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## Washington's Quiet Proxy War Against Vietnam. Part of Greater Regional Bid for US Hegemony

By Tony Cartalucci

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*Washington's meddling across Asia has grabbed headlines recently in Hong Kong where US National Endowment for Democracy (NED) funded opposition leaders attempted to trigger a "color revolution" targeting the government of Beijing and Hong Kong's local administrators. Its spectacular failure was owed to the almost immediate exposure of the protesters as foreign-backed proxies serving foreign interests.*

Additionally, political chaos has plagued Thailand amid a half-year struggle to oust Wall Street-Washington-backed dictator Thaksin Shinawatra and his subversive, well-funded proxy political front and various faux-rights advocates all extensively funded by Washington. Malaysia has likewise fought carbon-copies of US-backed opposition fronts in Hong Kong and Thailand, with its own battle against "Berish" led by Wall Street and Washington's Anwar Ibrahim.

Popular support, despite reports by the Western media, in each respective country, has been exposed as extremely small. In Thailand, for instance, even at the height of Shinawatra's bid to seize back power in 2010, his "red shirt" movement represented a paltry 7% of Thailand's 70 million citizens – a minority that has only shrunk since then.

In Myanmar, US-British creation, Aung San Suu Kyi has also expended her credibility and illusion of popular support. Her bid to work her way into Myanmar's political order has left even her own supporters disillusioned – not mentioning her support of Myanmar's brutal and infinitely racist, “saffron monks” who regularly lead machete wielding mobs amid riots of mass murder against Rohingya refugees.

However, US meddling is not limited to these countries. Indeed, the familiar template of “pro-democracy” fronts backed by NED and the Western media can be seen manifesting itself, if to a lesser degree, across the under-reported political landscape of Vietnam.

In a rare episode, US meddling has broken the surface recently with complaints across NED's network of faux human rights advocates and the Western media over the arrest of Nguyen Dinh Ngoc, described by the Associated Press in their article, “Nguyen Dinh Ngoc, Blogger, Detained In Vietnam,” only as a “blogger.” AP would report:

Blogger Nguyen Dinh Ngoc, 48, was taken into custody and his house was searched in the southern commercial hub of Ho Chi Minh City on Saturday. The Ministry of Public Security said in a statement that police were investigating and will deal with Ngoc in accordance with the law, but did not elaborate.

Over the past month, police in Ho Chi Minh City detained two other bloggers for alleged anti-government postings.

Anti-government postings alone are certainly no reason to lock up a “blogger.” However, NED would reveal in its own hand-wringing over the detainment of various “bloggers” in Vietnam that many are recipients of NED funding and support – meaning they are not simply critics of the Vietnamese government, but rather foreign-backed agents of sedition making their subsequent detainment justified.

In 2013, NED would also decry the detainment of “bloggers” in Vietnam. In a post titled, “Democracy blogger arrested in Vietnam,” NED would claim:

In a letter to the Prime Minister of Vietnam, the National Endowment for Democracy has expressed its deep concern over the Dec. 27 arrest of prominent human rights lawyer and blogger Lê Quốc Quân in Vietnam.

Quân, who was a Reagan-Fascell Democracy Fellow (2006-2007) at NED in Washington, DC, has written extensively on human rights abuses in Vietnam and has been detained by authorities multiple times on account of his pro-democracy views.

NED shamelessly admits the arrested blogger was working on their behalf and with their extensive support. NED is behind nearly every “human rights” advocate in Vietnam opposing the government – with many reporting diligently on NED's activities in the country – though never posting publicly their financial and political ties to Washington. For example, “Vietnam Human Rights Defenders” who recently condemned the above reported detainment of Nguyen Dinh Ngoc, regularly praises and reports on NED and USAID programs, but nowhere in its “about us”

section does it disclose any of its funding, let alone its ties to NED and USAID itself. There is, however, an extensive “links” list leading off to NED and every other imaginable rights advocacy front created by Wall Street and Washington behind which their agenda is peddled.

