

Terrorism Defined

George Orwell and the power of language

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Probably no word better defines or underscores the Bush presidency than “terrorism” even though his administration wasn’t the first to exploit this highly charged term. We use to explain what “they do to us” to justify what we “do to them,” or plan to, always deceitfully couched in terms of humanitarian intervention, promoting democracy, or bringing other people the benefits of western civilization Gandhi thought would be a good idea when asked once what he thought about it.

Ronald Reagan exploited it in the 1980s to declare “war on international terrorism” referring to it as the “scourge of terrorism” and “the plague of the modern age.” It was clear he had in mind launching his planned Contra proxy war of terrorism against the democratically elected Sandinista government in Nicaragua and FMLN opposition resistance to the US-backed El Salvador fascist regime the same way George Bush did it waging his wars of aggression post-9/11.

It’s a simple scheme to pull off, and governments keep using it because it always works. Scare the public enough, and they’ll go along with almost anything thinking it’s to protect their safety when, in fact, waging wars of aggression and state-sponsored violence have the opposite effect. The current Bush wars united practically the entire world against us including an active resistance increasingly targeting anything American.

George Orwell knew about the power of language before the age of television and the internet enhanced it exponentially. He explained how easy “doublethink” and “newspeak” can convince us “war is peace, freedom is slavery, and ignorance is strength.” He also wrote “All war propoganda, all the screaming and lies and hatred, comes invariably from (chicken hawk) people who are not fighting (and) Big Brother is watching....” us to be sure we get the message and obey it.

In 1946, Orwell wrote about “Politics and the English Language” saying “In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defence of the indefensible” to hide what its user has in mind. So “defenseless villages are bombarded from the air (and) this is called ‘pacification’.” And the president declares a “war on terrorism” that’s, in fact, a “war of terrorism” against designated targets, always defenseless against it, because with adversaries able to put up a good fight, bullies, like the US, opt for diplomacy or other political and economic means, short of open conflict.

The term “terrorism” has a long history, and reference to a “war on terrorism” goes back a 100 years or more. Noted historian Howard Zinn observed how the phrase is a contradiction in terms as “How can you make war on terrorism, if war is terrorism (and if) you respond to terrorism with (more) terrorism....you multiply (the amount of) terrorism in the world.” Zinn

explains that “Governments are terrorists on an enormously large scale,” and when they wage war the damage caused infinitely exceeds anything individuals or groups can inflict.

It’s also clear that individual or group “terrorist” acts are crimes, not declarations or acts of war. So a proper response to the 9/11 perpetrators was a police one, not an excuse for the Pentagon to attack other nations having nothing to do with it.

George Bush’s “war on terrorism” began on that fateful September day when his administration didn’t miss a beat stoking the flames of fear with a nation in shock ready to believe almost anything – true, false or in between. And he did it thanks to the hyped enormity of the 9/11 event manipulated for maximum political effect for the long-planned aggressive imperial adventurism his hard line administration had in mind only needing “a catastrophic and catalyzing (enough) event – like a new Pearl Harbor” to launch. With plans drawn and ready, the president and key administration officials terrified the public with visions of terrorism branded and rebranded as needed from the war on it, to the global war on it (GLOT), to the long war on it, to a new name coming soon to re-ignite a flagging public interest in and growing disillusionment over two foreign wars gone sour and lost.

Many writers, past and present, have written on terrorism with their definitions and analyses of it. The views of four noted political and social critics are reviewed below, but first an official definition to frame what follows.

How the US Code Defines Terrorism

Under the US Code, “international terrorism” includes activities involving:

(A) “violent acts or acts dangerous to human life that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State, or that would be a criminal violation if committed within the jurisdiction of the United States or of any State;”

(B) are intended to –

(i) “intimidate or coerce a civilian population;

(ii) influence the policy of a government by intimidation or coercion; or

(iii) affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and

(C) occur primarily outside the territorial jurisdiction of the United States....”

The US Army Operational Concept for Terrorism (TRADOC Pamphlet No. 525-37, 1984) shortens the above definition to be “the calculated use of violence or threat of violence to attain goals that are political, religious, or ideological in nature....through intimidation, coercion, or instilling fear.”

