

US Totalitarian Tendencies exposed

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Those who grew up during the peak years of the Cold War are struck by an emerging pattern in US foreign policy. The pattern suggests that throughout those Cold War years, the US projected on the Soviet Union its own intentions and inclinations, accusing the latter of seeking to set up a world government, seeking to spread the Soviet version of communism to every corner of the globe, when in fact it was the US which sought to impose its form of corporate cannibalism on the whole world.

Now that the US and its allies succeeded in subverting and causing the collapse of the Soviet Union itself instead, they now boast of having achieved what they once accused the Soviet Union of trying to achieve. And it seems clear to historians of the Cold War that it was the US and its allies who sought world domination after tasting it during the fight against Hitler.

A re-reading of the book called *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* by Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski is telling in this regard.

However, we start with recent stories in the Press which provide immediate indicators of this historical reality.

At the top of the list should be John Perkins' book *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* which was summarised in the interview which the US "economic consultant" had with a US radio station called *Democracynow* which *The Sunday Mail* reprinted under the title "Economic 'hitman' bares all" on May 1 2005.

Essentially, Perkins is saying that as a US economic "consultant" for the last 50 years, his real function was that of an economic saboteur and manipulator on behalf of the US transterritorial empire. Perkins says in the interview:

"Basically what we were trained to do and what our job is to do is to build up the American empire. To bring — to create situations where as many resources as possible flow into this country (the US), to our corporations, and our government and, in fact, we've been very successful . . . This empire, unlike any other in the history of the world, has been built primarily through economic manipulation, through cheating, through fraud, through seducing people into our way of life, through economic hitmen."

But the most revealing part of Perkins' interview is about the ladder of escalation of subversion methods used by this empire. At the lowest level it looks benign and friendly. It uses "civil society" means such as missionaries, NGOs, volunteers and other apparent do-gooders to soften up the society ideologically.

If this level does not accomplish the mission, intervention is raised to level two, where "the

private sector” of the US carries out the US government’s mandate with very little mention of the government or government intentions. Some of the private sector people become advisors to client governments. John Perkins himself rose to become the government’s chief economist in some of the countries he helped to subvert and destroy. Zimbabwe also once hired a chief economist, Norman Raynolds, who now travels around the world agitating for Western military intervention in this country.

If level two fails, level three involves using what Perkins calls “CIA jackals”. These are spy activists who whip up resentment and division within state and social institutions in order to provoke civil strife, civil war, coups d’etat or insurrection.

If level three fails, the US intervention escalates to level four, which involves the use of hired assassins to eliminate key leaders of the country. That is what happened in Rwanda in 1994 and Congo in 1961. It failed in Cuba, however. The killings of Samora Machel and Chris Hani perhaps need further investigations in terms of the Perkins scenarios.

If assassins’ plots fail, the US resorts to direct military intervention in the style of the US-UK invasion of Iraq in March 2003.

A second recent story appeared on the same Sunday, May 1 2005, in The Sunday Mirror. It was called “The rise of disaster capitalism”. It suggested that the US government, as a world government, has set up the Office of the Co-ordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilisation.

Its purpose is to help the US government to recycle the economies which it succeeds in destroying. This means that after the economic hitmen have succeeded in wrecking an economy, this office will move in to award contracts to US multinational corporations to start a new cycle of exploitation and entrapment called “reconstruction and stabilisation”.

The creation of the office means that in the post-1989 era the number of successfully wrecked economies has increased to the extent that a reconstruction plan is now needed long before the country and its economy are destroyed, meaning that even economies which are successful in their own ways but not under US control are seen from the US point of view as economies waiting to be destroyed, reconstructed and recycled for the benefit of the empire.

I The third significant story was about the new president of one of the instruments of global economic manipulation and sabotage, the World Bank. It was called “The Truth about the World Bank” and it appeared in the same Sunday Mirror as story number two above. Here, George Monbiot was saying that it was a good thing for victims of US corporate totalitarianism that the US had appointed a rightwing extremist, Paul Wolfowitz, to head the World Bank. Why? Because, for those who have eyes, it may become clear that the World Bank is part of the global infrastructure making it possible for economic hitmen of John Perkins’ type to subvert, wreck, rebuild and recycle countries for the benefit of the US and its allies.

With this Wolfowitz at the helm, there will be no more illusions about “poverty reduction” as one of the missions of the World Bank. It is mostly a conduit through which the West deploys its economic hitmen.

I The fourth story worth mentioning here is The New African’s cover story: “Can this man (Tony Blair) Save Africa?” in the April 2005 issue of the magazine. With this example we

cross the Atlantic Ocean from the US to its staunchest ally, the United Kingdom. Both these countries consistently accused the former Soviet Union of harbouring a “saviour” mentality and seeking to subjugate the world under the guise of saving it from oppression and poverty.

The emergence of unipolarism and neo-liberal capitalism confirms the US and UK as the ones most afflicted with this saviour mentality. North America’s key partner, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, not only put together a so-called Commission for Africa, he also proceeded to author a Commission for Africa Report reporting to himself and declaring: “I fear my own conscience on Africa. I fear the judgment of future generations, where history properly calculates the gravity of the suffering. I fear them asking: but how could wealthy people, so aware of such suffering, so capable of acting, simply turn away to busy themselves with other things?”

