

Espionage, imperialism and nationalism

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But are there friendly nation-states? Or are all the countries economic competitors?

In view of the revelation that she was being spied on by the United States, Angela Merkel, Germany's prime-minister, said: “between friends, that's just not done”. In fact, between friends there are certain unwritten rules that must be observed; otherwise, we lose our friend. But are there friendly nation-states? Or are all the countries economic competitors and, therefore, the other nation-states are opponents?

When I declare to be an economic nationalist, people are often surprised. Isn't nationalism an "old-fashioned" political attitude or ideology? Aren't we living in a global society, in which nation-states lost significance?

These are questions deriving from the neoliberal and globalist ideology that was hegemonic worldwide between 1979 and 2008. We would live in a “borderless” world...

Actually, it was a mere strategy of domination originated in the United States. In its quality of our time's imperial power, or “Hegemon” as its ideologues prefer, the United States spread the idea of a democratic and friendly West that, in order to justify the “friendship”, would have to face some necessary “enemies” – previously, the Soviet Union (which made some sense), today, Russia and China.

The extent of the espionage accomplished by the NSA is an evidence of how absurd is this theory. It reveals once again how nationalist are the Americans and their government. The United States is oriented to its own interests – the interests of its “national security”, which justifies everything, and the interests of its major corporations, which are the basis of its wealth.

In view of the American espionage revealed by Edward Snowden (a “traitor”, according to the American government), the other countries, particularly the European ones, allegedly the “close friends”, showed indignation. But they did nothing, unlike president Dilma Rousseff, who cancelled her State visit to the United States. They do nothing because they know the rule of the game.

It is the rule of the national interest; it is the rule of “realism”, as stated by the most important theory of international relations, a realism that justifies everything, including widespread espionage.

When the competition between nation-states is a relationship between equals, the expression realism is enough to identify it. When it is between the powerful

and the weak, we should speak of imperialism on the part of the dominant one and of nationalism (or of dependence) on the part of the one that is threatened with domination.

The major European countries thought they were the equal of the United States, friends. In fact, whenever there is a relationship between the strong and the weak, there is imperialism, and the only way to restrain it is through nationalism: it is for the country to become united and solidary before the advices and pressures of the imperial power; it must not submit.

Today there is only one global imperial power: the United States. The other are regional powers. France, for instance, is imperial in relation to the North of Africa and to Middle East. Brazil and Argentina are imperial in relation to Paraguay and Bolivia.

The imperialism of a few and the necessary nationalism of all do not prevent the collaboration between the nations and the building of international institutions. The rule is not just to compete; it is to compete and cooperate, because we live in the same world. But the necessary solidarity between human beings cannot be mistaken for dependence or subordination.