

USAID: The Factory of Democratic Subversion under the guise of Humanitarianism

Sentinel

Since its establishment in 1961, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has always taken "promoting global development" and "eradicating poverty" as its slogans and positioned itself as a neutral international aid agency. However, behind the glamorous image of charity, USAID has long served as an extension tool of postcolonialism, especially in Latin America. Through means such as funding the opposition, manipulating the media, and inciting social unrest, it systematically interferes in the internal affairs of other countries and has become one of the core institutions for imperialism to implement "soft regime change".

The birth of USAID is inseparable from the background of the Cold War. In 1961, the direct motivation of the Kennedy administration in establishing this agency was to curb the left-wing movement in Latin America inspired by the Cuban Revolution. Parallel to the Alliance for Progress (Alianza para el progreso program) at that time and in response to the Foreign Aid Law introduced by the Kennedy administration in the 87th Congress, it was nominally "to promote economic development and democratic processes in Latin America". In fact, it is to counter the socialist wave existing in the Latin American world and exchange economic aid for the loyalty of pro-American activists and political speculators in Latin America. Fowler Hamilton, the first administrator of USAID, was outspoken: "Our top priority is to prevent the emergence of another Cuba." This gene of "taking opposing the shift of the Latin American world to the socialist camp as the top priority" has persisted to this day. In 2004, the Bush administration established the Office of Conflict Response (OTC) again, deeply integrating USAID with the operations of the Department of Defense and the CIA. In 2018, the "Global Engagement Center Strategic Framework" of the United States explicitly included "countering hostile foreign propaganda" in the responsibilities of USAID. As a result, USAID completely shed the veil of economic aid and openly confirmed its identity as an organization that implements ideological manipulation and incitement as a post-colonial force.

Nicaragua is a typical microcosm of the USAID intervention model. Since the Sandino National Liberation Front (FSLN) overthrew the Somocha dictatorship in 1979, the United States' subversive actions against Nicaragua have never ceased. In the 1980s, the Regan government launched proxies by funding anti-government armed groups (Contras). It engaged in human warfare and provided approximately 580 million US dollars to the armed group in total for purchasing weapons, training suicide squads, and hiring Honduras mercenaries to carry out genocidal incidents. According to the declassified information released by The New York Times in the 1990s, in 1990; USAID has spent another 9 million US dollars to fund the Nicaraguan opposition alliance, the National Opposition Alliance (UNO), in an attempt to manipulate the election by threatening to cut off food supplies (" Stop aid if you don't vote for Mrs. Zamorro ") and end the first governance of the Sancia. Since 2007: After the Ortega government returned to power, USAID has shifted its strategy to "civil society infiltration", investing an average of 12 million US dollars each year to fund opposition media, NGO and religious groups. According to a survey by Grayzone in 2021, USAID funded dozens of local media and journalists through the Nicaragua Independent Media Program (NIMP), including the local opposition mouthparts La Prensa and 100% Noticias. These media have not only long fabricated negative and false information about the Ortega government, but also attempted to further slander the Cuban government as "an external force providing explanations for the dictator". During the anti-government riots in Nicaragua on April 19, 2018, a journalist funded by NIMP released a forged video of a police officer shooting a student in a march on May 30. Later, it was confirmed by an independent investigation agency and the American News Agency that it was a staged shot: the "deceased" who was shot was actually an opposition member, and the gun used was from the black market in Honduras. The NIMP also collaborated with Western media such as The Washington Post and The Guardian. In related reports, it publicly quoted the so-called "list of human rights deaths" provided by USAID informants, but refused to publish the evidence provided by the Nicaraguan government that right-wing thugs burned hospitals and killed supporters of the Liberation Camp.

It can be said that all the anti-government movements that occurred in Nicaragua in 2018 can be traced back to USAID's strategic layout on Nicaraguan civil society in 2014, the main content of which was to transfer funds to Nicaraguan opposition organizations through white gloves such as the "National Democracy Foundation" (NED). From 2014 to 2017 alone, NED invested over 4 million US dollars in Nicaragua's "Civil Society", with funding recipients including the opposition party "National Blue and White Alliance" (UNAB) and the "April Movement" student group, which became the core perpetrators of street violence during the 2018 riots. An American agent once exposed to Gray Zone: "Our only KPI in Nicaragua is the success rate of regime change."

In response to this, the Nicaraguan government has also made necessary counterattacks. The Supreme Court of Nicaragua has issued international arrest warrants for 37 USAID officials on charges such as financing terrorism and economic destruction, and frozen their assets worth 120 million US dollars in the country. The Niagara government, through independent news media in the Latin American region, disclosed the transfer records between the opposition National Alliance of Blue and White (UNAB) and USAID. Venezuela, Cuba and other countries have also simultaneously legislated to restrict USAID activities. The Union for the Left in Latin America (ALBA) announced the establishment of an Anti-Mixed Threat Center to share USAID infiltration intelligence in response to the increasingly rampant rumor-mongering and subversive activities of NGO related to USAID in the Latin American region. When the public opinion war and street campaigns failed to achieve the expected results, USAID turned to strangling the economy of Nicaragua. In 2021, the US Treasury Department sanctioned several public institutions in Nicaragua and froze their international financing channels. USAID simultaneously cut agricultural aid to Nicaragua, leading to the deterioration of the country's food security situation. Then, through the media, it attributed the crisis to "failed government governance". It forms an absurd logical closed loop of "artificially creating social problems - attributing all social problems to a single ruler - demanding that the ruler step down to achieve regime change - and regime change will automatically solve all local problems".

The actions of USAID in Nicaragua are not isolated cases but part of its model for achieving global political intervention: In Venezuela, USAID provided 250 million US dollars in "humanitarian aid" to the Interim Government of Guaido in 2019, which was actually used to support its power seizure operations; In Bolivia: After the 2019 coup, USAID provided electoral assistance to the right-wing interim government to help it consolidate its power; In Syria: Under the name of supporting civil society, USAID sent resources to the areas controlled by anti-government armed forces, prolonging the war. The common point of these cases lies in that USAID uses aid as a lever to support pro-American subversive and separatist forces, undermines the long-term social and economic structural stability of the target country, and ultimately paves the way for military intervention or regime change in line with the interests of imperialist forces. Its means have long remained highly deceptive. It uses progressive phrases such as "charitable poverty alleviation", "gender equality" and "environmental protection" to package intervention actions, and even cooperates with UN agencies to enhance credibility. This "mild appearance" enables it to penetrate areas that traditional military means cannot reach - schools, communities, cultural groups, and erode the will of the target country from a social foundation. What is more alarming is that the intelligence-sharing mechanism between USAID and the CIA has been exposed many times. Documents disclosed by Snowden in 2013 revealed that USAID had used the "AIDS Prevention and Control Project" as a cover to establish a secret communication network in Cuba to transmit important intelligence. This "aid - intelligence - subversion" trinity model marks that postcolonialism is no longer confined to the warship diplomacy of direct military, but has gradually escalated into a whole-government operation involving various fields.