Yet at an earlier time when he visited Africa, Blair reduced the continent to “a scar on the world’s conscience”.

What all this means is an extreme form of political narcissism whereby Blair’s conscience equals the conscience of the whole world and a committee set up at Number 10 Downing Street, London, automatically becomes a Commission for all of Africa and proceeds to report to itself about Africa and the Africans.

What do these stories mean? One explanation is that they reveal a North American and North Atlantic struggle to establish unipolarism as hegemony, to make the rest of the world accept an Anglo-Saxon dictatorship over the whole world as self-evident, inevitable and commonsensical. The ideology was always there and always implied in US anti-communism. But in the Cold War it was inverted as a projection through which the US attacked the former Soviet Union for pursuing the very same totalitarian objectives which the US itself actually pursued with much greater effectiveness, including its effectiveness in undermining the Soviet Union as the only real challenge to US totalitarianism at the time.

To understand how the projected ideology in fact reflected US ambitions and intentions, we look at Chapter 7 of Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew K. Brzezinski’s book *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*.

Chapter 7 tries to explain what the authors considered to be the most typical aspects of a totalitarian ideology. We are suggesting here that these typical aspects should not have been projected on the Soviet Union, far away, but on the US military industrial complex and the class interests it serves. This has become more obvious since 1989 than it was so soon after the Hitler wars.

The first claim Friedrich and Brzezinski made about the totalitarian state but which they would not associate with their own state and society is the demand and struggle for ideological unity.

Yet one can now see that this is very much a US demand as well. The Bush dictum that you are either with us or with the terrorists is a culmination of that ideological thrust. Historian Howard Zinn has also referred to a symmetrical ideology between the US Democratic Party and the US Republican Party. The ideas of the Programme for a New American Century refer to that insistence on ideological unity far beyond the borders of the US itself.

The symmetrical treatment of Zimbabwe by Britain, the US, Australia and the European Union demonstrates ideological unity which Gerald Horne referred to as “synthetic whiteness”, which claims to be far superior to apartheid and other forms of ethnic-based white nationalism. Anti-communism used to give this synthetic white supremacy its rigour. Without anti-communism the racist nature of US hegemony has become more apparent.

The second claim Brzezinski and Friedrich made was that the totalitarian state manipulates and marshals ideas as ideological instruments and weapons without much historical and local content to make them credible, palpable, consistent and tangible in the real lives of people.

Yet the same allegation can be sustained against the US and its allies after looking at the ways they have selectively and inconsistently marshalled the rhetoric of human rights, good governance, democracy, freedom of expression, free Press, accountability and transparency against states targeted for demonisation, stigmatisation, isolation, destruction and recycling.

Professor Raymond Kent of the University of California at Berkeley pointed out in June 2000 that the US-Nato doctrine of human rights treated as humans only those people who served the strategic interests of the US and Nato and those who are seen as potentially useful in US designs for global power. Kent titled his contribution: “A Tragi-Comedy in (Judicial) Robes”.

It is true that the US has framed its human rights propaganda selectively and differently for each region. In Southern Africa the propaganda will seek to downplay the US role in the history of apartheid and white settler racism. In the Middle East it will seek to downplay the state terrorism of Israel, the illegality of the US-UK occupation of Iraq and the role of the US in propping up corrupt monarchies in countries such as Saudi Arabia.

For each region, the US will try to develop separate literature. For Eastern Europe it developed a booklet called “Human Rights and You”, which states clearly that this is for Eastern Europe.

In short, it is the US today, which deploys ideas as mere tools and weapons, which are meant to restrain, stop or weaken everyone else except the US itself. The third important claim which Friedrich and Brzezinski made about a totalitarian ideology was that:

“Finally, a totalitarian ideology would be one that is concerned with total destruction and total reconstruction, involving typically an ideological acceptance of violence as the only practicable means for such total destruction. It might accordingly be defined as ‘a reasonably coherent body of ideas concerning practical means of how totally to change and reconstruct a society by force, or violence, based upon an all-inclusive or total criticism of what is wrong with existing or antecedent society.’ This total change and reconstruction in its very nature constitutes a ‘utopia’, and hence totalitarian ideologies are typically utopian in nature.”

These authors believed they were describing the ideology of a strange country quite alien to the “American way”.

We note that the aspect of ideology described here seeks to undermine other states, turn them into what is now termed “failed states” and use the perceived failure to invade and destroy them before engaging in their “reconstruction”. And the US is not guilty of this

behaviour, according to Friedrich and Brzezinski.

When the US invaded Grenada and Lebanon in the early 1980s and sponsored terrorists against Nicaragua, historian Michael Parenti published an article called "US Intervention: The World as Our Oyster". That article pointed out that the US used armed intervention outside its borders 215 times between January 1 1946 and December 31 1975. By 1984 the US had violently intervened more than 265 times outside its borders since 1 January 1 1946.

Recently the United States has violently intervened in Colombia, Haiti, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq. The myth that the orgy of violence and carnage going on in Iraq is a process of uprooting Moslem fanaticism and replacing it with transplanted democracy clearly fits the Friedrich and Brzezinski topology of a totalitarian ideology.

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