

American Interference in Foreign Affairs

We've compiled a number of different sources in this document because just one source may not be convincing to an American public steeped in the ideals of U.S. hegemony reported by the MSM as opposed to the practical application of power and associated brutalities.

- **Former CIA Director James Woolsey Admits CIA Interferes In Foreign Elections For A 'Very Good Cause'**
- **Database Tracks History Of U.S. Meddling In Foreign Elections**
- **Noam Chomsky On The Long History Of US Meddling In Foreign Elections**
- **The U.S. is no stranger to interfering in the elections of other countries**
- **America has a long history of meddling in the elections of foreign countries, new research shows**
- **American Military Intervention - A User's Guide, May 2, 1996**
(external link)

Former CIA Director James Woolsey Admits CIA Interferes In Foreign Elections For A 'Very Good Cause'

By [Aaron Kesel](#), February 21, 2018

<https://www.activistpost.com/2018/02/former-cia-director-james-woolsey-admits-cia-interferes-in-foreign-elections-for-a-very-good-cause.html> Former CIA director James Woolsey has admitted the U.S. interferes in foreign elections for a “very good cause.”



In an interview on Fox News, former CIA Director James Woolsey was asked whether the U.S. interferes in other countries' elections, Woolsey responded, “Well, only for a very good cause in the interests of democracy.”

“Oh, probably, but it was for the good of the system in order to avoid communists taking over,” Woolsey told Laura Ingraham on her Fox News show laughing.

According to WikiLeaks, the U.S. government's [own data shows](#) that its deep state in the CIA and the military-industrial complex has meddled in the elections of a whopping 81 foreign governments between 1946 and 2000, [including Russia](#) in the 1990s. That's no laughing matter and frankly worrying.

Perhaps unshockingly those numbers don't even include the [regime change operations](#) the U.S. has conducted and attempted across the world for the past decade which includes but is not limited to Iran, Guatemala, Congo, Dominican Republic, South Vietnam, Brazil, Chile, Syria.

Chillingly, a massive 72 of those were between 1947 and 1989, including 66 covert operations and six overt missions [according](#) to the *Washington Post*.

So enough about CIA coups and regime change, who is James Woolsey the agency's former director?

Woolsey served as CIA director under former President Bill Clinton during 1993 – 1995, in which there was only one known U.S.-helped government coup to have taken place in Somalia in 1993. Although, there is no documented evidence to suggest that Woolsey was behind or had a hand in [Operation Gothic Serpent](#).

However, more notably, years later after his occupation at the CIA, Woolsey was a member of the infamous [Project for the New American Century](#) (PNAC) which called for “*a catastrophic and catalyzing event—like a new Pearl Harbor,*” in its [Rebuilding America's Defenses](#) document. Interestingly, years prior Woolsey was also one of the signatories to the January 26, 1998 letter sent to President Clinton that called for the removal of [Saddam Hussein](#).

Then on September 11th, 2001, Woolsey was one of the first cheerleaders within mere hours, appearing on TV suggesting [Iraqi complicity](#) in the attacks and promoting allegations that Saddam Hussein harbored WMDs (weapons of mass destruction).

That's not all. In 2003, the former CIA director, commented on targeting Arab countries with regime change and being “on the side of the Arab people.” In his speech, he mentioned the need for regime change in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, and Libya. (Woolsey later [blamed](#) the 9-11 attacks on Iran and Iraq in 2015.)

Three of the seven countries ironically and coincidentally were planned invasions whistleblown by U.S. General Wesley Clark who said that “wars were planned almost immediately after 911” by senior officials in the Pentagon.

Despite Woolsey himself not being responsible for regime change during his tenure at the CIA, his antecedents and the agency itself is rife with a history of committing coups and even suggesting domestic false flag attacks against the American people for geopolitical reasons by blaming adversaries like Cuba ([Operation Northwoods](#)), and more recently revealed [Russia](#) to be the bogeyman of the hour as JFK documents detailed.

Then there is CIA agent Miles Copeland, who claims a bloodless coup took place on March 29th in Syria.

The CIA plan called for the use of Husni al-Za'im, former Chief of Staff of the Syrian Army as their man to overthrow then-President Shukri al-Kuwatli.

It isn't just the current Assad government that the CIA has been trying to overthrow, various Syrian presidents throughout history have been targeted as far back as March of 1949 when Syria was under the rule of President Shukri al-Kuwatli.

