed at achieving the desired results, due to the involvement of allied and other actors in cooperation. The study of soft power suggested that changes in all spheres of international interaction are a reflection of the new patterns of the formation of the modern world system and the use of innovations in international affairs.

In general, the concept of soft power by Joseph S. Nye changed the classical understanding of the balance of power, since the reasoned view of soft power is characterized by the recognition of the priority

¹ Nye, J. S., Jr. (2012) *Soft Power, Hard Power and Leadership* Word Press.

<<https://numerous.files.wordpress.com/2012/04/soft-power-hard-power-and-leadership.pdf>>. (2019, May, 28).

² Campbell, K., O'Hanlon, M. (2006). *Hard Power: The New Politics of National Security*. Publisher: Basic Books.

³ The White House (1990). *National Security Strategy of the United States* <<http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/1990.pdf>>. (2019, May, 28).

⁴ Черник, П. П., Шумка, А. В. (2008). Інформаційно-психологічні операції у війнах та збройних конфліктах другої половини ХХ-початку ХХІ ст. *Вісник Національного університету Львівська Політехніка*. <<http://ena.lp.edu.ua:8080/bitstream/ntb/1491/1/22.pdf>>. (2019, May, 28).

⁵ Рибак, М., Иванов, Б. (1999). Війна у зоні Перської затоки: застосування нових методів збройної боротьби та їх вплив на розвиток воєнного мистецтва. *Військо України, 1-2*, 32-34. (2019, May, 28).

⁶ Nye, J.S. (1990). *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*. Basic Books.

⁷ Nye, J.S. (2004). *Soft Power. The Means to Success in World Politics*. New York: Public Affairs.

of 'soft' domination as opposed to the use of 'hard' means of influence on interstate relations. It should be noted that soft power is characterized by three main components – a culture, political ideology and foreign policy, actual a diplomacy in the broad sense of the concept. The idea of global dominance of the United States not only in terms of military strength and economic power but also in the parameters of 'soft' (non-powerful) influence on international relations was addressed to the administration of George H. W. Bush and the theorists of political realism which should abandon the absolutization of the role of hard power in world policy after the end of the bipolar confrontation and achieve advantages through mechanisms for the coordination of foreign-policy actions and the cooperation based on common values¹.

According to analytical studies, Obama's presidential administration accused the former US administration of abuse of hard power that led to a deterioration of the country's reputation on the international arena. Therefore, for the presidency of Barack Obama, the administration tried to give priority to the strategy of soft power and to move away from the idea of a global war on terror in order to make the confrontation with terrorist groups more oriented towards specific 'enemies of America'. The transformation of the vision of the fight against terrorism, taking into account the use of US information potential in the Middle East, is reflected in the National Counterterrorism Strategy 2011² where one of the priorities was the psychological confrontation of the terrorist threat of Al-Qaeda and the discrediting of ideology of extremists in the United States per se. The main priorities of Barack Obama's foreign policy program in the world and in the Middle East region were the restoration of confidence in the US policy in general and the implementation of a new approach to Middle East policy in order to address a protracted crisis over the war on terror. A fundamentally important aspect of US security and defence strategies was the strengthening of the information factor, as information operations included components such as psychological operations, dissemination of misinformation, computer operations and electronic military actions involving the use of cyber weapons to destroy or neutralize information systems the enemy. Thus, during Barack Obama's presidency, sanctions were imposed against the most aggressive states in the information sphere, namely Russia and North Korea, also hackers from China and Iran were convicted; the agreements between the presidents of the United States and China were put in place to stop commercial hacking; the protection of critical nodes US infrastructure, the system of protection of national information networks were developed³.

The concept of smart power that meant the ability to effectively combine hard and soft power, at one time was proposed to the Obama administration by American theorists Joseph S. Nye and Richard Armitage who believed that 'achieving leadership in international relations is necessary primarily through foreign policy actions and broad cooperation with the allied states'⁴. The emergence of a new type of global strategy (smart power) that is based on the most intellectual types of international and political influence resources – innovative technological, scientific and educational potentials, resources of innovative diplomacy and high-tech armed forces – was based on the demands for a new quality of security of the international community, an increase in the political value of scientific and expert knowledge in international policy. The transformation of the information component in the US national security strategy under the presidency of Barack Obama was conditioned by a new vision of cyberspace as a sphere of ensuring national interests under conditions of asymmetry of international development⁵.

Special attention of analysts was drawn to the preparation of the proclamation of a new doctrine of the US foreign and security policy that was presented in 2014 during the traditional speech at the United States Military Academy⁶. The statement emphasized that there are serious transformations in the world

¹ Макаренко, Є. А., Рижков, М. М., Погорська, І. І., Піпченко, Н. О. (2016). *Зовнішня та безпекова політика США: аналітичні дослідження*. Київ: Центр вільної преси.

