

The Empire Strikes Back: With Destructive and Dishonest Neocolonialism

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Region: [Asia](#), [Europe](#), [Latin America & Caribbean](#), [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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This month sees some significant anniversaries in the struggle against old-style colonialism. The trouble is that colonialism didn't go away after countries in the developing world formally achieved their independence from Europe's 'Great Powers.'

It was replaced by a new form which proved to be more destructive and immeasurably more dishonest than what went before.

At least the British Empire – which at its peak covered almost a quarter of the world's land surface, acknowledged it was an Empire.

Today's more shadowy Empire of Globalized Monopoly Finance-Capital does no such thing. Entire countries, such as Yugoslavia, Libya, and Iraq, are destroyed for not toeing the line, while those which continue to defy the neocon/neoliberal elites, such as Venezuela, are under a state of permanent siege.

To add insult to injury this new wave of colonization, carried out to benefit the richest people in the richest countries in the world, is done in the name of 'democracy' and 'advancing human rights' and has the enthusiastic support of many self-styled 'progressives.' The hypocrisy of today's imperialists who lambasted Venezuela's Maduro for being a 'dictator' but who hail the unelected hereditary rulers of Saudi Arabia as they sell them deadly weaponry is truly breathtaking.

Maduro sets up Constituent Assembly in line with constitution he's a villain, Saudis flog and behead democracy activists, business as usual.

— John Wight (@JohnWight1) [August 3, 2017](#)

In the 1940s and 50s, it all looked very different. Colonialism did seem to be in retreat.

Seventy-five years ago this month, on 8th August 1942, Mahatma Gandhi started the 'Quit India' Movement in Bombay.

Seventy years ago on the 14/15th August 1947, India, and the new state of Pakistan, gained

their independence from the UK.

While 60 years ago (31 August 1957), The Federation of Malaya (now Malaysia) gained its independence from Britain.

These are important milestones that certainly need to be celebrated.

But the belief of progressives that 'decolonization' would mean genuine freedom for the countries that had been colonized has proved wildly optimistic. India and Malaysia may have progressed, but for other nations 'The Wind of Change' was just hot air. 'Independence' meant obtaining only the outward trappings of national sovereignty: a flag, a national anthem, UN membership and a football team. Economic power continued to reside elsewhere: in the banks and boardrooms of the richer nations.

In his classic 1965 [text](#) 'Neocolonialism, The Last Stage of Imperialism' the great Kwame Nkrumah, then President of Ghana and a staunch advocate of Pan-Africanism, explained how neocolonialism had replaced old-style colonialism.

"In the past, it was possible to convert a country upon which a neocolonial regime had been imposed – Egypt in the 19th century is an example – into a colonial territory. Today this process is no longer feasible," he wrote.

To find the money to build a welfare state at home colonies had to be formally given their independence, but that didn't mean control had to be surrendered too. The United States used its position as the world's number one creditor nation after World War II to accelerate this 'formal' process of decolonization, but only so that it could move into countries once dominated by the likes of Britain, France, and The Netherlands. Nkrumah cites the example of South Vietnam, where the 'old' colonial power was France, but the neo colonial power was the US. In fact, the US can be said to have been the pioneer of neocolonialism. While 'old-style' Empire still dominated in the rest of the world, the US used neocolonial techniques to ensure the countries of Latin America subordinated their economies to the interests of US big business. The US financial/corporate elite today targets the leftist Maduro in Venezuela for 'regime-change,' back in 1913 the US Ambassador to Mexico, Henry Lane Wilson, was conspiring with General Huerta to topple the leftist Madero.

It was a pattern to be repeated time after time in the next 100 years. The techniques Washington perfected in Latin America (backing coups against democratically elected governments who wanted to maintain national control over their economies, bankrolling the opposition to these governments, and eliminating leaders/politicians who stood for genuine independence) and which we saw deployed in Guatemala in 1954, Brazil in 1964 and Chile in 1973, were used around the world.

"Democracy promotion" has always been code for US backing internal subversion of insufficiently pliant governments <https://t.co/2Dg6IERMYm>

— Max Blumenthal (@MaxBlumenthal) [August 1, 2017](#)

A list of governments toppled, directly or indirectly, by the US and its closest allies to achieve economic control would be far too long to include in a single OpEdge, but here are a

few examples:

1. Indonesia, 1965/6

The US backed a bloody wave of mass killings by the military which led to the overthrow of the independently-minded Sukarno, the first President of 'postcolonial' Indonesia, and had him replaced, by the pro-Western dictator [General Suharto](#).

"The US embassy in Jakarta supplied Suharto with a "zap list" of Indonesian Communist party members and crossed off the names when they were killed or captured," [writes](#) John Pilger, who examined the coup in his 2001 film *The New Rulers of the World*.

"The deal was that Indonesia under Suharto would offer up what Richard Nixon had called "the richest hoard of natural resources, the greatest prize in southeast Asia."

"In November 1967 the greatest prize was handed out at a remarkable three-day conference sponsored by the Time-Life Corporation in Geneva. Led by David Rockefeller, all the corporate giants were represented: the major oil companies and banks, General Motors, Imperial Chemical Industries, British American Tobacco, Siemens, US Steel and many others. Across the table sat Suharto's US-trained economists who agreed to the corporate takeover of their country, sector by sector," Pilger [wrote](#).

The human cost of Indonesia's neocolonial 'regime-change' was huge with between 500,000 and 3 million people [killed](#). In 2016, an international panel of judges held that the US (and the UK and Australia) had been [complicit in genocide](#).

