

# Uncle Sam Loves You, so Buy American, or Else...

## US and Its Allies Are the Model of an Abusive Relationship

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Global Research, March 13, 2019

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*The US is so enamored of its role as sole world superpower that it thinks nothing of mistreating allies, never believing they might tire of the abuse and run away – into the arms of China, or – perish the thought – Russia.*

The Trump administration has never met a failed policy it wouldn't embrace, from attempting to ignite a color revolution in Iran (after stamping out actual democracy there half a century ago), to throwing good money after bad in the two-decade-long quagmire of Afghanistan. With a stranglehold on the world's reserve currency, even the most expensive mistakes – and at \$22 trillion in debt, a lot have been made – have largely theoretical consequences, and just as Wall Street is able to outsource risk to Main Street, the US can sleep well at night knowing the fallout of its bad decisions is unfolding largely outside its borders.

Bristling with nuclear enthusiasm after throwing aside the INF with a Strangelovian flourish, promising to take its bloated and over-equipped military to space “the better to menace you with,” brutalizing even its own citizens both physically and psychologically with constant surveillance, and wielding punitive sanctions against putative allies for daring to defy its petty economic vendettas, the US is the geopolitical equivalent of an abusive romantic partner. And its allies are finally waking up to the realization that perhaps it's time to break things off.

The biggest indignity yet was the ludicrous demand that NATO allies pay to host the American troops permanently garrisoned there – to essentially bankroll their own occupations. Last week, it was reported the US would begin asking some of its most hospitable allies – those nations home to hundreds of thousands of soldiers – to foot the bill for the cost of keeping them “safe.” While the cost breakdown hasn't been [decided](#) yet, it may include the actual salaries of the soldiers stationed there – which would make the “quartering” policy that helped set off the American Revolution look positively civilized in comparison. Over two-thirds of the residents of Okinawa, where the US wants to relocate a military base, voted against the plan in a [referendum](#) last month. Construction is going ahead anyway. With allies like these, who needs enemies?

Adding insult to this financial injury, those countries whose policies “align closely” with the US would get an unspecified “discount” on their occupation bill – while those countries who didn't play ball would, presumably, face the prospect of hundreds of thousands of disgruntled, well-armed American troops on their soil. “Gee, that's a nice country you got there. Would be a real shame if something happened to it.” The US has been accused of acting like a mafia state before, but prior to Trump, its leaders seldom embraced the designation with such zest. One has to respect his honesty, at least – as Ilhan Omar said

(and then quickly tried to un-say), Barack Obama's policies were almost indistinguishable, except they were delivered by a pretty face, with a smile capable of speaking in complete sentences.

And where would an abusive relationship be without gaslighting? The US insists, to all who will listen, that its puppet Juan Guaido is recognized the world over as the legitimate ruler of Venezuela, even though no more than 54 countries have fallen in line behind his self-appointed leadership. Even the mainstream US media – hardly a pack of truth-tellers – has come under attack by Sen. Marco Rubio, who accused CNN of Russian collusion for referring to Guaido as the “self-proclaimed” president of Venezuela. Not to be outdone, Abrams has threatened second-order [sanctions](#) against those nations that refuse to declare  $2 + 2 = 5$  and embrace the unelected frontman for another good old-fashioned South American resource-grab. Never mind international law – second-order sanctions are not, in fact, a thing – but almost three-quarters of the UN still backs Nicolas Maduro, the elected President of Venezuela.

Like any abusive partner, the US is wildly jealous. Germany is the primary target of its covetous rages, courted as it is both by Russia, with the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, and China, whose Huawei is currently in talks to build 5G wireless infrastructure. Huawei has even opened a “[cybersecurity](#) and transparency center” in Brussels in a bid to sway the whole EU into acknowledging its technological superiority, even as the US attempts to jail the company's CFO and ban its products across the western world. So far, this is a battle the US is losing, despite their efforts to convince allies that Huawei is secretly a Chinese spy plot – concerns Berlin perhaps feels justified in ignoring since learning that US intelligence spent over a decade [listening](#) in on Chancellor Angela Merkel's phone calls – so on Monday they upped the ante, issuing an ultimatum to Berlin that should they scorn the wishes of the world's only superpower, the US would no longer be able to [cooperate](#) with German security agencies. Officially, this is because of the risk of Chinese backdoors built into the equipment. Realistically, this is the behavior of a petty, jealous lover. Germany can do so much better. So can the rest of the world.

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