² National Strategy for Counterterrorism (2011). *The White House*. <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/counterterrorism_strategy.pdf>. (2019, May, 28).

³ Кириченко, І. О. (2011). Чинник «м'якої сили» у стратегіях національної інформаційної безпеки США. *Актуальні проблеми міжнародних відносин*, 102 (1).

⁴ Nye, J. S., Armitage, R. (2007). A smarter, more secure America. Report of the CSIS Commission on Smart Power. *CSIS*. <<https://carnegieendowment.org/files/csissmartpowerreport.pdf>>. (2019, May, 28).

⁵ Marks, J. (2017). Obama's Cyber Legacy: He Did (Almost) Everything Right and It Still Turned Out Wrong. *NextGov*. <<http://www.nextgov.com/cybersecurity/2017/01/obamas-cyber-legacy-he-did-almost-everything-right-and-it-still-turned-out-wrong/134612/>>. (2019, May, 28).

⁶ Elving, R. (2014). 10 Thoughts on Obama's West Point Policy Address. *NPR*. <<https://www.npr.org/sections/itsallpolitics/2014/05/28/316847607/10-thoughts-on-obamas-west-point-policy-address>>. (2019, May, 28).

that are leading to new approaches to the principles of America's foreign and security policy and the need for a new model of state leadership. Regarding the key arguments of the US president's speeches on foreign and security policy, the experts noted: Obama's multifaceted approach should be accepted, especially when it was about Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Specialists emphasized that Barack Obama and his administration did not mention the Budapest Memorandum but considered Ukraine important for security in Europe and in the world as a whole¹. In other words, it was about providing Ukraine with strong political support, as well as additional military assistance and with the EU financial assistance, to accelerate Ukraine's reform and fight against corruption and to withstand information and cyber threats.

To adequately respond to the current challenges to the Trump administration faced, regarding international security and the US national security, Joseph S. Nye proposed the concept of sharp power that is defined as a strategy for the use of manipulative diplomatic policy by one country for the influence or destruction of the political system of another state. Describing the sharp power Joseph S. Nye emphasized that such a strategy uses the attempts of one state for manipulating and managing information in the media and educational systems of other countries aimed at mislead public opinion or just divert attention from negative information about itself. As a result, sharp power is becoming increasingly important instruments of the interaction of international actors because authoritarian countries like China and Russia seek to manipulate culture, education systems and national or international media for impacting on democratic institutions and regimes.

The concept of sharp power was taken into account in the new US National Security Strategy (2017)^{2,3}, presented by President Donald Trump, and where emphasized that the main priorities of the US security policy are the protection of the US economic interests, the recognition of Russia and China as the main competitors for the geostrategic interests of the USA and the overcome of information threats to national security and the ensure of the state's influence on the international arena. It noted in the strategy that certain adverse states use information as a weapon for performing attacks on the values and institutions of democratic societies as well as disseminating fake news and propaganda. Separately, the strategy considered the information threats from jihadist terrorist groups that carry out information and ideological campaigns aimed at spreading and legitimizing hate speech and through using complex communication tools seeking to attract new supporters and incite them to attack against America and its partners. In order to realize these goals, it was proposed to mobilize resources and introduce the latest digital technologies into diplomatic and humanitarian cooperation programs. Accordingly, the need to help 'weak' states, in which there are wars and conflicts, was considered to minimize the terrorist threat to American security. During the presentation of the security strategy, President Trump's sharp rhetoric focused on Russian information aggression and its attempts of impact on the main candidates and their surroundings during the electoral process and the unauthorized interfering with the voting process.

The measures of the intelligence services and diplomats concerning the main American leaders and society have become the instruments for counteracting the unlawful Russian interference with the election process. The information about agents of influence surrounded by Donald Tramp, the reception of documents of the NSA by Kaspersky Lab specialists, the actions of Russian hackers on unauthorized access to American military smartphones were among the biggest challenges⁴.

In connection with the scandal between Facebook and Cambridge Analytica, that used data on users of the social network to influence American voters in 2016, measures to counter Russian propaganda in social networks were strengthened, in particular, introduced sanctions against individuals who supported the Russian Troll Factories. In the new preventive measures of the US Department of the Treasury against Russian oligarchs and the close encirclement of the Russian president, it was stated that restrictions are

¹ Pfeifle, M. (2016). Ukraine Is Going to Be a Big Problem for the Next U.S. President. *Foreign Policy*. <<https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/10/07/ukraine-is-going-to-be-a-big-problem-for-the-next-u-s-president/>>. (2019, May, 28).

² Nye, J. Jr. (2018). How Sharp Power Threatens Soft Power. *Foreign Affairs*. <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2018-01-24/how-sharp-power-threatens-soft-power>>. (2019, May, 28).