This coup was subsequently followed by several more coups in the years to come including — Operation Straggle, Operation Wappen and several [assassination plots](#) that eventually led to the rise of Hafez al-Assad being elevated to power in 1971.

The CIA then planned to overthrow Hafez al-Assad, the father of current President Bashar-al Assad. A CIA report from September, 1983 [outlined](#) the U.S. goal of destabilizing Syria and opening a two-front war against the country to put pressure on and overthrow Hafez al-Assad's government.

The 1983 secret report called for a U.S. covert operation to utilize a U.S.-allied Iraq as a base of attack on Syria. "Iraq might supply them with sufficient weapons to launch a civil war," the analysis said.

While another document in 1986 entitled "[Syria: Scenarios of Dramatic Political Change](#)," was authored by the Foreign Subversion and Instability Center, a part of the CIA's [Mission Center for Global Issues](#). Its analysis covered "a number of possible scenarios that could lead to the ouster of President Assad Bashar al-Assad's father, Hafez or other dramatic change in Syria," for an oil pipeline.

This brings us to the current day with the release of Hillary Clinton's emails. Within Hillary's emails from 2001 is the [discussion](#) of plans to overthrow both the Syrian government and Iranian government.

Deep state or the shadow government of elitist interests that has embedded itself within Washington has a vested interest in destabilizing Syria and the Middle East to continue an endless war for the Military Industrial Complex.

WikiLeaks cables years later show the CIA continuing its regime change operations in Syria, under Clinton's State Department in 2011 and the previous George Bush administration when the CIA secretly financed Syrian political opposition groups and related projects including a satellite TV channel Barada TV, [according](#) to diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks. While another [2006 cable](#) reveals the Bush administration tried to award \$5 million in grants to "accelerate the work of reformers in Syria." But no dissidents inside Syria were willing to take the money, fearing it would lead to their arrest or execution for treason.

Thanks to Jeremy Hammond and WikiLeaks releasing the Stratfor files, it's known that British and American special forces were already on the ground [advising](#) anti-Assad militants in the first year of the current Syrian conflict. Which, coincidentally enough, started in 2011 while the CIA was running an ongoing propaganda campaign in Syria.

Even more damning is a leaked U.S. [diplomatic cable](#) from 2006 which shows that the U.S. Embassy in Damascus had discussed plans to destabilize the Assad government by exploiting "potential vulnerabilities" 5 years before the conflict started.

This is just some of the history available that we know about when it comes to more recent examples of CIA meddling in foreign countries' affairs.

Woolsey was on Trump's transition team and [quit abruptly](#) in January of last year after Trump challenged the intelligence community for its determination that Russia meddled in the U.S. election.

Unsurprisingly, the former CIA head has called for regime change in [Syria](#) and [North Korea](#) under Trump, calling both countries a "problem."

If it wasn't clear by now, the former CIA director has made it abundantly transparent that the CIA interferes in foreign elections for a "very good cause." This reporter wonders what the "very good cause" was for recently interfering in France's 2012 election targeting all major French political parties for infiltration by the CIA's human ("HUMINT") and electronic ("SIGINT") spies within just seven months leading up to the country's presidential election, which was also [revealed](#) by WikiLeaks. So that's at least 82 foreign elections where the U.S. has interfered, with the likely potential that the number is much higher because that's only what we publicly know.

Again, that doesn't account for regime change, and drug- and gun-running operations which destabilizes another country.

Woolsey didn't state exactly what the "very good cause" was for interfering in other countries' democratic electoral process, or if it's the same "good cause" of manipulating the American people under Operation Mockingbird and other foreign states for geopolitical conquest done by his predecessors.

I guess we should all sleep well at night resting assured that Neocon James Woolsey is not an adviser for America's current foreign policy. However, there is still war monger H. R. McMaster who wanted/wants to send upwards to [50,000 troops](#) into Syria, which thankfully Trump has denied ... at least for now.

Aaron Kesel writes for Activist Post. Support us at [Patreon](#). Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Steemit](#), and [BitChute](#). Ready for solutions? Subscribe to our premium newsletter [Counter Markets](#).

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Database Tracks History Of U.S. Meddling In Foreign Elections

Heard on [All Things Considered](#), December 22, 2016, 4:28 PM ET

<https://www.npr.org/2016/12/22/506625913/database-tracks-history-of-u-s-meddling-in-foreign-elections>

NPR's Ari Shapiro talks to Carnegie Mellon University researcher Dov Levin about his historical database that tracks U.S. involvement in meddling with foreign elections over the years.

