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CIA Operatives and the Targeted Assassination of Foreign Leaders

By Stephen Lendman

July 06, 2013

No one's safe from America's long arm. From inception, CIA operatives developed skills to kill. Fidel Castro survived hundreds of assassination attempts. He knows best how Washington operates.

Other leaders weren't as lucky.

In April 1994, CIA surface-to-air missiles killed Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana and Burundi President Cyprien Ntaryamira.



Downing their plane put Paul Kagame in power. He became Washington's man in Rwanda. Ethnic slaughter continued what began earlier. It's longstanding US policy. It advances America's imperium.

Mobutu replaced Lumumba in Congo. Pinochet followed Allende in Chile. Saddam's gone. So is Gaddafi. William Blum documented 50 CIA foreign leader assassination attempts. Half or more times were successful. Chavez perhaps was the latest.

He succumbed to cancer. For decades, America experimented with cancer causing substances. Expert technologies exist.

Assassination this and many other ways claimed lives of foreign leaders. Washington eliminated ones it wanted removed. Sometimes it was by unexplained plane crashes. Every time was state-sponsored murder.

Evo Morales had just cause to worry. EU allies yielded to US pressure. They obstructed his safe passage home from Moscow. He made an emergency landing. He had to.



He was running out of fuel. He might have crash landed. He could have died. Perhaps a CIA missile's planned next time. Chavez knew Washington wanted him dead. Perhaps his final thought was they succeeded.

John Pilger called forcing down Morales' plane "an act of air piracy and state terrorism." It reflects flagrant lawlessness. "(G)angsterism" rules the world, said Pilger. Cowards and hypocrites "dare not speak its name."

Bolivia formally complained to UN authorities. It cited EU aggression. It claimed a high altitude kidnapping. Washington was largely silent.

No explanation worth hearing was forthcoming. State Department spokesperson Jennifer Psaki said:

"We have been in contact with a range of countries that had a chance of having Snowden land or travel through their country but I am not going to outline what those countries were or when (these contacts) happened."

Obama bears full responsibility. He pressured EU nations to comply. Another article said they operate like US colonies. They do so disgracefully in the process.

On July 3, [Bolivia Rising](#) headlined “Faced with US aggression against Bolivian President Evo Morales, UNASUR and ALBA hold emergency meetings,” saying:

France, Spain, Italy and Portugal revoked airspace passage rights.

Morales’ plane was originally routed Moscow – Lisbon. It was done so for refueling. Hours before takeoff, Portugal revoked landing rights.

An alternate route was Moscow – Canary Islands for refueling. Doing so required overflying France and Spain.

While airborne, both countries denied use of their airspace. So did Italy. An emergency Vienna landing followed.

Austrian authorities demanded permission to search Morales’ plane. Doing so violates Vienna Convention international law. It’s fundamental. It’s inviolable. It protects diplomatic immunity.

Morales refused to comply. “I am not a delinquent,” he said. “I am a president and I learned to know and respect international law. It seems that other presidents don’t do so.”

In Vienna, he added:

“We won’t be threatened. We are a small country but with dignity.”

“I tell the European countries, we are not in times of colonization and we won’t be intimidated. This is the time of the peoples.”

Bolivian Vice President Garcia Linera added:

“(W)e saw the most shameful page of the political history of some European countries, not only because they violated international agreements but also because they have violated their own dignity as countries.”

It’s “verified that the colonies are not in America and Africa. Rather sadly, (they’re) in Europe.”

Bolivia’s UN envoy Sacha Llorenti blamed Washington. Orders came from the White House, she suggested.

“By no means should a diplomatic plane with the president aboard be diverted from its route and forced to land in another country.”

On Tuesday, angry peaceful protesters gathered outside France’s La Paz embassy.

Latin American leaders cried foul. Shakespeare explained best. They “doth protest too much, methinks.”

Public anger conceals business as usual. Affairs of state matter most. Bristling comments make good headlines.

Venezuelan Foreign Minister Elias Jaua called it “an abuse to have put Evo Morales’ life in danger.”

“We call on all countries, above all those in Latin America and the Caribbean...to make declarations regarding this abuse.”

“The least important thing is if Snowden was on board or not. We’re talking about a presidential plane, with special licenses”

“Portugal and France should take responsibility (for their actions). They’re a “real violation of all the norms of...immunity of a president of a republic and of the sovereignty of countries and of official flights.”

Venezuela “holds the United States government, and all the governments who have denied flight permission to the presidential plane of brother president Evo Morales accountable, for the life of president Evo Morales, for his dignity as president.”

Snowden faces an “empire which tries to control the world.”

Argentinian President Christina Kirchner called what happened “madness.”

The [Havana Times](#) headlined “Cuba Denounces Affront to Evo Morales.” It published a Ministry of Foreign Affairs Statement. It said in part:

Refusal to grant Morales overflight and landing rights “constitutes an inadmissible, unfounded and arbitrary act, an offense to all of Latin America and the Caribbean.”

It “cannot be tolerated for any reason whatsoever, an act which damages all of Our America and deserves international repudiation.”

“Cuba calls on the international community to mobilize against these violations of international law and human rights.”

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro twittered solidarity with Morales, saying:

“(F)rom Venezuela we will respond to this dangerous, disproportionate and unacceptable aggression.”

“I am in contact with Evo. They have violated all the international immunities that protect heads of state, because of the imperial obsession.”

Ecuador’s Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino said “(w)e will not allow this affront against a Latin American leader.”

Organization of American States (OAS) secretary general Jose Miguel Insulza expressed “profound displeasure.Nothing justifies an action as disrespectful to the highest authority of a country.”

OAS operates out of Washington. Its members include 35 countries. Their deference to America is longstanding. They largely serve capital, not populist interests. They value multilateral trade relations.

They’re beholden to Washington’s economic leverage. It’s eroding. It hasn’t ended. It remains significant. It’s losing influence. Imperial dominance fades slowly.

It’s shelf life has a long way to go. Its markets are too valued to lose. Its capital has divine rights, but less so. Its military might’s too formidable to ignore.

Latin leaders rail about interventionist America. They recall earlier dark times. Despots replaced democrats. Territories were annexed. Nations became colonies.

Latin America no longer is Washington's back yard. One day perhaps it'll be entirely free. Maybe later. Not now. Nations able to bully others to comply have power. Changing things take unity to resist.

Breaking free matters. Countries exerting sovereign rights over subservience inspire others. Fidel did and survived. Raul's 82.

Chavez did. He's gone. Maduro, Morales, Correa, Cuba's next generation, and others matter. It's their job to free Latin America from Washington's scourge.

Doing so involves more than rhetorical posturing. It takes fortitude. It requires supporting right over wrong. It takes action, not words. Hopefully enough regional leaders are up to the challenge.