

Terrorism, Repression and Julian Assange - Imperialist Doubletalk

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Among the many diverse reasons for the emergence of a multipolar world, currently occurring at this historical moment, is the demand on the part of the majority world for justice and equity in international relations and its institutions. The recent death of the only ever President of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, reminds us of a time when there was an effective global balance between the Soviet Union and the United States. It was a balance that made possible many advances for the peoples of the world, including the victory of the people of Vietnam and too Cuba’s active solidarity with the liberation forces which ended apartheid in South Africa.

The power of the Soviet Union also allowed countries such as Nicaragua, Angola and Mozambique to resist the terrible wars imposed on their peoples by the United States and its allies carried out via the systematic use of terrorism. However, as the Nobel Laureate for Literature Harold Pinter observed in 2005:

“Hundreds of thousands of deaths took place throughout these countries. Did they take place? And are they in all cases attributable to US foreign policy? The answer is yes they did take place and they are attributable to American foreign policy. But you wouldn’t know it. It never happened. Nothing ever happened. Even while it was happening it wasn’t happening. It didn’t matter. It was of no interest. ”

Pinter is referring both to the impunity of the imperial powers for their crimes, and to the monopoly control of information worldwide by the United States and its allies at that time. In the latter sense, of course he exaggerates, but not by much. For its part, Nicaragua is proud to have demonstrated before the International Court of Justice in 1986 that the United States was guilty of systematic terrorism against the Nicaraguan people with an enormous cost in both human lives and material damage. In a moral sense, it was an unprecedented victory in which a small majority country of the world defeated the world’s most powerful country before the highest international court of law. Also, in practical terms, it is likely that the legal process in The Hague encouraged the US Congress in 1985 to prohibit US government aid to the Contras in Nicaragua.

However, the US government sought to continue its illegal campaign of terrorism against Nicaragua by means of the Iran-Contra stratagem. They sold weapons to Iran illegally and secretly and, with the funds obtained, bought weapons for the Contra in Nicaragua. In parallel, the same covert operations structure carried out drug trafficking operations and, with the sale of drugs in the United States, also financed the Ronald Reagan government's war of terror against Nicaragua. Despite the Iran-Contra scandal in the United States, there were no major consequences. A junior officer Colonel Oliver North was sentenced to a few months of community service. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger was indicted but before trial received a pardon from President George Bush in 1992. And that was it.

Years later, at the end of the decade of the 90s, genuine reporters like Gary Webb and Robert Parry investigated these facts and managed to publish a great deal of the hidden truth. But, as Harold Pinter commented, it was as if nothing took place, nothing happened, it didn't matter. It was not of the least interest. On the contrary, Gary Webb was persecuted in such a ruthless and relentless way that he found it impossible to find work in the news media. He suffered a vile slander campaign at the hands of mainstream media. His family was destroyed. He fell into extreme poverty and finally committed suicide. Why remember all this after so many years? It is important to remember this story because it shows that terrorism, suppression of the truth and repression against those who publish the truth are fundamental and permanent features of the policies of the United States and its allies.

The countries of North America and Europe insist that they are morally superior to the rest of the world and that their good intentions and actions benefit and support the majority world. If this sounds absurd, that's because it is, just as Harold Pinter observed in 2005 and as the populations of the majority world can observe for themselves every day of their lives. However, with the tremendous power of their corporate monopolies, Western elites still maintain, in much of the world, a dominance of the relevant commercial structures, of information and entertainment technology and of communications. It is in this way that the terrorism of the government of Ukraine against its own Russian-speaking population in Donetsk and Luhansk was covered up for eight years despite a death toll of 14000 people, the vast majority civilians.

Knowing that the dominant political forces in the government of Ukraine were and are of Nazi ideology, the United States and its European allies concealed in broad daylight that they armed, trained and financed the Ukrainian authorities to kill their own population. On the other hand, it was precisely on the false pretext that the governments of Libya and Syria were massacring their own populations that the United States and its European allies attacked those countries. The United States and its NATO allies used a similar false pretext to bomb Serbia for almost three months in 1999, killing thousands of Serbian civilians in the name of freedom and democracy. Thus, the terrorism promoted by the West goes hand in hand with a brutally repressive control of the psychological warfare apparatus, which facilitates the perversion not only news and information media, but also academic research, the reports of non-governmental organizations and the functions of international institutions.

That sinister, almost absolute control of the production and distribution of information facilitates the constant mass dissemination of false beliefs which in turn facilitate the construction of false memories. It is an infinite feedback process of psychological warfare that mainly affects Western populations but has a significant impact on the majority world populations as well. And it is in this way that with disconcerting straight faces and impressive

shamlessness, Western leaders claim moral superiority while being themselves the worst terrorist criminals on the planet.

In Latin America, the operation of imperialist armed and economic terrorism and how these are combined with a monopoly of information production and distribution can be seen as clearly as possible. In several countries this combination has been complemented by systematic institutional abuse in the form of the so-called “lawfare” and the endless abuses of institutions such as the Organization of American States. The cases of Bolivia and Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua are perhaps the most extreme and obvious. In Nicaragua in 2018, the United States and its European allies promoted an attempted coup d’état based on armed terrorism and on media terrorism. The attempt failed in reality because the Nicaraguan people defeated it. However, the prevailing opinion internationally favors the virtual coup promoters’ version despite abundant evidence contradicting them.

International opinion believes the lie that the criminals imprisoned for their coup-mongering actions are innocent champions of democracy. They allege that these prisoners are mistreated and even tortured in the Nicaraguan penitentiary system and denied their rights under the law. In fact, the undeniable truth was demonstrated at the recent hearings in the judicial system in which these people appeared not just in visibly perfect physical health but also in obviously good psychological health as well. It is worth comparing the behavior and appearance of these people duly convicted for serious crimes against the State and People of Nicaragua with the situation of Julian Assange, among many other political prisoners in the West. Julian Assange has not been convicted of any crime. He committed a minor misdemeanor for a bail violation for which he has already served a light sentence many years ago. But since being seized from the Ecuadorian embassy in 2019, Julian Assange has been held in a maximum security prison under the most stringent conditions permitted in the British prison system, being held for long periods in solitary confinement.

International expert opinion, like that of UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Nils Melzer, states that Julian Assange has been the subject of torture for many years. When he appears in court on the few occasions he is allowed to participate but always without the ability to consult freely with his lawyers, Julian Assange’s behavior and appearance confirms his dreadful physical and emotional deterioration. The British authorities, with their usual hypocrisy, keep Julian Assange in these conditions in obedience to the demands of the Yankee government because Julian Assange published the truth of US government crimes in its wars against Iraq and Afghanistan.

Until now, Julian Assange has avoided the fatal despair that cost Gary Webb his life. But the intention of the Western authorities has been to torture Julian Assange physically and psychologically in order to destroy him as a person. Even so, despite its extreme cruelty, the case of Julian Assange is merely one more in the endless catalogue of crimes committed by the Western powers and their governments. The special importance of the Julian Assange case lies in how it brings together imperial terrorism with the fierce information and communication repression that allows criminal political leaders in North America and Europe to enjoy absolute impunity, for the moment anyway. The hope of the majority of the world is that, sooner rather than later, that impunity will finally end.

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