ARI SHAPIRO, HOST:

This is hardly the first time a country has tried to influence the outcome of another country's election. The U.S. has done it, too, by one expert's count, more than 80 times worldwide between

1946 and 2000. That expert is Dov Levin of Carnegie Mellon University. I asked him to tell me about one election where U.S. intervention likely made a difference in the outcome.

DOV LEVIN: One example of that was our intervention in Serbia, Yugoslavia in the 2000 election there. Slobodan Milosevic was running for re-election, and we didn't want him to stay in power there due to his tendency, you know, to disrupts the Balkans and his human rights violations.

So we intervened in various ways for the opposition candidate, Vojislav Kostunica. And we gave funding to the opposition, and we gave them training and campaigning aide. And according to my estimate, that assistance was crucial in enabling the opposition to win.

SHAPIRO: How often are these interventions public versus covert?

LEVIN: Well, it's - basically there's about - one-third of them are public, and two-third of them are covert. In other words, they're not known to the voters in the target before the election.

SHAPIRO: Your count does not include coups, attempts at regime change. It sounds like depending on the definitions, the tally could actually be much higher.

LEVIN: Well, you're right. I don't count and discount covert coup d'etats like the United States did in Iran in 1953 or in Guatemala in 1954. I only took when the United States is trying directly to influence an election for one of the sides. Other types of interventions - I don't discuss. But if we would include those, then of course the number could be larger, yeah.

SHAPIRO: How often do other countries like Russia, for example, try to alter the outcome of elections as compared to the United States?

LEVIN: Well, for my dataset, the United States is the most common user of this technique. Russia or the Soviet Union since 1945 has used it half as much. My estimate has been 36 cases between 1946 to 2000. We know also that the Chinese have used this technique and the Venezuelans when the late Hugo Chavez was still in power in Venezuela and other countries.

SHAPIRO: The U.S. is arguably more vocal than any other country about trying to promote democracy and democratic values around the world. Does this strike you as conflicting with that message?

LEVIN: It depends upon if we are assisting pro-democratic side - could be like in the case of Slobodan Milosevic that I talked about earlier. I believe that that could be helpful for democracy. If it helps less-nicer candidates or parties, then naturally it can be less helpful.

SHAPIRO: Obviously your examination of 20th century attempts to influence elections does not involve hacking because computers were not widespread until recently.

LEVIN: Yeah.

SHAPIRO: In your view, is technology - the way that we saw in the November election - dramatically changing the game? Or is this just the latest evolution of an effort that has always used whatever tools are available?

LEVIN: I would say it's more the latter. I mean the Russians or the Soviets before unfrequently did these type of intervention, just, you know, without the cyber-hacking tools - you know, the old style people meeting in the park in secret giving out and getting information and things like that, so to speak.

SHAPIRO: Dov Levin is with the Institute for Politics and Strategy at Carnegie Mellon University. Thanks for joining us.

LEVIN: Thank you very much.

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Noam Chomsky On The Long History Of US Meddling In Foreign Elections

- by: C.J. Polychroniou

Noam Chomsky

A wide range of politicians and media outlets have described the alleged Russian interference in the last US presidential election (by way of hacking) as representing a direct threat to American democracy and even to national security itself. Of course, the irony behind these concerns about the interference of foreign nations in the domestic political affairs of the United States is that the US has blatantly interfered in the elections of many other nations, with methods that include not only financial support to preferred parties and the circulation of propaganda but also assassinations and overthrows of even democratically elected regimes. Indeed, the US has a long criminal history of meddling into the political affairs of other nations — a history that spans at least a century and, since the end of World War II, extends into all regions of the globe, including western parliamentary polities. This interview with Noam Chomsky reminds us that the United States is no stranger to election interference; in fact, it is an expert in this arena.

C. J. Polychroniou: Noam, the US intelligence agencies have accused Russia of interference in the US presidential election in order to boost Trump's chances, and some leading Democrats have actually gone on record saying that the Kremlin's canny operatives changed the election outcome. What's your reaction to all this talk in Washington and among media pundits about Russian cyber and propaganda efforts to influence the outcome of the presidential election in Donald Trump's favor?

