



The Woke CIA PsyOp

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Abby Martin (AM): Recently, the CIA released a video that was pretty shocking, embracing a radical exclusivity in the agency, it's now known as the 'woke CIA ad'.

CIA video: I am a woman of color. I am a mom. I am a cis-gender millennial who's been diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder. I am intersectional. I refuse to internalize misguided patriarchal ideas of what a woman can or should be. My parents left everything they knew and loved to expose me to opportunities they never had. Because of them, I stand here today a proud first generation Latina and officer at CIA.

AM: Wow, there is a lot to unpack here. First of all, this looks like a parody of what conservatives depict as what the left is. It's so cartoonishly over the top, it's hard to believe it's real. So what does it all mean? Has the CIA adopted real progressivism and equality? Of course not. This is a good old fashioned 'psyop', or psychological operation, to indoctrinate a new generation of teenagers with the idea that the CIA is pretty cool. And no, not because the CIA has been taken over by the left. The political and military establishment know that the young generation is increasingly turning to radical politics. That means things like anti-racism and trans equality in conjunction with anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism. This generation was not indoctrinated by the intense nationalist propaganda of the 9/11 era. It's a generation that grew up with the end stages of the U.S. Empire's senseless bloodbaths in Iraq and Afghanistan. It sees the systemic failures of capitalism.

That's a big problem for an organization that needs to plan future wars without much resistance and needs to recruit a sector of the population to fill its ranks. To do that, they need a rebrand. They need a new marketing campaign to overshadow their image as purveyors of torture and mass murder of civilians. In other words, they need new propaganda. They need a psyop to brainwash young people who aren't as familiar with the CIA's notoriously murderous history, which is exactly who they are targeting with this ad. In fact, they recently admitted they're recruiting kids right out of high school already. And here's the biggest irony: while the CIA claims to be socially progressive, they're only talking about how they treat their own.

Throughout the CIA's entire history, and until this very day, they've done nothing but actually attack and overthrow governments that are advancing social progress by installing or backing reactionary governments that use extreme violence to smash women, indigenous peoples and other marginalized groups. The agency gives power to governments that behead women for adultery or jails people for being gay. It supports neo-Nazis in Ukraine, fascists in Bolivia, and so many more examples. The CIA spends a lot of its time propping up regimes that would jail or murder that young woman in the woke CIA ad.

This is nothing more than an attempt to sanitize and whitewash its own horrific legacy and daily operations. Many other mass murdering entities have done the same thing. Defense contractors touting their first female drone pilots. Israel effectively pinkwashing its genocidal apartheid state and oil corporations green washing their pollution. This does not mean that environmentalism or gay liberation should be abandoned as modes of struggle. Things like trans liberation, and immigrant rights are major, deeply felt issues in our society, which activists have been doing such important and meaningful work to highlight. The cooptation by imperialism isn't the fault of these movements, but rather speaks to their success in bringing these important issues to the mainstream. The woke CIA ad is just another cooptation of these ideas to defang their revolutionary potential.

The strain of identity politics embraced by liberals is hollow and self-serving because they have no ideological worldview to underpin them. This is why corporations have seized on the current of Black Lives Matter to say they're on board, profiting off liberals who feel good purchasing products from companies who claim to support the struggle. Meanwhile, they're just steering it towards what's best for capitalism, claiming that things like fulfilling diversity quotas is the solution, instead of the radical systemic change the movement is calling for.

The new CIA ads are part of a larger propaganda campaign called 'Humans of the CIA' to give that warm, fuzzy image of the agency. Beyond recruitment, though, they want this generation to see the CIA as woke, and those who've run with the analysis that the deep state has been taken over by the so-called cultural left have unwittingly become part of the psyop. This particular ad is targeting young liberals, but it would be absurd to think the CIA isn't also continuing to hire Americans who are right wing. Some of their favorite recruiting pools are the Mormon church and counterterrorism majors. Look, the CIA is guided by one ideology and one ideology alone. The belief that US capitalism and imperialism should have global supremacy. Sure, the CIA is happy to recruit trans people, just like they're happy to recruit anti-trans people, as long as they ascribe to the orthodoxy that the U.S. should do anything and everything, no matter how brutal, to make sure it rules the world.

If you think about it, this is what neo-liberalism has already been for decades, adopting the language of human rights to convince people that imperialism is good. Wars on Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, we're all about helping people and fighting racism. What we're seeing is a very new, very concerted effort, to drape imperialism with an image that reflects the surge of progressive ideas. The Biden administration is wokeness on steroids, the promotion of

women to four star generals, the first black secretary of defense; all imperial heads that oversee mass killing. It's all a superficial distraction from the fact that there's no real policy in place that improves the material lives of this generation. Unfortunately, the knee jerk reaction to this advertisement is to punch left. And really, when you think about it, that's what the design of every good CIA psyop intends to do.

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