In one article, it praises Dr. Cu Huy Ha Vu, a literal “fellow” at the National Endowment for Democracy. In an article by “Vietnam Human Rights Defenders,” Vu is reported to claim pressure from the US is essential for the “peaceful democratization of Vietnam.” Pressure, no doubt, including armies of NED-funded bloggers, opposition fronts, and street demonstrations as seen in Thailand, Malaysia, and more recently in Hong Kong.

### **US Meddling in Vietnam Amid Greater Regional Bid for Hegemony**

NED’s official page describing its support for groups in Vietnam is particularly ambiguous – a pattern seen when NED refuses to admit association with any particular nation’s most prominent trouble-makers – as seen in Hong Kong recently. Under a subheading titled, “Human Rights,” NED states:

To build the expertise and skills of Vietnamese civil society organizations and activists in their efforts to support and defend human rights. The project will train lawyers and other activists on human rights advocacy, project management, and community organizing as well as link them to their counterparts in other ASEAN countries in an effort to strengthen an emerging grassroots civil society movement in Vietnam.

Linking them with their “counterparts in other ASEAN countries” indeed – because NED’s bid to overturn the political order in Vietnam is linked directly to Wall Street and Washington’s bid to turn all of Southeast Asia into a unified proxy front to wield against China. Identical campaigns of political subversion in Thailand, Malaysia, and Myanmar to install into power Thaksin Shinawatra, Anwar Ibrahim, and Aung San Suu Kyi respectively, would yield a regional bloc led by a collection of client states and puppet dictators propped up by and in the service of the West.

With corporate-financier hegemony ensured via economic “free trade” agreements like the unpalatable ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), China would not only be politically isolated from Southeast Asia, but economically as well. As with NATO in Europe, the US plans to create an ASEAN military alliance it itself leads, meaning in addition to political and economic isolation, Beijing will be militarily encircled as well.

### **Meddling in Vietnam Part of Washington’s Long-War Against China**



As early as the Vietnam War, with the so-called “Pentagon Papers” released in 1969, it was revealed that the conflict was simply one part of a greater strategy aimed at containing and controlling China.

Three important quotes from these papers reveal this strategy. It states first that:

“...the February decision to bomb North Vietnam and the July approval of Phase I deployments make sense only if they are in support of a long-run United States policy to contain China.”

It also claims:

“China—like Germany in 1917, like Germany in the West and Japan in the East in the late 30’s, and like the USSR in 1947—looms as a major power threatening to undercut our importance and effectiveness in the world and, more remotely but more menacingly, to organize all of Asia against us.”

Finally, it outlines the immense regional theater the US was engaged in against China at the time by stating:

“there are three fronts to a long-run effort to contain China (realizing that the USSR “contains” China on the north and northwest): (a) the Japan-Korea front; (b) the India-Pakistan front; and (c) the Southeast Asia front.”

While the US would ultimately lose the Vietnam War and any chance of using the Vietnamese as a proxy force against Beijing, the long war against Beijing would continue elsewhere.

This containment strategy would be updated and detailed in the 2006 Strategic Studies Institute report “String of Pearls: Meeting the Challenge of China’s Rising Power across the Asian Littoral” where it outlines China’s efforts to secure its oil lifeline from the Middle East to its shores in the South China Sea as well as means by which the US can maintain American hegemony throughout the Indian and Pacific Ocean. The premise is that, should Western foreign policy fail to entice China into participating in Wall Street and London’s “international system” as responsible stakeholders, an increasingly confrontational posture must be taken to contain the rising nation.

This proxy war has manifested itself in the form of the so-called “Arab Spring” where Chinese interests have suffered in nations like Libya that have been reduced to chaos by US-backed subversion and even direct military intervention. Sudan also serves as a proxy battleground where the West is using chaos to push Chinese interests off the continent of Africa.

With continued US meddling in Vietnam more recently, it can be seen that America’s strategy of encirclement and containment is still very much in play. Vietnam has once again, if even only subtly, become a proxy battleground between Washington and Beijing.

The Vietnamese, historically fiercely independent, may attempt to balance themselves between Beijing’s regional rise and Washington’s plans for a united ASEAN front against that rise. And while the US openly admits it is trying to link its various subversive fronts together across ASEAN, the Vietnamese government and its counterparts in Malaysia, Thailand, and Myanmar would be wise to link their efforts to confound this hegemonic endeavor.