Noam Chomsky: Much of the world must be astonished — if they are not collapsing in laughter — while watching the performances in high places and in media concerning Russian efforts to influence an American election, a familiar US government specialty as far back as we choose to trace the practice. There is, however, merit in the claim that this case is different in character: By US standards, the Russian efforts are so meager as to barely elicit notice.

Let's talk about the long history of US meddling in foreign political affairs, which has always been morally and politically justified as the spread of American style-democracy throughout the world.

The history of US foreign policy, especially after World War II, is pretty much defined by the subversion and overthrow of foreign regimes, including parliamentary regimes, and the resort to violence to destroy popular organizations that might offer the majority of the population an opportunity to enter the political arena.

Following the Second World War, the United States was committed to restoring the traditional conservative order. To achieve this aim, it was necessary to destroy the anti-fascist resistance, often in favor of Nazi and fascist collaborators, to weaken unions and other popular organizations, and to block the threat of radical democracy and social reform, which were live options under the conditions of the time. These policies were pursued worldwide: in Asia, including South Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, Indochina and crucially, Japan; in Europe, including Greece, Italy, France and crucially, Germany; in Latin America, including what the CIA took to be the most severe threats at the time, “radical nationalism” in Guatemala and Bolivia.

Sometimes the task required considerable brutality. In South Korea, about 100,000 people were killed in the late 1940s by security forces installed and directed by the United States. This was before the Korean war, which Jon Halliday and Bruce Cumings describe as “in essence” a phase — marked by massive outside intervention — in “a civil war fought between two domestic forces: a revolutionary nationalist movement, which had its roots in tough anti-colonial struggle, and a conservative movement tied to the status quo, especially to an unequal land system,” restored to power under the US occupation. In Greece in the same years, hundreds of thousands were killed, tortured, imprisoned or expelled in the course of a counterinsurgency operation, organized and directed by the United States, which restored traditional elites to power, including Nazi collaborators, and suppressed the peasant- and worker-based communist-led forces that had fought the Nazis. In the industrial societies, the same essential goals were realized, but by less violent means.

Yet it is true that there have been cases where the US was directly involved in organizing coups even in advanced industrial democracies, such as in Australia and Italy in the mid-1970s. Correct?

Yes, there is evidence of CIA involvement in a virtual coup that overturned the Whitlam Labor government in Australia in 1975, when it was feared that Whitlam might interfere with Washington’s military and intelligence bases in Australia. Large-scale CIA interference in Italian politics has been public knowledge since the congressional Pike Report was leaked in 1976, citing a figure of over \$65 million to approved political parties and affiliates from 1948 through the early 1970s. In 1976, the Aldo Moro government fell in Italy after revelations that the CIA had spent \$6 million to support anti-communist candidates. At the time, the European communist parties were moving towards independence of action with pluralistic and democratic tendencies (Eurocommunism), a development that in fact pleased neither Washington nor Moscow. For such reasons, both superpowers opposed the legalization of the Communist Party of Spain and the rising influence of the Communist Party in Italy, and both preferred center-right governments in France. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger described the “major problem” in the Western alliance as “the domestic evolution in many European countries,” which might make Western communist parties more attractive to the public, nurturing moves towards independence and threatening the NATO alliance.”

US interventions in the political affairs of other nations have always been morally and politically justified as part of the faith in the doctrine of spreading American-style democracy, but the

actual reason was of course the spread of capitalism and the dominance of business rule. Was faith in the spread of democracy ever tenable?

No belief concerning US foreign policy is more deeply entrenched than the one regarding the spread of American-style democracy. The thesis is commonly not even expressed, merely presupposed as the basis for reasonable discourse on the US role in the world.

The faith in this doctrine may seem surprising. Nevertheless, there is a sense in which the conventional doctrine is tenable. If by “American-style democracy,” we mean a political system with regular elections but no serious challenge to business rule, then US policymakers doubtless yearn to see it established throughout the world. The doctrine is therefore not undermined by the fact that it is consistently violated under a different interpretation of the concept of democracy: as a system in which citizens may play some meaningful part in the management of public affairs.

So, what lessons can be drawn from all this about the concept of democracy as understood by US policy planners in their effort to create a new world order?

