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Commentator accuses West of waging soft war against Iran

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Text of commentary by Mahsa Mahpishanyan headlined "America comes to war against Iran armed with the 'fourth power'" published by Iranian newspaper Javan on 1 March

"Think-tanks," which in Persian are also referred to by other names such as "think organizations," "research institutes," "think institutions," etc... are described in the US as "universities without students." The latter uses experts, former and present government officials and also specialists of various issues to study domestic and foreign issues of their country. They also influence general policy. The most influential of these institutions, in a way, acts as a shadow government and a source for providing the individuals needed by future governments. Their operational method is that former US government officials enter these institutions while officials of the new governments leave. These institutions also provide the experts required by the media to prepare reports concerning everyday events and to submit testimonies to various Congress committees.

These think-tanks have become so well established in the US that, along with the media, they are called the government's fourth branch; a branch on the same level as the other branches (legislative, executive and judiciary) that form the structure of the US government. That is why the aforementioned institutions in the US have turned into the main figures that depict the political outlook of the White House. The policy makers in the Congress, the White House, the Pentagon and even federal administrative officials often consult them before making any decisions. The importance of these think-tanks becomes even more evident when their role in preparing US solutions to soft and hard confrontations with our country is reviewed. On the whole, from the beginning until now, these think-tanks have established four mega approaches regarding Iran and the majority of them have entered the field of policy making regarding the Islamic Republic at various junctures over the past 32 years. These four main approaches are as follows:

The compromise approach: persuading Iran to cooperate

The war approach: Iran's destruction

The approach of change from within: overthrow of the Islamic Republic regime

The approach of deterrence: threatening Iran

US think-tanks and Iran

Although, from the very beginning of the formation of the Islamic Republic, the West, spearheaded by the US, did not spare any efforts to overthrow the Iranian regime and used all soft and hard leverages against our country. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the victory of the Western ideology against the Communist bloc can be considered as the start of a serious soft warfare on their part and a shift in the direction of the Western thinking institutions towards other areas of concern such as Islam and Iran in particular. At this time, US think-tanks, many of which had been established for the theoretical confrontation with the Soviet Union, considered themselves the winners in the field and tried to pursue the same strategy towards other countries, including Iran. This trend started with the Committee on the Present Danger and the National Endowment for Democracy and quickly spread to other institutions. They also concentrated their research activities on Iran, attracting academic figures and engaging in espionage activities under the cover of sending experts. At the moment, more than 80 US think-tanks and institutions, with a budget of more than 2bn dollars, are engaged in soft war activities against Iran and over the past 18 years, more than 17.7m dollars have been spent specifically to

overthrow the Islamic Republic. In view of this approach by US institutions towards Iran and their activities against our country, the fruits of which they were trying to reap in the June 2009 (Khordad 1388) presidential election, the Islamic Republic of Iran's Ministry of Intelligence submitted a list of 60 Western institutions and announced their activities to be inconsistent with our country's national security and banned any activity with them. The important point is that all the aforementioned institutions support a change in the Islamic Republic of Iran's regime and the only difference lies in their methods.

Operational solutions against Iran

A study of actions by US think-tanks against Iran in various fields will show that their operational solutions to bring about a regime change in the Islamic Republic of Iran are focused on the following axes:

1. The use of distorted theoretical movements

One of the first Western methods that was consequently adopted by their think-tanks against our country with the aim of soft overthrow was the use of distorted theoretical movements among the so-called intellectual class that was present within the structure of the Islamic Republic's regime and could inflict the biggest blow on the regime. Think-tanks are using this method to bring about a transformation from inside the country.

2. Sullyng Iran's nuclear activities

Insistence that our country's peaceful nuclear activities are military, despite the fact that they have always been within the IAEA safeguards framework and the NPT agreement, has been one of the fundamental principles of almost all US institutions in the fight against Iran. Lacking in documented evidence, they are insisting on Iran's intentions and claiming that ultimately our country's aim is to build nuclear weapons. In any case, the study of various issues shows that, in all their reports, there is concern that the Zionist regime's security may be endangered and that a disruption of the balance of power in the region will be detrimental to this regime. In order to deal with Iran's peaceful nuclear programme, they recommend solutions including sanctions and military attacks. Lately, they have been recommending that the West put pressure on Iran in the field of human rights and get concessions in return in the nuclear field. Their method is for the West to insist that human rights are being abused in Iran so that, in return, our country's officials will retreat as far as uranium enrichment is concerned.

3. The use of human rights as a tool

In the past, US institutions have repeatedly used this method to support the opposition and agents of the sedition movement inside the country. Some of the main solutions they use in this respect include issuing repeated statements in support of the seditionists, murderers, drug smugglers and spies; [issuing] invitations to Iranian figures who are the so-called supporters of human rights to make speeches; submitting reports to the UN Human Rights Council and the Western countries' government institutions; putting pressure on governments to pay attention to the issue of human rights in their ties with Iran; and awarding various prizes to domestic seditionists in the name of supporting human rights activists.

