

US Schools Need to Teach Kids About Proxy War

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The Russo Ukraine war has brought up a concept sorely lacking in the American vocabulary: Proxy War.

Most folks are familiar with the word proxy. Ask and they might respond "Oh yes, like when I sign over my right to vote stock shares to another who votes as my proxy." But throw in "war" after "proxy" and you'll likely get an eye roll.

Given how prevalent US reliance on proxy war has become in foreign policy, ignorance of proxy war has a debilitating effect on an informed electorate crucial to fostering a peaceful world.

OK, for the uninformed, Webster advises:

Proxy War. Noun. A war instigated by a major power which does not itself become involved. "The end of the Cold War brought an end to many of the proxy wars thru which the two sides struggled to exert their influence.

Today the US is involved in two devastating proxy wars that have taken over half a million lives. One is our proxy war against imagined US enemy Iran. Tho the targeted enemy, not a death has occurred on Iranian soil. Over are 400,000 dead, mainly in Yemen, inflicted by neighboring Saudi Arabia since 2015. The Saudis intervened in the Yemeni civil war to prevent the Houthi faction from controlling Yemen. We're been supplying much of the air power, bombs, maintenance, logistics and moral support for Saudi Arabia to kill all those Houthis. Why? We view the Houthis as proxies for Iran to extend its influence in the Middle East. We deem that an existential threat to US national security interests. Regardless of how delusional and senseless, the US has been fueling this proxy war against Iran for 8 years now.

The other US proxy war is infinitely worse: our 8 year long proxy war against Russia that provoked their invasion of neighboring Ukraine 13 months ago. At that point the proxy war

clueless respond incredulously, “Are you crazy? Putin woke up one morning and decided to reestablish the old Soviet Empire, starting with Ukraine. Once he takes Kyiv, he’ march westward into Western Europe. I know, read it in the *NY Times* and *Washington Post*.”

That is the problem. In the US national security state and its compliant media, proxy war is the term that dare not speak its name.

The information is out there but one must dig to get it. Try exploring the US supported coup of 2014 that deposed elected Ukrainian President Yanukovich to prevent Ukraine from partnering economically and politically with Russia. Check out the murderous civil war the coup started resulting in thousands of dead Russian leaning Ukrainians in Donbas. Learn how hundreds of millions in US weapons helped the US picked Ukrainian post-coup government kill those hapless Ukrainians. Investigate the 2015 Minsk II Agreement that was designed to give the Donbas independence under nominal Ukraine sovereignty, but free from further Ukraine government violence. One will find that France, Germany and the US neither supported nor intended Minsk II from providing Donbas independence. That would have been viewed as a Russian “win”, totally unacceptable to the US proxy war agenda.

Why is the US proxy war against Russia infinitely worse than our proxy war against Iran in Yemen? The former could pivot from proxy war to nuclear war in a heartbeat. It could take just one mistake, one miscalculation, one deranged “Dr. Strangelove” military renegade to trigger an unstoppable nuclear onslaught.

The forces of ignorance have won the narrative. Every media report on the war begins with “Russia’s unproved attack on Ukraine.” The term proxy war never has and never will appear.

Might be too late but time for grammar and high school curriculums to add a chapter, maybe even a semester, on proxy war in US foreign policy history and current events classes. After horrendous debacles in Afghanistan and Iraq, killing 6,879 Americans, the US only does proxy wars. No Americans die in proxy wars, only proxies in designated countries like Yemen and Ukraine. Maybe the next generation will gain enough wisdom to recognize a proxy war when it occurs, and possibly push back to keep it from devolving from proxy to nuclear.

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