Eqbal Ahmad On Terrorism

Before his untimely death, Indian activist and scholar Eqbal Ahmad spoke on the subject of terrorism in one of his last public talks at the University of Colorado in October, 1998. Seven Stories Press then published his presentation in one of its Open Media Series short books titled “Terrorism, Theirs and Ours.” The talk when delivered was prophetic in light of the

September 11 event making his comments especially relevant.

He began quoting a 1984 Reagan Secretary of State George Shultz speech calling terrorism “modern barbarism, a form of political violence, a threat to Western civilization, a menace to Western moral values” and more, all the while never defining it because that would “involve a commitment to analysis, comprehension and adherence to some norms of consistency” not consistent with how this country exploits it for political purposes. It would also expose Washington’s long record of supporting the worst kinds of terrorist regimes worldwide in Indonesia, Iran under the Shah, Central America, the South American fascist generals, Marcos in the Philippines, Pol Pot and Saddam at their worst, the current Saudi and Egyptian regimes, Israel in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT), and for the people of Greece, who paid an enormous price, the Greek colonels the US brought to power in the late 1960s for which people there now with long memories still haven’t forgiven us.

Ahmad continued saying “What (then) is terrorism? Our first job is to define the damn thing, name it, give it a description of some kind, other than (the) “moral equivalent of (our) founding fathers (or) a moral outrage to Western civilization.” He cited Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary as a source saying “Terrorism is an intense, overpowering fear....the use of terrorizing methods of governing or resisting a government.” It’s simple, to the point, fair, and Ahmad calls it a definition of “great virtue. It focuses on the use of coercive violence....that is used illegally, extra-constitutionally, to coerce” saying this is true because it’s what terrorism is whether committed by governments, groups, or individuals. This definition omits what Ahmad feels doesn’t apply - motivation, whether or not the cause is just or not because “motives differ (yet) make no difference.”

Ahmad identifies the following types of terrorism:

- State terrorism committed by nations against anyone - other states, groups or individuals, including state-sponsored assassination targets;
- Religious terrorism like Christians and Muslims slaughtering each other during Papal crusades; many instances of Catholics killing Protestants and the reverse like in Northern Ireland; Christians and Jews butchering each other; Sunnis killing Shiites and the reverse; and any other kind of terror violence inspired or justified by religion carrying out God’s will as in the Old Testament preaching it as an ethical code for a higher purpose;
- Crime (organized or otherwise) terrorism as “all kinds of crime commit terror.”
- Pathology terrorism by those who are sick, may “want the attention of the world (and decide to do it by) kill(ing) a president” or anyone else.
- Political terrorism by a private group Ahmad calls “oppositional terror” explaining further that at times these five types “converge on each other starting out in one form, then converging into one or more others.

Nation states, like the US, focus only on one kind of terrorism - political terrorism that’s “the least important in terms of cost to human lives and human property (with the highest cost type being) state terrorism.” The current wars of aggression in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine underscore what Ahmad means. Never mentioned, though, is that political or retail terrorism is a natural response by oppressed or desperate groups when they’re victims of far more grievous acts of state terrorism. Also unmentioned is how to prevent terrorist acts

Noam Chomsky explains saying the way to get “them” to stop attacking “us” is stop attacking “them.”

Ahmad responded to a question in the book version of his speech with more thoughts on the subject. Asked to define terrorism the way he did in an article he wrote a year earlier titled “Comprehending Terror,” he called it “the illegal use of violence for the purposes of influencing somebody’s behavior, inflicting punishment, or taking revenge (adding) it has been practiced on a larger scale, globally, both by governments and by private groups.” When committed against a state, never asked is what produces it.

Further, official and even academic definitions of state terrorism exclude what Ahmad calls “illegal violence:” torture, burning of villages, destruction of entire peoples, (and) genocide.” These definitions are biased against individuals and groups favoring governments committing terrorist acts. Our saying it’s for self-defense, protecting the “national security,” or “promoting democracy” is subterfuge baloney disguising our passion for state-sponsored violence practiced like it our national pastime.

Ahmad also observed that modern-day “third-world...fascist governments (in countries like Indonesia (under Suharto), Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo - DRC), Iran (under the Shah), South Korea (under its generals), and elsewhere - were fully supported by one or the other of the superpowers,” and for all the aforementioned ones and most others that was the US.

