

Gain of Dysfunction

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Early in Putin's war, rumors and assertions and "memes" about Russian forces attacking U.S. bioweapons labs in Ukraine quickly spread online.

The corporate press's "official" "fact" "checkers" mocked the idea, of course.

But then something . . . inconvenient . . . happened.

Senator Marco Rubio asked Under-Secretary of State Victoria Nuland point blank: "Does Ukraine have chemical and biological weapons?"

Her response was not, as Glenn Greenwald notes, what he was expecting. "Ukraine has biological *research* facilities," she answered,* "which, we are now in fact quite concerned that Russian troops, Russian forces, may be seeking to gain control of, so we are working with the

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Ukrainians on how they can prevent any of those research materials from falling into the hands of Russian forces should they approach."

It turns out that the United States has long been working with Ukraine "to consolidate and secure pathogens and toxins of security concern and to continue to ensure Ukraine can detect and report outbreaks caused by dangerous pathogens before they pose security or stability threats." And the relationship between defensive biological



research and offensive is quite close, Greenwald suggests: "research that is classified as 'defensive' can easily be converted, deliberately or otherwise, into extremely destructive biological weapons."

If this is at all puzzling, note those fact-checkers, again. These "defensive" warriors in the memetic arena are supposed to serve as antibodies to "misinformation" in the realm of spreadable ideas. By reflexively debunking any new attack on accepted government-approved opinion, they serve as spreaders of their own misinformation.

As in the war of ideas, so in the war of biological contagions.

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But then, I thought it was a bad idea to subsidize biological research laboratories in Wuhan, China.

Our leaders think they know better.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.

* Greenwald leaves in Nuland's uh-stutters and the like. I've cut them.