**Thayer Podcast Monday, December 23, 2024**

**Droning On**

<http://www.tedthayer.com/12-23-2024%20Podcast.mp4>

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NOTE:

Christmas and Chanukah happen together this year! How ‘bout that?!

There’s been a phenomenon going on for over a month that I haven’t seen for a long time: Public hysteria coupled with gullibility.

Sometime during the Second World War, Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels wrote that if you repeat a lie often enoughitbecomes the truth. Earlier, in his 1925 book Mein Kampf, Adolph Hitler described how people could be induced to believe a colossal lie. Russian Dictator Vladimir Lenin is also given credit for penning the statement. However, the concept was published in 1869 - before Hitler, Goebbels and Lenin - when Isa Blagden penned that allegation in her book The Crown of a Life, “If a lie is only printed often enough, it becomes a quasi-truth, and if such a truth is repeated often enough, it becomes an article of belief, a dogma, and men will die for it.”

On November 18th, USA Today subsidiary Asbury Park Press reported that witnesses had been spotting several large drones in New Jersey at night, usually between dusk and 11 p.m. The Morris County Prosecutor's Office in New Jersey said patrolmen from law enforcement also spotted the drones and that that office, along with federal and state law enforcement partners, would "coordinate, monitor, and investigate the drone activity."

Last week, December 18th, The Conservative Fix online publication reported survey results that **35%** of respondents believe that Secret government operations are testing new technologies and another **34%** think foreign adversaries are conducting surveillance. **21%** say it’s a media-fueled hoax to distract from bigger issues and **10%** believe that Private companies or hobbyists are the cause of the confusion that has since spread to the West Coast.

My experience as a Broadcast Journalist tells me two things are happening: Good ol’ Cause and Effect.

Back in the mid-1990s kids used to drive through neighborhoods at night and from car windows, with baseball bats, trash people’s mailboxes. Police reports detailed these petty crimes which were then reported on the news. The perpetrators got a kick out of hearing about it on the radio and reading it in the papers and subsequently repeated the crime almost every evening. The news spread to neighboring communities and local kids there took to the exact same petty crimes. The vandalism didn’t stop until authorities quit including the incidents in daily reports and the news media stopped writing about it.

Humans, especially young ones, learn by example. If a parent is abusive the kid will likely copy that behavior and become a bully. By the same token, volunteer parents usually have kids that are happy to pitch in and help with a project. You get the idea. Unfortunately, as we have experienced over the last year or so, some adults can also be induced to believe all sorts of stupid stuff, and like the mailbox trashing, it can spread like wildfire.

And, like mailbox trashing, it can eventually hurt someone. So far, I haven’t heard about any injuries or deaths caused directly or indirectly by unidentified drones, but the spread of sightings has been so random and so fast I have no doubt that somebody’s protective instincts will lead us to death or serious injury.

Maybe it’s time for America’s Fourth Estate to knock it off, while the rest of us …

****Improvise – Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi

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