



US Looks to Interfere in Russian Elections – Ex-CIA Officer

Description

WORLD : When it comes to Washington’s attempts to intervene in Russia’s domestic affairs, the country’s intelligence community is capable of duly tackling these challenges, Larry Johnson, a retired CIA intelligence officer and State Department official, told Sputnik.

Incumbent Vladimir Putin has won a landslide victory in the 2024 Russian presidential elections, praised by international observers as free and fair.

Western elites have always harbored personal animosity towards Putin due to a spate of factors, Larry Johnson, a retired CIA intelligence officer and State Department official, said in an interview with Sputnik.

“One, when Putin broke up the oligarchs, many of them were in bed economically with people in the West. Number two, Putin’s embrace of fundamental Christian values has been a source of anger directed at him.

But what he’s done is he’s insisted upon trying to protect Russia and insist on Russia’s national rights being respected. That has earned him the animosity in the West. It’s really crazy,” Johnson noted.

In this vein, the ex-CIA agent commented on Russian Foreign Intelligence Chief Sergey Naryshkin’s statement that the US is looking to create a “fifth column” in Russia to meddle in the 2024 presidential elections and discredit the country’s leadership on social media.

Johnson stressed that “this notion of creating a fifth column has always been and will always be a pipe dream,” adding that America’s “ultimate goal of interfering in Russia’s domestic affairs is “trying to create a Russia that will be obedient to the US and make it submit to the will of the West.”

The West sees itself as the world leader in terms of moral, economic, and military clout, with Russia perceived as “a thorn in Western side, which must be compelled to submit,” the retired CIA intelligence officer pointed out.

Dwelling on the primary methods that US intelligence employs when meddling in other countries’

election processes, Johnson explained that it all “starts off with funding.”

“You identify an existing opposition group and provide it funding, or you create an opposition group and provide it funding. You create propaganda or put articles into what used to be newspapers and magazines, and then you created documentaries, movies and news items for television.

And now, with the advent of social media, you use it to try to develop memes and develop ideas,” he said.

As for Facebook*, Twitter, and Instagram*, Johnson added, those social media companies “actually, in some cases, were created or at least helped out in their creation by the [Western] intelligence community and are used by them to try to influence elections.”

In this regard, the retired CIA intelligence officer pointed out that “the Russian intelligence capability is really good at identifying these [US interference-related] threats and dealing with them.”

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