

## Patterns

by cleaves *Wednesday, Jan 19 2005, 11:28am*

international / imperialism / feature

Recent events involving the actions of certain nations have highlighted a pattern that most freedom loving people would find extremely disturbing. Is it possible, in the absence of a strategic balance of power in the world, that some nations with the means and opportunity would attempt to impose their will and value systems on other nations?

During the Balkan conflict the intervening powers (NATO) agreed not to supply any of the warring parties with military hardware or assistance. The USA ignored this agreement. The Norwegian Air Force observed the USAF supplying arms (and intelligence) directly to Bosnian Muslim separatists in clear contravention of the protocol. This subversive act and the unilateral attitude of the US resulted in the speedy formation of the European Rapid Deployment Force - this was essentially a political gesture designed to reign in the rogue tendencies of US command. I would add here that the US, in an attempt to suppress the knowledge of their intervention, subjected the Norwegian pilot and Norwegian Air Command to extreme intimidation. Nevertheless, to their credit, the Norwegians released the information to the public - as a result the secret agenda of the US in the Balkans was exposed.

The Balkan wars also presented us with examples of hypocrisy and double standards in the Kosovo conflict. In this instance the US and NATO, in clear contravention of international law, supported a rebel group (KLA) in separatist moves to secede from the then sovereign nation of Yugoslavia. It must be remembered that Kosovo has been Yugoslav territory (notwithstanding the Ottoman occupation) for hundreds of years - indeed, it could be described as the crucible in which the Serbian people formed their identity. To make a comparison that US citizens could understand, it would be equivalent to surrendering Washington DC to the Chinese or Russians.

It is to be expected that any people would fight to protect their sovereign territory against secessionist rebels or foreign invasion but against NATO and US intervention a tiny Balkan nation would have no chance. The outcome is now history, the now 'former' Yugoslavia has been fragmented into five separate countries. These tiny fragmented 'States' are nations in name only - they have been largely subsumed by the more affluent nations of Western Europe. It would seem that a nation's freedom and independence account for little when an oil pipeline is needed to supply Western Europe. Huge bases of occupation have been built on conquered territory to ensure the security needs of oil infrastructures.

The transparency of NATO's machinations become evident when the historical record is analysed. No intervention occurred when China implemented policies to eradicate Tibetan culture and displace Tibetans from their own land, or more recently, when tribal conflicts in African nations led to hundreds of thousands of needless deaths. Faced with these comparisons the excuses for military intervention in the form of bombing Belgrade would seem unbalanced. Perhaps the lives of Tibetans and Africans are not as valuable as the lives of Albanian Kosovars! It seems that a new value has been placed on human life and it would appear in the present that Palestinian life is the 'cheapest' of all. Where is the intervention when Israel embarks on a campaign of blatant ethnic cleansing of Palestinians?

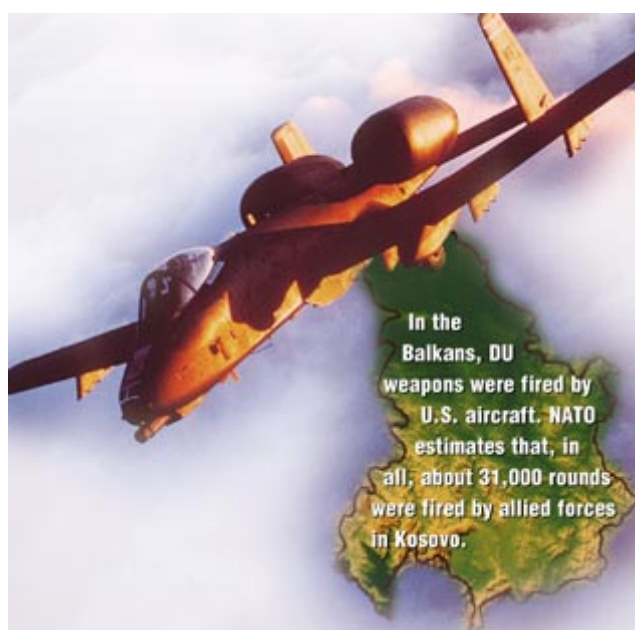
American citizens can remain 'secure' in the knowledge that wherever there are needed resources and territories, American 'democracy' and 'liberty' will prevail. The new value placed on human life will be in inverse proportion to the value of the resource or strategic territory that is 'required.'

The lies the world was fed to justify an (illegal) invasion of Iraq are at present making international headlines. Regardless of the outcome of these exposures we can seek 'comfort' from the fact that American oil interests will never surrender Iraq's most valuable resource.

The astute observer would have noticed a number of similarities between the Balkan and Iraq 'interventions.' Both leaders of the attacked states refused to conform to external impositions, both nations were relatively defenceless against the military powers that threatened them. This last point is worthy of closer examination. The claim most often made to justify these attacks is that 'evil' dictators were removed from power - whether they were democratically elected in the case of Milosevic seems irrelevant.

In order to assess the integrity of the claim we will select two known dictators, Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore and Kim Jong-il of North Korea and make comparisons. In the case of North Korea we would ask, why hasn't a known tyrant who oppresses his people been removed by US intervention? Answer: because 'uncle' Kim is armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons! The prospect of a retaliatory strike sends shivers through Washington - so they must choose carefully - States with the least capability to retaliate are the 'preferred' targets. In the case of 'uncle' Lee, he was left to dictate over Singaporeans because he complied with Western interests. So we can now appreciate that a dictator is 'evil' when he does not conform to US dictates or Western values. An unfortunate but clear message is sent to the world as a result of this cowardly selection process, and that is, acquire nuclear weapons if you wish to deal with the US. America has 'sown the wind' and will no doubt 'reap the whirlwind.' As surely as night follows day, it will all come home to roost.

In the recent past, the world paid a very high price for allowing ultra right-wing regimes to operate unchecked. The result was the Third Reich and World War II. The present US regime's mode of behaviour is almost identical to the Fascist models of the past. If we allow the US to proceed on its present course unchecked, we must also be willing to accept the inevitable consequences.



***NATO's legacy***

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