One problem that arose as areas were liberated from fascism [after World War II] was that traditional elites had been discredited, while prestige and influence had been gained by the resistance movement, based largely on groups responsive to the working class and poor, and often committed to some version of radical democracy. The basic quandary was articulated by Churchill’s trusted adviser, South African Prime Minister Jan Christiaan Smuts, in 1943, with regard to southern Europe: “With politics let loose among those peoples,” he said, “we might have a wave of disorder and wholesale Communism.” Here the term “disorder” is understood as threat to the interests of the privileged, and “Communism,” in accordance with usual convention, refers to failure to interpret “democracy” as elite dominance, whatever the other commitments of the “Communists” may be. With politics let loose, we face a “crisis of democracy,” as privileged sectors have always understood.

In brief, at that moment in history, the United States faced the classic dilemma of Third World intervention in large parts of the industrial world as well. The US position was “politically weak” though militarily and economically strong. Tactical choices are determined by an assessment of strengths and weaknesses. The preference has, quite naturally, been for the arena of force and for measures of economic warfare and strangulation, where the US has ruled supreme.

Wasn’t the Marshall Plan a tool for consolidating capitalism and spreading business rule throughout Europe after World War II?

Very much so. For example, the extension of Marshall Plan aid in countries like France and Italy was strictly contingent on exclusion of communists — including major elements of the anti-fascist resistance and labor — from the government; “democracy,” in the usual sense. US aid was critically important in early years for suffering people in Europe and was therefore a powerful lever of control, a matter of much significance for US business interests and longer term planning. The fear in Washington was that the communist left would emerge victorious in Italy and France without massive financial assistance.

On the eve of the announcement of the Marshall Plan, Ambassador to France Jefferson Caffery warned Secretary of State Marshall of grim consequences if the communists won the elections in France: "Soviet penetration of Western Europe, Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East would be greatly facilitated" (May 12, 1947). The dominoes were ready to fall. During May, the US pressured political leaders in France and Italy to form coalition governments excluding the communists. It was made clear and explicit that aid was contingent on preventing an open political competition, in which left and labor might dominate. Through 1948, Secretary of State Marshall and others publicly emphasized that if communists were voted into power, US aid would be terminated; no small threat, given the state of Europe at the time.

In France, the postwar destitution was exploited to undermine the French labor movement, along with direct violence. Desperately needed food supplies were withheld to coerce obedience, and gangsters were organized to provide goon squads and strike breakers, a matter that is described with some pride in semi-official US labor histories, which praise the AFL [American Federation of Labor] for its achievements in helping to save Europe by splitting and weakening the labor movement (thus frustrating alleged Soviet designs) and safeguarding the flow of arms to Indochina for the French war of re-conquest, another prime goal of the US labor bureaucracy. The CIA reconstituted the mafia for these purposes, in one of its early operations. The quid pro quo was restoration of the heroin trade. The US government connection to the drug boom continued for many decades.

US policies toward Italy basically picked up where they had been broken off by World War II. The United States had supported Mussolini's Fascism from the 1922 takeover through the 1930s. Mussolini's wartime alliance with Hitler terminated these friendly relations, but they were reconstituted as US forces liberated southern Italy in 1943, establishing the rule of Field Marshall [Pietro] Badoglio and the royal family that had collaborated with the Fascist government. As Allied forces drove towards the north, they dispersed the anti-fascist resistance along with local governing bodies it had formed in its attempt to establish a new democratic state in the zones it had liberated from Germany. Eventually, a center-right government was established with neo-fascist participation and the left soon excluded.

Here too, the plan was for the working classes and the poor to bear the burden of reconstruction, with lowered wages and extensive firing. Aid was contingent on removing communists and left socialists from office, because they defended workers' interests and thus posed a barrier to the intended style of recovery, in the view of the State Department. The Communist Party was collaborationist; its position "fundamentally meant the subordination of all reforms to the liberation of Italy and effectively discouraged any attempt in northern areas to introduce irreversible political changes as well as changes in the ownership of the industrial companies ... disavowing and discouraging those workers' groups that wanted to expropriate some factories," as Gianfranco Pasquino put it. But the Party did try to defend jobs, wages and living standards for the poor and thus "constituted a political and psychological barrier to a potential European recovery program," historian John Harper comments, reviewing the insistence of Kennan and others that communists be excluded from government though agreeing that it would be "desirable" to include representatives of what Harper calls "the democratic working class." The recovery, it was understood, was to be at the expense of the working class and the poor.