2. Iran, 1953

The toppling of the democratically elected nationalist Mohammad Mossadegh and his replacement by the more compliant Shah was another US/UK joint op. The 'crime' of Mossadegh was wanting to nationalize his country's oil industry and use the revenues to fight poverty and disease. So the neocolonialists decided he had to go. A campaign of destabilization- similar to that waged against Venezuela at present- was started.

"CIA and SIS propaganda assets were to conduct an increasingly intensified effort through the press, handbills and the Tehran clergy in a campaign designed to weaken the Mossadeq government in any way possible," admitted Donald N. Wilber, a key planner of the so-called TPAJAX project.

In 2013, declassified documents [revealed](#):

"The military coup that overthrew Mossadeq and his National Front cabinet was carried out under CIA direction as an act of US foreign policy, conceived and approved at the highest levels of government."

Worth remembering when we hear politicians in neocolonialist countries feign outrage over unproven 'Russian interference' in their political processes.

What is the #1 U.S. interest in Venezuela? If the classified history of the U.S. State Department is a guide, oil. <https://t.co/xCRNDT1oMFpic.twitter.com/8Z1e0IsKND>

— WikiLeaks (@wikileaks) [August 2, 2017](#)

3. Yugoslavia, 1999/2000

“Balkanization is the major instrument of neocolonialism and will be found wherever neocolonialism is practiced,” wrote Kwame Nkrumah.

The socialist leader of F.R. Yugoslavia, Slobodan Milosevic, was [demonized](#) in the 1990s by the Western elites not because he wanted to break his country up but because he wanted it to stay together.

Having survived an illegal 78-day ‘humanitarian’ bombing campaign by NATO against his country in 1999, Slobodan saw the ‘regime-change’ operation to oust him intensify. Millions of dollars poured illegally into the country from the US to opposition groups and anti-government activists, such as the Otpor! Organization. Milosevic was toppled in a Western-sponsored ‘Bulldozer Revolution’ in October 2000 and Secretary of State Madeline Albright, who four years earlier had said the death of half a million Iraqi children due to sanctions was a price worth paying, celebrated.

George Kenney, a former Yugoslav desk officer of the State Department, revealed why it all took place.

“In post-Cold War Europe no place remained for a large independent-minded socialist state that resisted globalization.”

In 2012, the New York Times reported how leading members of the US administration which had dismantled Yugoslavia were [returning to the Balkans](#) as ‘entrepreneurs’ to bid for privatized assets.

Why is it so difficult for some to grasp in 2017 what was obvious in 1982? Solidarity. [pic.twitter.com/EuU9aVAnho](https://t.co/EuU9aVAnho)

— Club des Cordeliers (@cordeliers) [July 31, 2017](#)

Now the neocolonialist neocon regime changers have moved on to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Like Milosevic, and many others before him who got in the way of ‘*The New Rulers of the World*,’ the democratically elected Nicolas Maduro is labeled a ‘dictator.’ As in the case of Milosevic, it’s self-styled ‘progressives’ who are at the forefront of the elites’ campaign to demonize Venezuela and its leadership- demanding that public figures in the West who had expressed support for ‘Chavism’ issue denunciations.

All these US “Leftist” critiques of Venezuela that dismiss US interference,

ascribe outcomes of economic warfare to "government failure."

— Crypto Cuttlefish (@cuttlefish_btc) [August 5, 2017](#)

In the fierce critiques of the Venezuelan government that have been pouring out in the Western media these past few days, there's no mention of the unrelenting external campaign to destabilize the country and sabotage its economy. Nor of the millions of dollars that have [poured](#) into the coffers of the opposition and anti-government activists from the US.

Imagine if the Venezuelan government had been bankrolling anti-government protestors in America. But when the neocolonialists do it in other countries, it's fine.

Kwame Nkrumah called neocolonialism 'the worst form of imperialism,' and he was right.

"For those who practice it, it means power without responsibility, and for those who suffer from it, it means power without responsibility."

And what happened to Nkrumah, I hear you ask? Just a few months after his book was published, the father of modern Ghana was deposed in a coup. The 'National Liberation Council' which overthrew him swiftly restructured [Ghana's economy](#), under the supervision of the IMF and World Bank, for the benefit of Western capital.

The West denied involvement, but years later John Stockwell, a CIA officer in Africa [revealed](#):

"the CIA station in Ghana played a major role in the overthrow of Kwame Nkrumah in 1966."

Venezuela has lots of oil, a socialist govt & is a strong supporter of Syria. I can't think why neocons are so keen for a 'regime change'...

— Neil Clark (@NeilClark66) [August 4, 2017](#)

Today, the neocolonialists want us to support their 'progressive' crusade for 'democracy' and 'human rights' in oil-rich Venezuela. If Kwame Nkrumah were still around, he'd be urging us to see the bigger picture.

Neil Clark is a journalist, writer, broadcaster and blogger. He has written for many newspapers and magazines in the UK and other countries including The Guardian, Morning Star, Daily and Sunday Express, Mail on Sunday, Daily Mail, Daily Telegraph, New Statesman, The Spectator, The Week, and The American Conservative. He is a regular pundit on RT and has also appeared on BBC TV and radio, Sky News, Press TV and the Voice of Russia. He is the co-founder of the Campaign For Public Ownership @PublicOwnership. His award winning blog can be found at www.neilclark66.blogspot.com. He tweets on politics and world affairs @NeilClark66

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