Further, Ahmad notes “religious zealotry has been a major source of terror” but nearly always associated in the West with Islamic groups. In fact, it’s a global problem with “Jewish terrorists....terrorizing an entire people in the Middle East (the Palestinians, supported by) Israel which is supported by the government of the United States.” Crimes against humanity in the name of religion are also carried out by radical Christians, Hindus, Buddhists and others, not just extremist Muslims that are the only ones reported in the West.

In August, 1998 in the Dawn English-language Pakistani newspaper, Ahmad wrote about the power of the US in a unipolar world saying: “Who will define the parameters of terrorism, or decide where terrorists lurk? Why, none other than the United States, which can from the rooftops of the world set out its claim to be sheriff, judge and hangman, all at one and the same time.” So while publicly supporting justice, the US spurns international law to be the sole decider acting by the rules of what we say goes, and the law is what we say it is. Further, before the age of George Bush, Ahmad sounded a note of hope saying nothing is “historically permanent (and) I don’t think American power is permanent. It itself is very temporary, and therefore its excesses have to be, by definition, impermanent.”

In addition, he added, “America is a troubled country” for many reasons. It’s “economic capabilities do not harmonize with its military (ones and) its ruling class’ will to dominate is not quite shared by” what its people want. For now, however, the struggle will continue because the US “sowed in the Middle East (after the Gulf war but before George Bush became president) and South Asia (signaling Pakistan and Afghanistan) very poisonous seeds. Some have ripened and others are ripening. An examination of why they were sown, what has grown, and how they should be reaped is needed (but isn’t being done). Missiles won’t solve the problem” as is plain as day in mid-2007, with the Bush administration hanging on for dear life in the face of two calamitous wars the president can’t acknowledge are hopeless and already lost.

Edward S. Herman On Terrorism

Herman wrote a lot on terrorism including his important 1982 book as relevant today as it was then, "The Real Terror Network." It's comprised of US-sponsored authoritarian states following what Herman calls a free market "development model" for corporate gain gotten through a reign of terror unleashed on any homegrown resistance against it and a corrupted dominant media championing it with language Orwell would love.

Back then, justification given was the need to protect the "free world" from the evils of communism and a supposedly worldwide threat it posed. It was classic "Red Scare" baloney, but it worked to traumatize the public enough to think the Russians would come unless we headed them off, never mind, in fact, the Russians had good reason to fear we'd come because "bombing them back to the stone age" was seriously considered, might have happened, and once almost did.

Herman reviews examples of "lesser and mythical terror networks" before discussing the real ones. First though, he defines the language beginning with how Orwell characterized political speech already explained above. He then gives a dictionary definition of terrorism as "a mode of governing, or of opposing government, by intimidation" but notes right off a problem for "western propaganda." Defining terrorism this way includes repressive regimes we support, so it's necessary finding "word adaptations (redefining them to) exclude (our) state terrorism (and only) capture the petty (retail) terror of small dissident groups or individuals" or the trumped up "evil empire" kind manufactured out of whole cloth but made to seem real and threatening.

Herman then explains how the CIA finessed terrorism by referring to "Patterns of International Terrorism" defining it as follows: "Terrorism conducted with the support of a foreign government or organization and/or directed against foreign nationals, institutions, or governments." By this definition, internal death squads killing thousands are excluded because they're not "international" unless a foreign government supports them. That's easy to hide, though, when we're the government and as easy to reveal or fake when it serves our purpose saying it was communist-inspired in the 1980s or "Islamofascist al Qaeda"-conducted or supported now. Saying it makes it so even when it isn't because the power of the message can make us believe Santa Claus is the grinch who stole Christmas.

Herman also explains how harsh terms like totalitarianism and authoritarianism only apply to adversary regimes while those as bad or worse allied to us are more benignly referred to with terms like "moderate autocrats" or some other corrupted manipulation of language able to make the most beastly tyrants look like enlightened tolerant leaders.

In fact, these brutes and their governments comprise the "real terror network," and what they did and still do, with considerable US help, contributed to the rise of the "National Security State" (NSS) post-WW II and the growth of terrorism worldwide supporting it. In a word, it rules by "intimidation and violence or the threat of violence." Does the name Augusto Pinochet ring a bell? What about the repressive Shah of Iran even a harsh theocratic state brought relief from?

