

## How the Empire Gets Away With Expanding (Some Observations)

by Mary Beaudoin

*“This is the secret of propaganda: those who are to be persuaded by it should be completely immersed in the ideas of the propaganda, without ever noticing they are immersed in it.”* – Joseph Goebbels, Reich Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda in Germany, 1933 to 1945

The 2018 National Defense Strategy calls for the U.S. to focus on Russia and China as the “Great Power Competition.” This is a tacit recognition that the U.S. is no longer the dominant power it once considered itself to be in the world. In an effort to regain its position, the U.S. tries to keep its two giant competitors out. That’s why the goal of the U.S., as an empire, is to continue going after less formidable (mid-range or smaller) nation states that it hopes to control. In its quest for conquest, it uses some of the same methods it always has.

One early clue that a nation is targeted: Its government is no longer identified as such, but instead is referred to as a “regime.” Regime change is easier to justify than the internationally illegal overthrow of the government of a sovereign nation.



*A protester calls out the Empire for lying.*

The targeted country is put in the position of struggling to maintain its economy and defenses. It’s declared a threat to peace and placed under punitive sanctions (an act of war in itself), which cripples its ability to trade and to conduct financial business in the world. Another tactic is putting the country in an economic hitman type of vise. An austerity program is imposed in order to force the beleaguered nation to pay back onerous loans.

The populace feels the pinch. Their standard of living goes down and prices go up. They are deprived of the benefits and goods they want and need. “Regime change” advocates hope that the people will blame the leadership of their own government and will become so angry that they

will want to depose it. And, in this desire, they get a little help from their “friends” – foreign-sponsored NGOs, and clandestine parties within and without the country – who have been working quietly in the background for years. The people of any nation are not stupid and have “agency,” but most people, either in the targeted country or in the U.S., won’t know that one specific agency is the CIA.

Whether the majority of the country’s population actually wants a change of leadership is not a consideration. While citizens do have objections to some of their government’s actions, we here in America will hear how the majority is suffering from severe violations of its human rights. The head of state of the targeted country is described ad infinitum as a “strongman,” or a “murderous,” “brutal,” or “evil” dictator who, defying reason, is oppressing and even “killing his own people.”

American media plays an important role, enabling the constant drumbeat of propaganda, so that whatever disinformation, misinformation, and lies are spread lose their shock value. Smug news commentators and serious talk show guests amplify the message. Comedians on the left are especially effective mocking the leadership of the targeted country with a witty skit or a cheap jab, guaranteed to get a knowing laugh. That’s because even those who disagree with whoever is in power in Washington have come to accept the glib portrayal of the targeted country. In spite of the fact that most Americans have little to no knowledge of the form of governance, culture, language, or what’s really going on in the targeted country, the narrative becomes so pervasive and mainstream that any critical thinking and analysis is regarded as uninformed and out of touch with reality.

The American audience has been prepped at some stage before or during the overthrow. As to the targeted country – a violent, fringe segment with its own motivations, only too happy to get a hand up from the American Empire and/or its allies, is designated to do the dirty work of the actual overthrow. The group or groups may be brought in from the outside or they may exist within, or some combination of both – e.g., the Mujahideen in Afghanistan, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in Yugoslavia, an Al Qaeda associated group in Libya, various “rebels” in Syria, and now the MEK in Iran. They will be secretly advised, armed, and trained.



*Antiwar protest banner from the movement to stop attacks on Iran in 2012. Protests are beginning again.*

Once things are stirred up, to garner the support of the American people, interference in the country is conducted under the rubric of “humanitarian” intervention to save the country’s populace from its legitimate leadership. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the “Responsibility to Protect”

doctrine is the smokescreen the instigators hide behind in the international arena to enlist support for “saving” people in a foreign country from their own government.

If it is particularly difficult to depose the leadership, the target country will be bombed. Americans who dissent – that is, who are opposed to war – are branded supporters of the targeted government’s legitimate leadership.

Within the U.S., we find that we, ourselves, are subjects in the empire. But as citizens, observing the overthrow process begin to unfold again, we can demand it stop.

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