

The Cowardly Democracies

by

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As I have been watching the Russian invasion of Ukraine on television, I was not surprised finding my thoughts turning toward Putin's history of bullying.

Since bullying has existed since the earliest civilization, it amazes me how little people know what it is and how unprepared they are to confront it. Part of the problem is that in our own personal minds we don't have a solid consistent definition of the word. Another part of the problem is that we look for other words, less emotionally charged, to describe its activities. Political correctness has also clouded its definition.

According to the Oxford Languages dictionary the definition of bully is:

seek to harm, intimidate, or coerce (someone perceived as vulnerable)

Some synonyms for bully include:

- Annoyer
- Antagonizer
- Browbeater
- Bulldozer
- Coercer
- Harrier
- Harasser
- Hector
- Intimidator
- Oppressor
- Persecutor
- Pest
- Rascal
- Rowdy
- Ruffian
- Teaser
- Tormenter
- Tough

Now a synonym is a word having the same or nearly the same meaning as another. Go back over the above list and you can easily see how each term is a "water downed" version of bully. We can also see how each synonym is a descriptor of Putin.

A lot of psychological and sociological studies have been done on bullies and bullying. Since much of the content of these studies is confusing to the lay person, let's look at bullies and bullying in the context of day-to-day living.

In schools across the country, any student who appears to be out of place for whatever reason from the other students will often be called names, picked on, harassed, jostled, intimidated, ignored, the last chosen, etc. The terms just used are synonyms for bully. However they do not have the same intellectual or emotional impact as bullying because we think of bullying as a physical act – hitting, kicking, pushing, etc. These lesser "charged" words are used because we do not like to face the reality of bad things.

Sometimes other students will come to the direct aid of the one being bullied. However this doesn't often happen out of fear that the bully will turn on the defender as well. Consequently, if teachers and administration do not see the bullying directly they become aware of it through anonymous notes.

Let's look at another example, the neighborhood bully. The neighborhood bully could be a single person or a gang that everyone is afraid of. Out of fear the residents rarely will stand up to these bullies. These bullies are the same ones that were encountered in school. They use fear and intimidation to gain power and control over others. However in both situations bullies lose their power and control when people, collectively, stand up to them.

In the studies of bullies, psychologists and sociologists have determined that they are cowards because they prey on the weak. If challenged they feel the need to exert their control to avoid being called a wimp, chicken, scaredy-cat, yellow-belly, etc. by those in his gang. Thus the bully will strike out to "put down the insurrection."

Simply put, bullies exist because people allow them to. The phrase "peace through strength" is often attributed to Ronald Reagan but actually dates back to the ancient times. The concept, today, as in the past, is that if a country/region has the greater military strength, that peace would exist. In an esoteric way, such thinking is correct. However it is also very misguided. To view understand this misconception all we have to do is look at history. Every empire that has ever existed was achieved by conquering other lands, people and cultures. To achieve this, each empire had a military strength that was greater than that of the conquered. Once conquered, the people essentially become slaves to those lording over them. The people are bullied using all of the synonyms mentioned above.

If we look at the crucifixion of Christ and his disciples, there was only a handful of people who spoke up against the Jewish and Roman rulers. Any form of defiance from within was immediately and drastically dealt with in order to maintain control over the people.

We have seen this with Stalin, Hitler, Castro, the Iranian ayatollahs, and more recently Venezuela's Maduro. All of these so-called leaders were nothing more than bullies.

We have also known for years of another bully – Putin. He has used strong-arm tactics to control the Russian people, and now is flexing his cowardness with the second invasion of Ukraine. Ukraine posed no threat Russia nor was there any provocation that would cause Russia to invade the country. Putin used many excuses, as bullies do, for the invasion; there truly is no reason other than control and power.

However, just like the neighborhood bully, Putin has not faced any opposition from other countries. As he is trouncing Ukraine (neighbor) no other country (other neighbors or outside the neighborhood) have come to Ukraine's defense.

Oh, you might say that the various democracies have condemned Putin's action and have sent military supplies to Ukraine, but none of the democracies have stood up against Putin to stop or turn back the invasion. This is the same type of response you would find in your neighbors – you condemn but are too afraid to do anything yourself out of fear that the bully will turn on you.

During WW-2 we saw the same thing happening as Hitler ravaged not just nations but people. Roosevelt deliberately kept the US out of WW-2 by not sending US military to fight against Hitler or against the Japanese in the Sino-Japanese War until, December 7th when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and when Hitler declare war on the US on December 11, 1941. Roosevelt condemned both Hitler and Japan but would not take direct action until forced to.

Just as in Europe and China during WW-2, the world's democracies today are afraid and unwilling to stand against what is morally and ethically right to fight bullies and evil. And this includes your own country, the United States of America, a superpower that has no leader.