Because of its responsiveness to the needs of these social sectors, the Communist Party was labelled “extremist” and “undemocratic” by US propaganda, which also skillfully manipulated the alleged Soviet threat. Under US pressure, the Christian Democrats abandoned wartime promises about workplace democracy and the police, sometimes under the control of ex-fascists, were encouraged to suppress labor activities. The Vatican announced that anyone who voted for the communists in the 1948 election would be denied sacraments, and backed the conservative Christian Democrats under the slogan: “O con Cristo o contro Cristo” (“Either with Christ or against Christ”). A year later, Pope Pius excommunicated all Italian communists.

A combination of violence, manipulation of aid and other threats, and a huge propaganda campaign sufficed to determine the outcome of the critical 1948 election, essentially bought by US intervention and pressures.

The CIA operations to control the Italian elections, authorized by the National Security Council in December 1947, were the first major clandestine operation of the newly formed agency. CIA operations to subvert Italian democracy continued into the 1970s at a substantial scale.

In Italy, as well as elsewhere, US labor leaders, primarily from the AFL, played an active role in splitting and weakening the labor movement, and inducing workers to accept austerity measures while employers reaped rich profits. In France, the AFL had broken dock strikes by importing Italian scab labor paid by US businesses. The State Department called on the Federation’s leadership to exercise their talents in union-busting in Italy as well, and they were happy to oblige. The business sector, formerly discredited by its association with Italian fascism, undertook a vigorous class war with renewed confidence. The end result was the subordination of the working class and the poor to the traditional rulers.

Later commentators tend to see the US subversion of democracy in France and Italy as a defense of democracy. In a highly-regarded study of the CIA and American democracy, Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones describes “the CIA’s Italian venture,” along with its similar efforts in France, as “a democracy-propping operation,” though he concedes that “the selection of Italy for special attention ... was by no means a matter of democratic principle alone;” our passion for democracy was reinforced by the strategic importance of the country. But it was a commitment to “democratic principle” that inspired the US government to impose the social and political regimes of its choice, using the enormous power at its command and exploiting the privation and distress of the victims of the war, who must be taught not to raise their heads if we are to have true democracy.

A more nuanced position is taken by James Miller in his monograph on US policies towards Italy. Summarizing the record, he concludes that “in retrospect, American involvement in the stabilization of Italy was a significant, if troubling, achievement. American power assured Italians the right to choose their future form of government and also was employed to ensure that they chose democracy. In defense of that democracy against real but probably overestimated foreign and domestic threats, the United States used undemocratic tactics that tended to undermine the legitimacy of the Italian state.”

The “foreign threats,” as he had already discussed, were hardly real; the Soviet Union watched from a distance as the US subverted the 1948 election and restored the traditional conservative order, keeping to its wartime agreement with Churchill that left Italy in the Western zone. The “domestic threat” was the threat of democracy.

The idea that US intervention provided Italians with freedom of choice while ensuring that they chose “democracy” (in our special sense of the term) is reminiscent of the attitude of the extreme doves towards Latin America: that its people should choose freely and independently — as long as doing so did not impact US interests adversely.

The democratic ideal, at home and abroad, is simple and straightforward: You are free to do what you want, as long as it is what we want you to do.

Note: Some of the material for this interview was adapted from excerpts from [Deterring Democracy \(Verso\)](#).

The U.S. is no stranger to interfering in the elections of other countries

By Nina Agrawal , Dec 21, 2016 | 2:45 AM

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-us-intervention-foreign-elections-20161213-story.html>

One professor's database cites 81 attempts by the United States to influence elections in other countries, notably in Iran, Guatemala and Chile.

Update: President Obama on Thursday [slapped Russia with new penalties](#) for meddling in the U.S. presidential election, kicking out dozens of suspected spies and imposing banking restrictions on five people and four organizations the administration says were involved.

The CIA has accused Russia of interfering in the 2016 presidential election by hacking into Democratic and Republican computer networks and selectively releasing emails. But critics might point out the U.S. has done similar things.

The U.S. has a long history of attempting to influence presidential elections in other countries – it's done so as many as 81 times between 1946 and 2000, according to a database amassed by political scientist Dov Levin of Carnegie Mellon University.

That number doesn't include military coups and regime change efforts following the election of candidates the U.S. didn't like, notably those in Iran, Guatemala and Chile. Nor does it include general assistance with the electoral process, such as election monitoring.