Herman explained "the economics of the NSS" that's just as relevant today as then with some updating of events in the age of George Bush. He notes NSS leaders imposed a free market "development model" creating a "favorable investment climate (including) subsidies

and tax concessions to business (while excluding) any largess to the non-propertied classes....” It means human welfare be damned, social benefits and democracy are incompatible with the needs of business, unions aren’t allowed, a large “reserve army” of workers can easily replace present ones, and those complaining get their heads knocked off with terror tactics being the weapon of choice, and woe to those on the receiving end.

The Godfather in Washington makes it work with considerable help from the corrupted dominant media selling “free market” misery like it’s paradise. Their message praises the dogma, turning a blind eye to the ill effects on real people and the terror needed to keep them in line when they resist characterized as protecting “national security” and “promoting democracy,” as already explained. All the while, the US is portrayed as a benevolent innocent bystander, when, in fact, behind the scenes, we pull the strings and tinpot third-world despots dance to them. But don’t expect to learn that from the pages of the New York Times always in the lead supporting the worst US-directed policies characterized only as the best and most enlightened.

At the end of his account, Herman offers solutions worlds apart from the way the Bush administration rules. They include opposing “martial law governments” and demanding the US end funding, arming and training repressive regimes. Also condemned are “harsh prison sentences, internments and killings,” especially against labor leaders. Finally, he cites “the right to self-determination” for all countries free from foreign interference, that usually means Washington, that must be held to account and compelled to “stop bullying and manipulating....tiny states” and end the notion they must be client ones, or else.

Referring to the Reagan administration in the 1980s, Herman says what applies even more under George Bush. If allowed to get away with it, Washington “will continue to escalate the violence (anywhere in the world it chooses) to preserve military mafia/oligarch control” meaning we’re boss, and what we say goes. Leaders not getting the message will be taught the hard way, meaning state-sponsored terrorism portrayed as benign intervention.

Herman revisited terrorism with co-author Gerry O’Sullivan in 1989 in their book “The Terrorism Industry: The Experts and Institutions That Shape Our View of Terror.” The authors focus on what kinds of victims are important (“worthy” ones) while others (the “unworthy”) go unmentioned or are characterized as victimizers with the corrupted media playing their usual role trumpeting whatever policies serve the interests of power. The authors state “....the West’s experts and media have engaged in a process of ‘role reversal’ in....handling....terrorism... focus(ing) on selected, relatively small-scale terrorists and rebels including....genuine national liberation movements” victimized by state-sponsored terror. Whenever they strike back in self-defense they’re portrayed as victimizers. Examples, then and now, are legion, and the authors draw on them over that earlier period the book covers.

They also explain the main reason individuals and groups attack us is payback for our attacking or oppressing them far more grievously. As already noted, the very nature of wholesale state-directed terror is infinitely more harmful than the retail kind with the order of magnitude being something like comparing massive corporate fraud cheating shareholders and employees to a day’s take by a local neighborhood pickpocket.

“The Terrorism Industry” shows the West needs enemies. Before 1991, the “evil empire” Soviet Union was the lead villain with others in supporting roles like Libya’s Gaddafi, the PLO under Arafat (before the Oslo Accords co-opted him), the Sandinistas under Ortega laughably threatening Texas we were told, and other designees portrayed as arch enemies

of freedom because they won't sell out their sovereignty to rules made in Washington. Spewing this baloney takes lots of chutzpah and manufactured demonizing generously served up by "state-sponsored propaganda campaigns" dutifully trumpeted by the dominant media stenographers for power. Their message is powerful enough to convince people western states and nuclear-powered Israel can't match ragtag marauding "terrorist" bands coming to neighborhoods near us unless we flatten countries they may be coming from. People believe it, and it's why state-sponsored terrorism can be portrayed as self-defense even though it's pure scare tactic baloney.

The authors stress the western politicization process decides who qualifies as targeted, and "The basic rule has been: if connected with leftists, violence may be called terrorist," but when it comes from rightist groups it's always self-defense. Again, it's classic Orwell who'd be smiling saying I told you so if he were still here. He also understood terrorism serves a "larger service." Overall, it's to get the public terrified enough to go along with any agenda governments have in mind like wars of aggression, huge increases in military spending at the expense of social services getting less, and the loss of civil liberties by repressive policies engineered on the phony pretext of increasing our safety, in fact, being harmed.

The authors also note different forms of "manufactured terrorism" such as inflating or inventing a menace out of whole cloth. It's also used in the private sector to weaken or destroy "union leaders, activists, and political enemies, sometimes in collusion with agents of the state."

