

## How to Make Sense of Foreign Protests, Conflicts and Uprisings

By Caitlin Johnstone, American Herald Tribune, 29 August 2019

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation, our government-funded media outlet, has published an article titled “[Australian expat living in Hong Kong throws off business suit to join protest movement](#)”. The entire story is in the headline: some random guy, who ABC keeps anonymous but for the name “Daniel”, has joined the protests in Hong Kong. That’s it. That’s the whole entire bombshell newsworthy news story.

“In Australia we have proper democracy but in Hong Kong, democracy is being slowly eroded away and I’ll try to do whatever I can to try and help the cause,” the anonymous guy told ABC.

This sort of enthusiastic empty non-story cheerleading is typical for western media coverage of the Hong Kong protests so far, while these same media outlets consistently ignore or downplay protests against the government of France, Israel, Honduras, India, Indonesia and any other region that happens to fall within the US-centralized power alliance. It’s an amazingly reliable pattern: the entire western political/media class finds protests and uprisings endlessly fascinating when they are in opposition to governments which haven’t yet been absorbed into the imperial blob like China, Russia, Iran, Venezuela, Syria, pre-collapse Libya, or then-Moscow-aligned Ukraine, but any protests or uprisings within that empire are ignored at best or demonized at worst.

If dissidents in the United States began donning yellow vests and holding aggressive demonstrations in the current media environment, you could safely bet your bottom dollar that they would be ignored for as long as possible and then smeared as fascists, antisemites and/or Russian pawns thereafter. This would happen with absolute certainty.

This very reliable trend in the western media is very interesting, because it also happens to be the known position of the US State Department.

In 2017 [a memo was leaked to Politico](#) in which the sniveling [John Bolton lackey](#) Brian Hook explained to DC neophyte Rex Tillerson how to perform his job as Secretary of State with regard to human rights violations. Hook explained that the US government must downplay and ignore the human rights violations of US allies like Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the Philippines while aggressively targeting unabsorbed governments like China, Russia, Iran and North Korea for any allegations of human rights violations on their part.

“In the case of US allies such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the Philippines, the Administration is fully justified in emphasizing good relations for a variety of important reasons, including counter-terrorism, and in honestly facing up to the difficult tradeoffs with regard to human rights,” Hook explained in the memo.

“One useful guideline for a realistic and successful foreign policy is that allies should be treated differently — and better — than adversaries,” Hook wrote. “Otherwise, we end up with more adversaries, and fewer allies. The classic dilemma of balancing ideals and interests is with regard to America’s allies. In relation to our competitors, there is far less of a dilemma.

We do not look to bolster America's adversaries overseas; we look to pressure, compete with, and outmaneuver them. For this reason, we should consider human rights as an important issue in regard to US relations with China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran."

This State Department memo is really all you need to understand what's going on whenever there's any kind of uprising or conflict in a foreign nation. Hell, it's almost all you need to understand the dynamics of empire in general. And, combined with the consistent pattern we've seen in coverage of protests and uprisings against empire-absorbed governments versus unabsorbed ones, it certainly tells you all you need to know about the state of the western media.

In theory the US Department of State was meant to serve as a counterpart to what was then called the Department of War (later falsely re-titled the "Department of Defense"). In theory, the State Department was meant to specialize in peace and diplomacy in the same way the War Department specialized in war. In practice the warmongers just got two war departments.

Understand this one basic concept and you can understand all the hot topic foreign policy issues of any given day: there is an alliance of nations, centralized around US military and economic power, which effectively functions as a single empire. This empire works tirelessly to either absorb unabsorbed governments into its blob, or at least to undermine and marginalize them so they can't impede the empire's growth. The goal of the empire is total global domination without causing a nuclear war and without the public noticing that they're living in an empire. In this sense it's essentially a silent, slow-motion third world war.

I see some of my readers voicing confusion about the protests in Hong Kong, but if you understand the basic dynamic I just described you'll see that this is really no different from the protests and uprisings we've seen in Venezuela, Iran, Syria, Libya and Ukraine: the western political/media class are backing an uprising which benefits the imperial blob and undermines an unabsorbed government. This doesn't mean that the protesters don't have grievances or that none of those grievances are legitimate, it just means that you're being told to cheerlead for an agenda by empire narrative managers solely because your doing so benefits that empire.

So don't. Refuse to be a pro bono CIA propagandist. This doesn't mean you need to oppose the protesters in Hong Kong, Venezuela or anywhere else, it just means that the only people who benefit from westerners cheerleading a CIA-approved uprising against an unabsorbed government are your rulers, who work endlessly to manufacture support for pro-empire agendas.

People who don't get this sometimes tell me that we should "support" the protesters in a given unabsorbed region, but they're always very reluctant to say what they mean by "support". Do they mean simply joining the western mass media in uncritically cheerleading for an uprising which benefits western power structures? Do they mean send them money? Weapons? An emotional thumbs-up? Prayers? Getting someone to say what they mean when they say we should "support" the Hong Kong protesters or whomever is like pulling teeth, because it would bring up a lot of cognitive dissonance to actually turn and examine what's behind the impulse they're following: narrative management. They're promoting pro-empire narrative management, and nothing more. And they're doing this because the empire narrative managers trained them to.

“Centrist” empire loyalists tend to ignore the protests in places like France while amplifying and cheerleading the protests in places like Hong Kong. Right-wing empire loyalists sometimes do it a little differently, actively conflating the Yellow Vests protests with protests in places like Hong Kong despite the very different forces that are at play in those two situations. But in both cases they’re effectively mirroring the same State Department posture that Brian Hook tried to educate into Rex Tillerson in 2017.

Don’t subject yourself to such indignities. If the political/media class is going to propagandize the masses into supporting the advancement of the agendas of the empire, at least make them do it without your help.