³ The White House (2017). *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* <<http://nssarchive.us/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/2017.pdf>>. (2019, May, 28).

⁴ Walters, Gr. (2018). The State Department has a secret plan to counter Russian propaganda. It may be too late. *News.Vice* <https://news.vice.com/en_ca/article/vbpd9/the-state-department-has-a-secret-plan-to-counter-russian-propaganda-it-may-be-too-late>. (2019, May, 28).

imposed through hostile activities against the USA in the cyberspace. Basically, the program of unconventional solutions regarding security problems was launched for covering almost all activity areas of the United States, and it was planned to develop updated versions of regulations on cybersecurity at the state level. Also, the decision of the US Secretary of Defence James Norman Mattis has significantly increased the requirements for the level of cybersecurity in the military department, proposed a reboot of cybersecurity management in the Pentagon, including the introduction of a new Chief Information Warfare Officer who shall be a direct subordinate of the Minister of Defence and shall be authorized to deal with cybersecurity and information warfare issues. In addition, the Senate version of the draft law on defence policy for 2018 included a provision prohibiting the use of Kaspersky Lab's software¹.

Simultaneously, Twitter transferred to the US Senate Committee on Intelligence the information about 201 accounts that have substantiated suspicions about using Russia to intervene in the US presidential election. Twitter was also blocked by advertising on the accounts of the RT channel and the Sputnik news agency on the basis of an investigation into 'Russian interference' in the political electoral process in America. A number of measures were taken by the management of the social network Facebook that has decided to expand the staff of security professionals with admittance to secret information to quickly track the beginning of 'subversive' online campaigns, as well as to receive information about potential threats. Facebook has developed a new feature in the social network to check the reliability of the news that offers a panel with information about the source of news, with an in-depth consideration, given the news that was posted. Google, in general, excluded the Kremlin propaganda channel Russia Today from the premium list of YouTube videos that the company sells to advertisers. Thus, the authority and society in the United States could operatively mobilize to counter Russia's information influences².

Donald Trump's implementation of the sharp power strategy is traced in decisions on the denuclearization of the North Korea to be completed by January 2021 in negotiations between the President Moon Jae-in and the Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un on the peaceful settlement and elimination of all sources of conflict on the Korean Peninsula, as the current US president seeks to rebuild the international order established after the Second World War, guided by the interests of sovereign states, not international institutions. At the same time, American analysts are debating how the strategy of foreign policy 'America first!' can relate to the hard or soft/smart strategy used by Trump's predecessors or sharp power as constructed by the experts right now.

According to the expert community, China, Russia and other authoritarian regimes seek to provide greater influence in their regions and throughout the world than before, recognizing that the rise of authoritarianism as the dominant political form throughout the world has led to the significant use of sharp power as an instrument of information security and strategic weapons. The spread of the sharp policy is also conditioned by technological innovations in social media that is a challenge for global democracy, the implementation of legal international policy and effective cooperation³.

American analysts are trying to find grounds for substantiating further US global leadership, pointing out that the soft power strategy transformed into Obama's smart power strategy, is proclaimed 'sharp' under the presidency of Donald Trump. The idea that the world once again sees the sharp unpopular competition between the US, China and Russia is the main argument of the new Strategies of National Security, National Defence and Nuclear Policy of the Trump administration⁴.

Using sharp strategy in the foreign policy is due to the fact that authoritarian states are trying to influence through the diplomacy of sharp power that arose usually from ideologies supported the privileges of state power over personal freedom and fundamentally hostile to open debate and independent thought. The practice of sharp power differs from one political regime to another but usually involves the censorship and manipulations that are not intended for the salvation of the public but for the deterioration of the integrity of the independent institutions. As a result, the US information security strategies focus on

¹ Farmer, B., Luhn, A. (2017). Kaspersky software used by Russian state hackers to trawl for US secrets. *Telegraph*. <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/10/11/kaspersky-software-used-russia/>>. (2019, May, 28).

² Foo, Y. Ch. (2019). Google, Facebook, Twitter fail to live up to fake news pledge. *Reuters*. <<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-eu-tech-fakenews/google-facebook-twitter-fail-to-live-up-to-fake-news-pledge-idUSKCN1QH1O5>>. (2019, May, 28).

³ Макаренко, Є.А. (2017). *Стратегічні комунікації у міжнародних відносинах*. Київ: VADEX.

⁴ Liptak, K., Merica, D. (2018). Trump's first year of diplomacy finds friends and foes. *CNN*. <<https://edition.cnn.com/2018/01/16/politics/donald-trump-world-leaders-list/index.html>>. (2019, May, 28).

counteracting information threats against critically important infrastructure and the functioning of the international community, the recognition of information technology as a new global weapon of mass destruction, the need to create mechanisms for preventing information aggression within the political competence of international and national security and defence institutions.

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