The authors call all of the above "The Terrorism Industry of institutes and experts who formulate and channel analysis and information on terrorism in accordance with Western demands" often in cahoots with "Western governments, intelligence agencies, and corporate/conservative foundations and funders." It's a "closed system" designed to "reinforce state propaganda" to program the public mind to go along with any agenda the institutions of power have in mind, never beneficial to our own. Yet, their message is so potent they're able to convince us it is. It's an astonishing achievement going on every day able to make us believe almost anything, and the best way to beat it is don't listen.

Noam Chomsky On Terrorism

In his book "Perilous Power: The Middle East and US Foreign Policy," co-authored with Gilbert Achcar, Chomsky defines terrorism saying he's been writing about it since 1981 around the time Ronald Reagan first declared war on "international terrorism" to justify all he had in mind mentioned above. Chomsky explained "You don't declare a war on terrorism unless you're planning yourself to undertake massive international terrorism," and calling it self-defense is pure baloney.

Chomsky revisits the subject in many of his books, and in at least two earlier ones addressed terrorism or international terrorism as those volumes' core issue discussed further below. In "Perilous Power," it's the first issue discussed right out of the gate, and he starts off defining it. He does it using the official US Code definition given above calling it a commonsense one. But there's a problem in that by this definition the US qualifies as a terrorist state, and the Reagan administration in the 1980s practiced it, so it had to change it to avoid an obvious conflict.

Other problems arose as well when the UN passed resolutions on terrorism, the first major one being in December, 1987 condemning terrorism as a crime in the harshest terms. It

passed in the General Assembly overwhelmingly but not unanimously, 153 - 2, with the two opposed being the US and Israel so although the US vote wasn't a veto it served as one twice over. When Washington disapproves, it's an actual veto in the Security Council or a de facto one in the General Assembly meaning it's blocked either way, and it's erased from history as well. Case closed.

Disguising what Martin Luther King called "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today," referring to this country, a new definition had to be found excluding the terror we carry out against "them," including only what they do to "us." It's not easy, but, in practical terms, this is the definition we use - what you do to "us," while what we do to you is "benign humanitarian intervention." Repeated enough in the mainstream, the message sinks in even though it's baloney.

Chomsky then explains what other honest observers understand in a post-NAFTA world US planners knew would devastate ordinary people on the receiving end of so-called free trade policies designed to throttle them for corporate gain. He cites National Intelligence Council projections that globalization "will be rocky, marked by chronic financial volatility and a widening economic divide....Regions, countries, and groups feeling left behind will face deepening economic stagnation, political instability, and cultural alienation. They will foster political, ethnic, ideological, and religious extremism, along with the violence that often accompanies it."

Pentagon projections agree with plans set to savagely suppress expected retaliatory responses. How to stop the cycle of violence? End all types of exploitation including so-called one-way "free trade," adopting instead a fair trade model like Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's government follows that's equitable to all trading partners and their people. The antidote to bad policy, brutal repression, wars and the terrorism they generate is equity and justice for all. However, the US won't adopt the one solution sure to work because it hurts profits that come ahead of people needs.

Chomsky wrote about terrorism at length much earlier as well in his 1988 book "The Culture of Terrorism." In it he cites "the Fifth Freedom" meaning "the freedom to rob, to exploit and to dominate society, to undertake any course of action to insure that existing privilege is protected and advanced." This "freedom" is incompatible with the other four Franklin Roosevelt once announced - freedom of speech, worship, want and fear all harmed by this interloper. To get the home population to go along with policies designed to hurt them, "the state must spin an elaborate web of illusion and deceit (to keep people) inert and limited in the capacity to develop independent modes of thought and perception." It's called "manufacturing consent" to keep the rabble in line, using hard line tactics when needed.

"The Cultural of Terrorism" covers the Reagan years in the 1980s and its agenda of state terror in the post-Vietnam climate of public resistance to direct intervention that didn't hamper Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon. So unable to send in the Marines, Reagan resorted to state terror proxy wars with key battlegrounds being Central America and Afghanistan. The book focuses on the former, the scandals erupting from it, and damage control manipulation so this country can continue pursuing policies dedicated to rule by force whenever persuasion alone won't work.