Levin defines intervention as "a costly act which is designed to determine the election results [in favor of] one of the two sides." These acts, carried out in secret two-thirds of the time, include funding the election campaigns of specific parties, disseminating misinformation or propaganda, training locals of only one side in various campaigning or get-out-the-vote techniques, helping

one side design their campaign materials, making public pronouncements or threats in favor of or against a candidate, and providing or withdrawing foreign aid.

In 59% of these cases, the side that received assistance came to power, although Levin estimates the average effect of "partisan electoral interventions" to be only about a 3% increase in vote share.

The U.S. hasn't been the only one trying to interfere in other countries' elections, according to Levin's data. Russia attempted to sway 36 foreign elections from the end of World War II to the turn of the century – meaning that, in total, at least one of the two great powers of the 20th century intervened in about 1 of every 9 competitive, national-level executive elections in that time period.

Italy's 1948 general election is an early example of a race where U.S. actions probably influenced the outcome.

"We threw everything, including the kitchen sink" at helping the Christian Democrats beat the Communists in Italy, said Levin, including covertly delivering "[bags of money](#)" to cover campaign expenses, sending experts to help run the campaign, subsidizing "pork" projects like land reclamation, and threatening publicly to end U.S. aid to Italy if the Communists were elected.

Levin said that U.S. intervention probably played an important role in preventing a Communist Party victory, not just in 1948, but in seven subsequent Italian elections.

Throughout the Cold War, U.S. involvement in foreign elections was mainly motivated by the goal of containing communism, said Thomas Carothers, a foreign policy expert at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "The U.S. didn't want to see left-wing governments elected, and so it did engage fairly often in trying to influence elections in other countries," Carothers said.

This approach carried over into the immediate post-Soviet period.

In the 1990 Nicaragua elections, the CIA leaked damaging information on alleged corruption by the Marxist Sandinistas to German newspapers, according to Levin. The opposition used those reports against the Sandinista candidate, Daniel Ortega. He lost to opposition candidate Violeta Chamorro.

In Czechoslovakia that same year, the U.S. provided training and campaign funding to Vaclav Havel's party and its Slovak affiliate as they planned for the country's first democratic election after its transition away from communism.

"The thinking was that we wanted to make sure communism was dead and buried," said Levin.

Even after that, the U.S. continued trying to influence elections in its favor.

In Haiti after the 1986 overthrow of dictator and U.S. ally Jean-Claude “Baby Doc” Duvalier, the CIA sought to [support particular candidates](#) and undermine Jean-Bertrande Aristide, a Roman Catholic priest and proponent of liberation theology. The New York Times reported [in the 1990s](#) that the CIA had on its payroll members of the military junta that would ultimately unseat Aristide after he was democratically elected in a landslide over Marc Bazin, a former World Bank official and finance minister favored by the U.S.

The U.S. also attempted to sway Russian elections. In 1996, with the presidency of Boris Yeltsin and the Russian economy flailing, President Clinton endorsed a \$10.2-billion loan from the International Monetary Fund linked to privatization, trade liberalization and other measures that would move Russia toward a capitalist economy. Yeltsin used the loan to bolster his popular support, telling voters that only he had the reformist credentials to secure such loans, [according to media reports at the time](#). He used the money, in part, for social spending before the election, including payment of back wages and pensions.

In the Middle East, the U.S. has aimed to bolster candidates who could further the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. In 1996, seeking to fulfill the legacy of assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and the peace accords the U.S. brokered, Clinton openly supported Shimon Peres, convening a peace summit in the Egyptian resort of Sharm el Sheik to boost his popular support and inviting him to a meeting at the White House a month before the election.

“We were persuaded that if [Likud candidate Benjamin] Netanyahu were elected, the peace process would be closed for the season,” said Aaron David Miller, who worked at the State Department at the time.

In 1999, in a more subtle effort to sway the election, top Clinton strategists, including James Carville, were sent to advise Labor candidate Ehud Barak in the election against Netanyahu.

In Yugoslavia, the U.S. and NATO had long sought to cut off Serbian nationalist and Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic from the international system through economic sanctions and military action. In 2000, the U.S. spent millions of dollars in aid for political parties, campaign costs and independent media. Funding and broadcast equipment provided to the media arms of the opposition were a decisive factor in electing opposition candidate Vojislav Kostunica as Yugoslav president, according to Levin. “If it wouldn’t have been for overt intervention ... Milosevic would have been very likely to have won another term,” he said.

