

A Leader's Lexicon for the 21st Century

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Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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Intended to help all 21st Century leaders (Western of course) when making speeches or statements to the press and their gullible public. N.B.: this is not an exhaustive list, and leaders will invent their own useful words and phrases, freely copied by their fellows.

Insurgents (also known as terrorists, Mujahideen, Al Qaeda, Taliban, Islamists): bad. We don't support them.

Rebels: good. We support them, with weapons and other equipment, training by our own forces (that are not there) because...

Boots on the ground: we are not going to send in any of our own troops (because they went in secretly last week/month/year).

Regimes, dictatorships: legitimate governments we don't support.

Governments: regimes and dictatorships we do support.

'We are proud of our special relationship': we buy arms from them.

'Partners': we sell arms to them.

Friendly nations: and them.

Global allies: and them too.

We welcome the new government/the overthrow of the last government: we want to sell arms to them.

Regimes: people we used to sell arms to.

Dictatorships: as above.

Rogue state: one that has got entirely out of the West's control.

Chemical/biological/nuclear weapons: use this term to frighten your own citizens. For example, "Iran/Iraq/Syria could attack us with their chemical/biological/nuclear weapons". Warning - tread carefully here because (1) they may not actually have these weapons and (2) you can't remember if and when you sold these weapons to them.

Back your statement with: 'We have proof they have used them on their own citizens'. NEVER provide any proof. The headlines in the press the next day - "Syria/Iran/Iraq accused of..." are what you want.

'We have proof': a figment of your imagination. There are two courses you can follow. 1) Never mention it again in the hope the public will forget. 2) Plead 'security issues' that prevent you being entirely open and honest.

Robust security response: anything from sanctions, air strikes, boots on the ground to entire lock-down of your own country.

Threat: you can't use this word often enough, usually with the words 'grave', 'real and present', 'real and existential', 'large and existential' etc. Yes- you don't know what 'existential' actually means, but neither does the public, so you get to look smarter than them. You hope.

Intervention: sanctions, air strikes, invasion (but do not mention plots, rebellions or assassinations organised by your own security forces).

Intervention to protect/defend our interests: their resources, our multi-nationals.

Our interests: as above

Humanitarian intervention: look noble when you use this phrase. You are going to stand between an innocent population and its cruel dictator. Do not mention your forces' shoot-to-kill policy. Also known as 'Responsibility to protect', which requires a UN Resolution.

UN Resolution: an impossible set of demands on a rogue state. You know they can't comply, which gives your invasion an appearance of legitimacy.

We are upholding the terms of the UN 'responsibility to protect' resolution: well done, this is quite true! You broke all the terms before you got the resolution passed.

Liberation: offer this to invaded states as the price of modernisation.

Modernisation: handing control of their resources/services over to multinationals.

Democracy (1): arranging elections for invaded states.

Democracy (2): ensuring governments of invaded states are controlled by your preferred candidates. If possible, they should hold American or British passports and maintain a residence in your country.

Democracy (3): ignore local, traditional systems of governance and impose 'democratic elections'.

Democracy (4): inform your own citizens that you are their leader because they live in a democracy - of which they should be proud.

Removing dictator/regime: make clear to your own citizens that this is in their interest. Make clear that it is also being done to free the invaded country's citizens and that it is absolutely necessary that they should be the subjects of air strikes etc. Who knows - you might get lucky. One of your precisely targeted missiles might hit the dictator.

Precision bombing: anything within 1000 yards - roughly.

'Senior Al Qaeda/Taliban /Gaddafi/Assad supporter killed in strike': Sound proud of your armed drones. They are so pin-point accurate and you know damned well no one can prove otherwise.

Our Brave Boys: our cannon fodder. Use freely and equally with 'Heroes'.

Combatants: enemy combatants, that is. They are cannon fodder. Synonymous with 'terrorists' etc.

Sacrifice: Usually by 'our brave boys' when they have been killed, wounded, blown up or captured by 'the enemy'. 'Sacrifice' is often 'tragic' - another word to be used freely. Warning: when using the word sacrifice, please hide the satisfaction you feel in knowing you personally will never have to sacrifice anything for the good of your country.

For the good of the country: Use to convince the voters you have a wider, further-reaching vision than theirs. Can also be used in conjunction with 'national security' and 'interests'.

Innocent civilians: yours.

Collateral damage: theirs.

Targeted killing: do your best to sound clinical and leader-like when using this phrase. It means murder or assassination - for which your own citizens would be imprisoned for.

Torture: If British, just keep repeating 'the Government's clear policy is not to participate in, solicit, encourage or condone the use of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment for any purpose', and insist that 'our brave boys' would never do such a thing, even if it has already been proved they did and do. If American, insist that US law allows you to do this as it has ruled that water-boarding etc. is not torture. You can be absolutely sure on this - you or your predecessor pushed it through the courts.

We have the enemy on the run: our troops are confined to base.

Bringing our boys back home: always insist that they have 'fulfilled their mission'. Depend on the fact that very few people will remember what the mission was. If pressed, use the words 'pulling out' rather than 'withdrawing'. Or say that the 'global threat of terrorism' has moved elsewhere and that you and your forces are prepared to go wherever it raises its ugly head.

But NEVER, never use the words 'retreat', 'lost' or 'defeat'.

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