



Computer Games Seen as Threat to Russia's Global and Domestic Support

OE Watch Commentary: A key element of the Kremlin's current strategic security perspective revolves around the assertion that the West remains intent upon weakening Russia. Kremlin leaders emphasize that much of this Western aggression occurs within the information realm, where the "enemy" employs various media and digital weapons to weaken both global and domestic support for Russia. The brief excerpt from the military weekly *Voyenno-Promyshlennyy Kuryer* examines how many popular computer games "frankly demonize faceless Russians, thereby implanting practical Russophobia in a playful way."

The author begins by asserting that "if you want to defeat the enemy, raise his children," contending that "customers and producers" of the computer game market today are "flooding the market with Russophobic 'shooters.'" The author goes on to suggest that once Russians are demonized in computer games, "it is easier to reproduce such actions in real life, for which our youth are preparing." These "Russophobic" computer games are apparently popular among Russian youth, and the author asserts that this negative depiction of Russians is responsible for "the growth of protest moods among the youth, the increase in migration among them" ... and "disrespect and contempt for their history."

After providing examples of Russian-bashing computer games, the author points out that "foreign researchers confirm total Russophobia in games [whereby] "Russians were enemies in 21 percent of the games." He reiterates that this negative portrayal of Russians is not merely a way to sell more games, but a deliberate plan "to decompose the Russian people, undermine their spirit and national code." He quotes a popular Russian blogger who questions why "this acute problem is still not being solved at the state level in Russia [with] the production of decent games defending Russian history, traditions, our mentality, self-awareness, forming and educating a normal patriot."

The author concludes with statistics that reflect the scale of the challenge: "In 2013 there were at least 46 million gamers in Russia — those who regularly play online games of any genre and on any device." Russia is "in 12th place in the world in the number of gamers and in first place in the number of PC players per capita." Given the current political climate in Russia, it is not surprising that many popular computer games are now regarded with fear and suspicion. **End OE Watch Commentary (Finch)**

"If you want to defeat the enemy, raise his children..."

Source: Roman Iushchenko, "Практическая игровая русофобия (Practical game Russophobia)," *Voyenno-Promyshlennyy Kuryer*, 14 July 2020. <https://vpk-news.ru/articles/57777>

...Today, Russophobia safely migrated from the pages of books, newspapers, television screens to computer games. They have a very strong influence on the consciousness of people, especially young people, as well as on children. You can not underestimate the contribution to the upbringing of the younger generation of games that form this or that idea of reality. After all, no one has yet disproved the terrible practice expressed in the proverb "If you want to defeat the enemy, raise his children."

Simulation is widely used by customers and producers of game content, flooding the market with Russophobic "shooters." It is through the shooting of unlikely, and even frankly demonized, faceless Russians that practical Russophobia is implanted in a playful way. Those who have crossed this invisible barrier in the game will find it easier to reproduce such actions in real life, for which our youth are preparing. Indirectly, the successes of our opponents are indicated by the growth of protest moods among the youth, and the increase in migration among them, and directly - so far some isolated facts of disrespect and contempt for their history that have appeared in the media: the homeland, the flag, the symbols of Victory, and war veterans.

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...Here is how the well-known blogger Dmitry Babich, who is well-known among domestic gamers, argues on this subject: "Why, our government, looking at all this disgrace, will not be puzzled by the question: why is this acute problem still not being solved at the state level in Russia - the production of decent games defending Russian history, traditions, our mentality, self-awareness, forming and educating a normal patriot? After all, money for youth, educational patriotic projects is allocated and wasted between departments, but the result is poorly visible."

It is hard to disagree with him. Indeed, what is stopping us? Or who? The incompetence of the authorities or those who have modernized the well-known "Dulles's plan" to decompose the Russian people, undermine their spirit and national code?

According to the gameonline20.ru/statistika game portal, in 2013 there were at least 46 million gamers in Russia - those who regularly play online games of any genre and on any devices. We are in 12th place in the world in the number of gamers and in first place in the number of PC players per capita.