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America has a long history of meddling in the elections of foreign countries, new research shows

By [Shane Dixon Kavanaugh](#), Dec 30, 2016 at 2:25 PM ET

<http://www.vocativ.com/388500/election-interference-us-45-countries/index.html>

Russia's attempt to sway the 2016 election continues to consume American politics as the Obama administration struck back with a series of punishments targeting Russia's spy agencies and diplomats. The White House on Thursday moved to expel 35 suspected Russian intelligence operatives from the U.S. and impose sanctions on the Kremlin's two leading intelligence services in response for what the U.S. says were a series of cyberattacks conducted by Russia during the presidential campaign. For the time being, Russian President Vladimir Putin has indicated that he [won't immediately retaliate](#), though that could change.

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KAITLYN KELLY / SOURCE: DOV H. LEVIN, CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY

Electoral Interference By The U.S., 1946-2000

America is no stranger to meddling in the elections of foreign countries, new research shows



Albania	Iceland	Panama
Argentina	Indonesia	Peru
Bolivia	Iran	Philippines
Brazil	Israel	Romania
Bulgaria	Italy	Russia
Cambodia	Jamaica	San Marino
Chile	Japan	Slovakia
Costa Rica	Laos	Somalia
Dominican Republic	Lebanon	Sri Lanka
Greece	Malaysia	Thailand
Grenada	Malta	Ukraine
Guatemala	Mauritius	United Kingdom
Guyana	Nepal	Uruguay
Haiti	Nicaragua	

Former countries:
 West Germany: 1953
 South Vietnam: 1961, 1971
 Czechoslovakia: 1990
 Former Yugoslavia: 1992, 2000

The simmering tit for tat has kept the issue of election meddling burning bright in the national spotlight, fueled even further by the belief among U.S. intelligence agencies that Russia wanted to help Donald Trump capture the presidency. Yet neither country is a stranger when it comes to directly trying to sway the election of other nations. In fact, the U.S. has a long and stunning history of attempting to influence foreign presidential elections, [recent research](#) by political scientist Dov Levin,

a postdoctoral fellow at the Institute for Politics and Strategy at Carnegie-Mellon

University, [found that](#) the

U.S. attempted to influence the elections of foreign countries as many as 81 times between 1946 and 2000. Often covert in their execution, these efforts included everything from CIA operatives running successful presidential campaigns in the Philippines during the 1950s to leaking damaging information on

Marxist Sandanistas in order to sway Nicaraguan voters in 1990. All told, the U.S. allegedly targeted the elections of 45 nations across the globe during this period, [Levin's research shows](#). In the case of some countries, such as Italy and Japan, the U.S. attempted to intervene in four or more separate elections.

Levin's figures do not include military coups or regime change attempts following the election of a candidate the U.S. opposed, such as when the CIA [helped overthrow](#) Mohammad Mosaddeq, Iran's democratically elected prime minister, in 1953. He defines an electoral intervention as "a costly act which is designed to determine the election results [in favor of] one of the two sides." According to Levin's research, that includes: peddling misinformation or propaganda; creating campaign material for preferred candidates or parties; providing or withdrawing foreign aid, and; making public announcements that threaten or favor certain candidates. Often, it also includes the U.S. covertly delivering large sums of cash, as was the case in elections in Japan, Lebanon, Italy, and other countries.

To build his database, Levin says he relied on declassified U.S. intelligence as well as a number of Congressional reports on CIA activity. He also combed through what he considered reliable histories of the CIA and covert American activity, as well as academic research on U.S. intelligence, diplomatic histories of the Cold War, and memoirs of former CIA officials. Much of America's meddling in foreign elections has been well-documented — [Chile in the 1960s](#), [Haiti in the 1990s](#). But Malta in 1971? According to Levin's study, the U.S. attempted to "goose" the tiny Mediterranean island's economy in the months leading up to its election that year.

Much of the America's electoral meddling occurred throughout the Cold War as a response to containing Soviet influence through the spread of supposed leftist proxies, the findings suggest. And to be clear, the U.S. wasn't the only one trying to sway foreign elections. By Levin's count, Russia attempted to interfere in other countries' elections 36 times between the end of World War II and the end of the 20th century, bringing the total number of electoral interventions by the two countries to 117 during that period.

Yet even after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the U.S. continued its interventions abroad, including elections in Israel, former Czechoslovakia, and [even Russia in 1996](#), Levin found. Since 2000, the U.S. has attempted to sway elections in Ukraine, Kenya, Lebanon, and Afghanistan, among others.

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