A "new urgency" emerged in June, 1986 when the World Court condemned the US for attacking Nicaragua using the Contras in a proxy war of aggression against a democratically elected government unwilling to operate by rules made in Washington. In a post-Vietnam

climate opposed to this sort of thing, policies then were made to work by making state terror look like humanitarian intervention with local proxies on the ground doing our killing for us and deceiving the public to go along by scaring it to death.

So with lots of dominant media help, Reagan pursued his terror wars in Central America with devastating results people at home heard little about if they read the New York Times or watched the evening news suppressing the toll Chomsky reveals as have others:

— over 50,000 slaughtered in El Salvador,

— over 100,000 corpses in Guatemala just in the 1980s and over 200,000 including those killed earlier and since,

— a mere 11,000 in Nicaragua that got off relatively easy because the people had an army to fight back while in El Salvador and Guatemala the army was the enemy.

The tally shows Ronald Reagan gets credit for over 160,000 Central American deaths alone, but not ordinary ones. They came “Pol Pot-style....with extensive torture, rape, mutilation, disappearance,” and political assassinations against members of the clergy including El Salvador’s Archbishop Oscar Romero gunned down by an assassin while celebrating mass inside San Salvador’s Hospital de la Divina Providencia. His “voice for the voiceless” concern for the poor and oppressed and courageous opposition to death squad mass-killing couldn’t be tolerated in a part of the world ruled by wealthy elites getting plenty of support from some of the same names in Washington now ravaging Iraq and Afghanistan.

Chomsky cites the Reagan Doctrine’s commitment to opposing leftist resistance movements throughout the 1980s, conducting state-sponsored terror to “construct an international terrorist network of impressive sophistication, without parallel in history....and used it” clandestinely fighting communism.

With lots of help from Congress and the dominant media, the administration contained the damage that erupted in late 1986 from what was known as the Iran-Contra scandal over illegally selling arms to Iran to fund the Contras. Just like the farcical Watergate investigations, the worst crimes and abuses got swept under the rug, and in the end no one in the 1980s even paid a price for the lesser ones. So a huge scandal greater than Watergate, that should have toppled a president, ended up being little more than a tempest in a teapot after the dust settled. It makes it easy understanding how George Bush gets away with mass-murder, torture and much more almost making Reagan’s years seem tame by comparison.

Chomsky continued discussing our “culture of terrorism” with the Pentagon practically boasting over its Central American successes directing terrorist proxy force attacks against “soft targets” including health centers, medical workers and schools, farms and more, all considered legitimate military targets despite international law banning these actions.

Latin America is always crucial to US policy makers referring to it dismissively as “America’s backyard” giving us more right to rule here than practically any place else. It’s because of the region’s strategic importance historian Greg Grandin recognizes calling it the “Empire’s Workshop” that’s the title of his 2006 book subtitled “Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism.” In it, he shows how the region serves as a laboratory honing our techniques for imperial rule that worked in the 1980s but now face growing

rebellion providing added incentive to people in the Middle East inspiring them to do by force what leaders like Hugo Chavez do constitutionally with great public support.

But Washington's international terror network never quits or sleeps operating freely worldwide and touching down anywhere policy makers feel they need to play global enforcer seeing to it outliers remember who's boss, and no one forgets the rules of imperial management. Things went as planned for Reagan until the 1986 scandals necessitated a heavy dose of damage control. They've now become industrial strength trying to bail George Bush out his quagmire conflagrations making Reagan's troubles seem like minor brush fires. It worked for Reagan by following "overriding principles (keeping) crucial issues....off the agenda" applicable for George Bush, including:

- "the (ugly) historical and documentary record reveal(ing)" US policy guidelines;
- "the international setting within which policy develops;"
- application of similar policies in other nations in Latin America or elsewhere;
- "the normal conditions of life (in Latin America or elsewhere long dominated by) US influence and control (and) what these teach us about the goals and character of US government policy over many years;
- similar matters (anywhere helping explain) the origins and nature of the problems that must be addressed."

It was true in the 1980s and now so these issues "are not fit topics for reporting, commentary and debate" beyond what policy makers disagree on and are willing to discuss openly.

The book concludes considering the "perils of diplomacy" with Washington resorting to state terror enforcing its will through violence when other means don't work. But the US public has to be convinced through guile and stealth it's all being done for our own good. It never is, of course, but most people never catch on till it's too late to matter. They should read more Chomsky, Herman, Ahmad, and Michel Chossudovsky discussed below, but too few do so leaders like Reagan and Bush get away with mass-murder and much more.

