

British Democracy: Living in Fear, Kept in the Dark

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Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#), [Police State](#)
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Earlier this year, I watched the BBC's main political debate programme that allows an audience of members of the public to put questions to a panel of politicians and so-called experts. Syria was on the agenda. A member of the panel referred to the Syrian rebels as 'freedom fighters'. Within a few minutes, all panel members and the audience were using this term to refer to the rebels. It led me to ponder why so many people were willing to accept at face value an agenda that portrayed the insurgents in such a wholly positive light.

It also led me to conclude just how easy it is to manipulate ordinary people into backing imperialist ventures abroad, which are fought on behalf of rich interests. At a time of biting austerity and attacks on workers and the welfare state, well over a billion pounds of ordinary people's money was used to fund the illegal bombing of Libya.

The justification sold to people for such militarism is that dictators are bad. The justification sold to people for attacking or destabilising countries resulting in mass death is that democracy must therefore be forced through by the barrel of a gun. Isn't it terrible, the politicians and media say, that Assad is a brutal dictator who is preventing democracy by putting down the rebels.

The Assad regime undoubtedly has its faults, but nothing is ever said by the corporate media about the authoritarian ruling clique in Saudi Arabia, which has even given its name to that country (House of Saud). Nothing is ever said about a western backed dictator in Bahrain who has been in power for 52 years. Nothing is ever revealed about the brutal ongoing crackdowns on protestors and dissenters in those countries. When Bahrain used Saudi troops to put down uprisings in 2011, the resultant death toll was proportionally much larger than was the loss of life in Egypt during the uprising there. In fact, if the death toll in Bahrain were taken as a proportion of the population, the equivalent death toll for Egypt would have been 12,000.

Where was the outrage from the US and its client states? That's right, there was none. The King of Bahrain was even invited to attend Queen Elizabeth's Jubilee celebrations at Buckingham Palace.

As it did in Libya, repressive Saudi Arabia is playing a big role in facilitating the rag-tag rebels in Syria to destabilise a sovereign state that stands in the way of NATO and Israeli interests.

And far away, back in Britain, the public is being fed a pack of lies by politicians and the mainstream media about the situation in Syria, just as it has been over other military adventures over the past decade. The majority of Brits don't have much of a clue about

what is happening. They are unaware that Syria forms part of the greater game in the region. They fail to see the links between Syria, Pakistan, Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran, which are all part of a Washington-led wider geo-political strategy hell-bent on global domination, controlling the world's mineral resources, pipeline routes and lining the pockets of western financiers and oil, armaments and logistics companies. Too many remain confused or ignorant thanks to duplicitous politicians and the corporate media.

The public cannot know the reality. They will not be allowed to know. They must be kept in fear and in the dark and deceived by politicians and the media that churn out increasingly tired-sounding clichés about a war on terror or humanitarian militarism to justify murderous brutality.

And the result is that too many people accept the lie that rag-tag forces made up of vicious, faction-ridden fighters, illegally armed by NATO terror governments and unelected regimes in Saudi and Qatar, are fighting for freedom and democracy. Those forces and nations wouldn't know about freedom and democracy if they fell over it.

Sorry, my mistake, they would and they do. That's why they seek to crush it when it appears. And that applies whether it appears within the borders of the US, Britain or Saudi, or elsewhere in places that are of strategic importance to them. The US track record of crushing democratic governments is well documented by the likes of Noam Chomsky and historian William Blum. And look no further to see the attacks on WikiLeaks or the Occupy Movement to see how democratic movements are treated at home. Look no further to see how democratic workers' movements that took hundreds of years to build in Britain and elsewhere in Europe are under sustained attack.

Giving the people the opportunity to vote every four or five years, while in the meantime deceiving, misinforming and lying to them, has no more to do with democracy or freedom than what is happening in Syria right now.

If more ordinary folk were turn their attention away from glossy sports events, premiership football, cheap knockabout BBC political debate shows or all other forms of comatosing infortainment for one minute, they might well realise that the billionaire criminal elites that take their taxes and dictate national and foreign policy are in many cases a good deal worse than any number of the regimes they seek to demonise.

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