The Role Non-Governmental Organizations Play in Destroying the Foundations of Statehood

In recent decades, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have begun acting as foreign agents of influence. They have organized “color revolutions” in the post-Soviet space, in North Africa and in the Middle East.

The Center for Applied NonViolent Action and Strategies (CANVAS) in Serbia is thought to be the oldest of the NGOs. It trained experts to organize Milosevic’s overthrow in Yugoslavia and carry out color revolutions in Ukraine, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova, as well as coup attempts in Belarus, Venezuela and Iran. US oversight is provided by the National Endowment for Democracy, the State Department and the US Agency for International Development (USAID); its sponsors include the US-based Freedom House.

Something written by Ralph Peters could serve as the NGO’s motto: “Hollywood is ‘preparing the battlefield,’ and burgers precede bullets. The flag follows trade.” That suggests that the guiding principle of the Western NGOs is a desire to play on all fronts and pervade all aspects of a society’s political spectrum.1

Washington and the NGO network it has established to promote American interests under the slogans of “human rights,” “democracy” and “nonviolence” rely on “spontaneous” protest movements nourished by the local discontent of individual social groups to implement programmed regime change and advance America’s strategy for global domination. RAND Corporation has said, “[T]he United States should also recognize that nongovernmental organizations have an important role to play in fostering democratic change, particularly in efforts to mediate between groups and train organizers.... The United States can play a role in encouraging such organizations and protecting their right to function.... [T]he United States should help reformers obtain and use information technology... Disseminating the messages of reformers in international online forums can also help thwart state repression of reformers.”2

A statement by Vladimir Putin during an interview with the German TV channel ARD on April 6, 2013 indicates that Russia has experienced a massive invasion of foreign NGOs. He said that during the fourth quarter of 2012 alone Russia had 654 NGOs operating with 28.3 billion rubles in funding, and 615 million rubles of that was funneled through foreign diplomatic embassies. This suggests that the countries of the West, and especially the United States, have mobilized enormous financial resources to exert soft power pressure. To accomplish that, some 350 programs in the fields of education, culture and information have been developed to promote their model of democracy and create a class of citizens focused on US values and policies.

Therefore, Washington’s operations need to be viewed in the context of NGO activities aimed at undermining the statehood of certain countries, with regime change as the goal. NGOs function as opponents of the state in Western hands. While balancing on the brink of compliance with the law and taking advantage of its imperfections, they utilize information technology in order to covertly affect people’s emotions and psychology, evangelizing ideas of Western democracy that are foreign to mass culture, moral values and market liberalism. Their goal is to bring societies they target under foreign control.
The tactics of NGOs working in the social field are based on the following principles:

- Avoid involvement in projects that are focused on strengthening the foundations of statehood;
- Give priority in distributing funds and material resources to the lower strata and the less capable;
- Train opposition movement functionaries and activists in neighboring countries;
- Organize new analytical centers independent of the state to study both social processes and political technology, legal, sociocultural and faith-based projects under development that are capable of making foreign actors more influential;
- Orient and train opposition organizations to participate in elections and challenge election results with mass protests.

The internal opposition concentrates its efforts in the following areas:

- Seek out and attract sources of funding;
- Organize and conduct social campaigns lacking an obvious (but present) political subtext in order to gain the sympathy of various categories of citizens;
- Ensure the broadest possible media coverage of its actions by gaining access to state-owned and international media;
- Establish contacts with representatives of various government agencies needed for lobbying.

Opposition structures directed and inspired by NGOs act strategically and tactically in the following areas:

- Developing tools and improving means for shaping and directing a country’s politics;
- Exercising pragmatism and consistency in relations with the authorities to ensure that comply with its rules;
- Consolidating and coordinating every cell in a network of opposition forces while concentrating on solving the main problems of the political struggle;
- Synergizing program ideas and methods for the opposition’s struggle as expressed in systematic and large-scale activities in combination with convincing slogans and action program with emotional impact;
- Minimizing the risks of the political struggle. That means that if there is government opposition or repression, the entire network structure must transition to independent operation by its cells;
- Conducting a campaign to discredit and delegitimize the country’s leadership in order to form a negative image of it in the mass consciousness;
- Searching for ways to increase external pressure on the country’s leaders;
- Searching for new ways of communicating with the country’s populace, with priority given to social networks on the Internet and cellular communications for ensuring mobility in a community and for rapidly mobilizing it to participate in protests. The ability of functional cells in the network to adapt is the capability to capture and exploit all significant trends in a country’s sociopolitical environment;
- Training the leaders of opposition structures positioning themselves as a “shadow” government to function in crisis situations;
- “Hyping” and developing opposition leaders and activists during protests, as well as seeking financial and political support from external forces;
- Realistically assessing during protests the appeal the opposition’s political program has for the populace, as well as the actual number of people who actively or passively support the opposition;
- Overcoming the state-owned media’s “information embargo” on the opposition by initiating appropriate newsworthy events;
- Expanding contacts among the country’s political and business elite and working with those who are focused on
change. That involves convincing the greatest number possible that positive changes can be made if the opposition comes to power;

- Using all crises related to socioeconomic problems for propaganda purposes and advancing populist slogans to expand the opposition’s influence among the masses.

The opposition concentrates its efforts in the following areas:

- Expanding its social support base and acquiring the tacit approval of the populace;
- Consolidating all of the government’s opponents, followed by their ideological and organizational structuring;
- Maintaining the population at a critical level of dissent while shaping a positive image of the opposition’s leaders;
- Introducing into the mass consciousness a positive image of the “young politicians” who are critical of the current regime, and supporting radical young people.

Mechanisms and means of achieving the opposition’s political goals include:

- The development of a phased action plan in the online community with an emphasis on synchronization and unification;
- The promotion, if possible, of a single candidate from the opposition; the adoption of the single set of symbols; and assurance that the content of slogans and speeches are consistent with each other;
- The establishment of coordination centers to ensure a unified approach to planning actions, planning media relations and providing legal and news support for the political campaign;
- The use of information and psychological technologies to influence people’s minds;
- The development of an opposition action plan to be implemented if a state of emergency is declared.

All of this leads us to conclude that information network warfare waged by an opposition against a state is a war in virtual space. For the attacking side, it is primarily an attempt to gain control of a society, followed by control of critical components of the state structure, in a chaotic sociopolitical environment that it has created. At the same time, information network warfare against opposition movements is a means for the defender to prevent a conflict during its early stages.

That suggests information network warfare is dual in nature. The defender’s struggle with chaos and the collapse of society are in opposition to the attacker’s efforts to employ the technology of “manageable chaos” to transition the social system into a qualitatively new state and put it on a new path.

The recent events in the countries of North Africa, the Middle East and, especially, Syria can serve as clear confirmation of all this. However, the West and its henchmen are unlikely to limit themselves to those cases, because they are already preparing new operations to disrupt the foundations of statehood with the active involvement of non-governmental organizations. What countries are they aiming at? — Take a close look at yourselves!