Chomsky wrote another book on terrorism titled "Pirates and Emperors, Old and New: International Terrorism in the Real World." It was first published in 1986 with new material added in more recent editions up to 2001. The book begins with a memorable story St. Augustine tells about a pirate Alexander the Great captured asking him "how he dares molest the sea." Pirates aren't known to be timid, and this one responds saying "How dare you molest the whole world?I do it with a little ship only (and) am called a thief (while you do) it with a great navy (and) are called an Emperor." It's a wonderful way to capture the relationship between minor rogue states or resistance movements matched off against the lord and master of the universe with unchallengeable military power unleashing it freely to stay dominant.

The newest edition of "Pirates and Emperors, Old and New" explores what constitutes terrorism while mainly discussing how Washington waged it in the Middle East in the 1980s, also then in Central America, and more recently post-9/11. As he often does, Chomsky also shows how dominant media manipulation shapes public perceptions to justify our actions called defensible against states we target as enemies when they resist - meaning their wish

to remain free and independent makes them a threat to western civilization.

Washington never tolerates outlier regimes placing their sovereignty above ours or internal resistance movements hitting back for what we do to them. Those doing it are called terrorists and are targeted for removal by economic, political and/or military state terror. In the case of Nicaragua, the weapon of choice was a Contra proxy force, in El Salvador, the CIA-backed fascist government did the job, and in both cases tactics used involved mass murder and incarceration, torture, and a whole further menu of repressive and economic barbarism designed to crush resistance paving the way for unchallengeable US dominance.

The centerpiece of US Middle East policy has been its full and unconditional support for Israel's quest for regional dominance by weakening or removing regimes considered hostile and its near-six decade offensive to repress and ethnically cleanse indigenous Palestinians from all land Israelis want for a greater Israel. Toward that end, Israel gets unheard of amounts of aid including billions annually in grants and loans, billions more as needed, multi-billions in debt waved, billions more in military aid, and state-of-the-art weapons and technology amounting in total to more than all other countries in the world combined for a nation of six million people with lots of important friends in Washington, on Wall Street, and in all other centers of power that count.

It all goes down smoothly at home by portraying justifiable resistance to Israeli abuse as terrorism with the dominant media playing their usual role calling US and Israeli-targeted victims the victimizers to justify the harshest state terror crackdowns against them. For Palestinians, it's meant nearly six decades of repression and 40 years of occupation by a foreign power able to reign state terror on defenseless people helpless against it. For Iraq, it meant removing a leader posing no threat to Israel or his neighbors but portrayed as a monster who did with Iranian leaders and Hugo Chavez now topping the regime change queue in that order or maybe in quick succession or tandem.

It's all about power and perception with corrupted language, as Orwell explained, able to make reality seem the way those controlling it wish. It lets power and ideology triumph over people freely using state terror as a means of social control. Chomsky quoted Churchill's notion that "the rich and powerful have every right to....enjoy what they have gained, often by violence and terror; the rest can be ignored as long as they suffer in silence, but if they interfere with....those who rule the world by right, the 'terrors of the earth' will be visited upon them with righteous wrath, unless power is constrained from within." One day, the meek may inherit the earth and Churchill's words no longer will apply, but not as long as the US rules it and media manipulation clouds reality enough to make harsh state terror look like humanitarian intervention or self-defense by helpless victims look like they're the victimizers.

Michel Chossudovsky on "The War on Terrorism"

No one has been more prominent or outspoken since the 9/11 attacks in the US than scholar/author/activist and Global Research web site editor Michel Chossudovsky. He began writing that evening publishing an article the next day titled "Who Is Osama Bin Laden," perhaps being the first Bush administration critic to courageously challenge the official account of what took place that day. He then updated his earlier account September 10, 2006 in an article titled "The Truth behind 9/11: Who is Osama Bin Ladin." Chossudovsky is a thorough, relentless researcher making an extraordinary effort to get at the truth no matter how ugly or disturbing.

Here's a summary of what he wrote that was included in his 2005 book titled "America's War on Terrorism (In the Wake of 9/11)" he calls a complete fabrication "based on the illusion that one man, Osama bin Laden (from a cave in Afghanistan and hospital bed in Pakistan), outwitted the \$40 billion-a-year American intelligence apparatus." He called it instead what it is, in fact - a pretext for permanent "New World Order" wars of conquest serving the interests of Wall Street, the US military-industrial complex, and all other corporate interests profiting hugely from a massive scheme harming the public interest in the near-term and potentially all humanity unless it's stopped in time.