4. Character creation

Giving prominence to seditionists and the opposition to the Islamic Republic of Iran's regime, which can take the form of intellectuals, human rights activists, freedom-seekers, theorists etc. is among the other methods used by Western institutions and they often give it widespread propaganda through the media under their control. This method tries to create rivals for the main figures and the domestic leaders from within the society.

5. Provoking ethnic minorities to bring about a break-up of Iran

Provoking ethnic minorities was one of the policies first adopted by the West against our country; so much so that, only three days after the Islamic Revolution's victory on 11 February 1979 (22 Bahman 1357), they initiated the Kordestan commotion and later similar incidents in the Torkaman Sahra and Khuzestan regions, but they were neutralized through Imam Khomeyni's bravery and wisdom. In any case, in recent years, this policy has once again been adopted within the framework of the strategy to confront our country and its execution has been specifically given to the "American Enterprise Institute," which openly publishes books and magazines and organizes meetings in this respect. In one of the recent meetings of this institute entitled "Unknown Iran; another instance for federalism," unfamiliar individuals from various ethnic groups were brought together and the objective behind the meeting was explicitly referred to as "leader creation" for Iran's ethnic groups and how to provoke them into confronting the Islamic Republic of Iran's regime.

6. Launching websites and internet publications

The websites and publications launched by Western institutions in Persian, which prepare reports and interviews and provide solutions to seditionists and the opposition, are of such importance that they have been given colossal budgets in recent years. All these websites are trying to promote a pessimist outlook towards Iran and to create doubt over our country's peaceful nuclear activities. Among these websites, one can refer to:

"Gozar," which belongs to Khaney-e Azadi [house of freedom]

"Tavana," which belongs to the Middle East Freedom Centre

"Panjareh," which belongs to the National Endowment for Democracy

"Rahbord," which belongs to the National Endowment for Democracy

"Washington Prism," which belongs to the Global Security Centre

"Iran Tracker," which belongs to the American Enterprise Institute

"Iran Security Innovation" [Ebtakar-e Amniyat-e Iran], which belongs to the Washington Near East Policy Institute

"Cheragh-e Azadi" [lamp of liberty], which belongs to the Cato Institute

7. Execution of the colourful revolutions plan

With the success of colourful revolutions in the newly independent countries of the former Soviet Union, this prescription was also written for our country and placed on the agenda of the West's think foundations and that of the Soros Institute in particular.

Accordingly, their colleagues inside the country started to translate books related to these kinds of transformations and to set up training classes inside and outside the country, with the participation of colourful revolutions' agents in countries such as Serbia.

In response to these failed attempts, during the first Friday Prayers after the 2009 [Iranian] presidential election, which took place on 19 June 2009 (29 Khordad 1388), the Supreme Leader said: "They thought that Iran is Georgia. Several years ago and according to his own comments, which were published in the media and some publications, a US Zionist capitalist (George Soros) said that I spent 10m dollars. I initiated a velvet revolution in Georgia, took away a government and brought in another government. The stupid people thought that the Islamic Republic of Iran and this great nation are similar to that country. What are you comparing Iran with? Our enemies' problem is that they still do not know the Iranian nation."

8. Supporting those who have escaped

US think-tanks attract journalists and the Iranian opposition under the guise of education and research scholarships where they have been awarded with more than 50 prizes under various pretexts in recent years. This is another method adopted by the US think-tanks in this respect. Once they are part of these institutions, the escapees turn their backs on the beliefs and characteristics that they had formerly maintained, albeit superficially, and transform into a spokesperson for these new beliefs and wishes.

9. Creating, strengthening and using NGOs

Helping to create and strengthen NGOs in Iran is another measure adopted by Western institutions and particularly the Open Society Foundation, which belongs to George Soros, the Jewish billionaire, and they try to eliminate weaknesses in the financial, management, and human resources fields. By launching joint training workshops across Iran and also outside the country, these NGOs tried to acquaint participants with Western theories regarding concepts such as civil society, secularism, social assets, the free market, human rights, civil and democratic freedoms and methods on how to put these outlooks into practice in Iran. In the classes held in Serbia and the UAE, there was also training on how to bring about a colourful revolution in our country by using experiences from velvet revolutions in other countries.

In such circumstances, the most important solution to deal with these measures is undoubtedly the adoption of political,

social and economic initiatives, which can only come about if our policymakers and politicians have access to accurate and correct information. One can say that the first successful step by our country's politicians in this respect would be to increase the capability of domestic research and analysis institutions. Strengthening research institutions in Iran will not only help politicians become acquainted with solutions and plots by Western research institutions, it will also play an important role in the preparation of political, economic and social solutions by the politicians to vaccinate society against new security threats.

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