On the morning of 9/11, the Bush administration didn't miss a beat telling the world Al Qaeda attacked the World Trade Center (WTC) and Pentagon meaning Osama bin Laden was the main culprit - case closed without even the benefit of a forensic and intelligence analysis piecing together all potential helpful information. There was no need to because, as Chossudovsky explained, "That same (9/11) evening at 9:30 pm, a 'War Cabinet' was formed integrated by a select number of top intelligence and military advisors. At 11:00PM, at the end of that historic (White House) meeting, the 'War on Terrorism' was officially launched," and the rest is history.

Chossudovsky continued "The decision was announced (straightaway) to wage war against the Taliban and Al Qaeda in retribution for the 9/11 attacks" with news headlines the next day asserting, with certainty, "state sponsorship" responsibility for the attacks connected to them. The dominant media, in lockstep, called for military retaliation against Afghanistan even though no evidence proved the Taliban government responsible, because, in fact, it was not and we knew it.

Four weeks later on October 7, a long-planned war of illegal aggression began, Afghanistan was bombed and then invaded by US forces working in partnership with their new allies - the United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan or so-called Northern Alliance "warlords." Their earlier repressive rule was so extreme, it gave rise to the Taliban in the first place and has now made them resurgent.

Chossudovsky further explained that the public doesn't "realize that a large scale theater war is never planned and executed in a matter of weeks." This one, like all others, was months in the making needing only what CentCom Commander General Tommy Franks called a "terrorist, massive, casualty-producing event" to arouse enough public anger for the Bush administration to launch it after declaring their "war on terrorism." Chossudovsky, through thorough and exhausting research, exposed it as a fraud.

He's been on top of the story ever since uncovering the "myth of an 'outside enemy' and the threat of 'Islamic terrorists' (that became) the cornerstone (and core justification) of the Bush administration's military doctrine." It allowed Washington to wage permanent aggressive wars beginning with Afghanistan and Iraq, to ignore international law, and to "repeal civil liberties and constitutional government" through repression laws like the Patriot and Military Commissions Acts. A key objective throughout has, and continues to be, Washington's quest to control the world's energy supplies, primarily oil, starting in the Middle East where two-thirds of known reserves are located.

Toward that end, the Bush administration created a fictitious "outside enemy" threat without which no "war on terrorism" could exist, and no foreign wars could be waged. Chossudovsky exposed the linchpin of the whole scheme. He uncovered evidence that Al Qaeda "was a creation of the CIA going back to the Soviet-Afghan war" era, and that in the

1990s Washington “consciously supported Osama bin Laden, while at the same time placing him on the FBI’s ‘most wanted list’ as the World’s foremost terrorist.” He explained that the CIA (since the 1980s and earlier) actively supports international terrorism covertly, and that on September 10, 2001 “Enemy Number One” bin Laden was in a Rawalpindi, Pakistan military hospital confirmed on CBS News by Dan Rather. He easily could have been arrested but wasn’t because we had a “better purpose” in mind for “America’s best known fugitive (to) give a (public) face to the ‘war on terrorism’ ” that meant keeping bin Laden free to do it. If he didn’t exist, we’d have had to invent him, but that could have been arranged as well.

The Bush administration’s national security doctrine needs enemies, the way all empires on the march do. Today “Enemy Number One” rests on the fiction of bin Laden-led Islamic terrorists threatening the survival of western civilization. In fact, however, Washington uses Islamic organizations like Islamic jihad as a “key instrument of US military-intelligence operations in the Balkans and the former Soviet Union” while, at the same time, blaming them for the 9/11 attacks calling them “a threat to America.”

September 11, 2001 was, indeed, a threat to America, but one coming from within from real enemies. They want to undermine democracy and our freedoms, not preserve them, in pursuit of their own imperial interests for world domination by force through endless foreign wars and establishment of a locked down national “Homeland Security (police) State.” They’re well along toward it, and if they succeed, America, as we envision it, no longer will exist. Only by exposing the truth and resisting what’s planned and already happening will there be any hope once again to make this nation a “land of the free and home of the brave” with “a new birth of freedom” run by a “government of the people, by the people, for the people” the way at least one former president thought it should be.

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