

In Struggle With The American Mind

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Region: [USA](#)
Theme: [History](#)

Since The Great Flood hit Pakistan in July ...

- many millions have been displaced, evacuated, stranded or lost their homes; numerous roads, schools and health clinics destroyed
- hundreds of villages washed away
- millions of livestock have perished; for the rural poor something akin to a Western stock market crash that wipes out years of savings
- countless farms decimated, including critical crops like corn; officials say the damage is in the hundreds of millions of dollars and it does not appear that Pakistan will recover within the next few years
- infectious diseases are rising sharply
- airplanes of the United States of America have flown over Pakistan and dropped bombs on dozens of occasions [1](#)

I direct these remarks to readers who have to deal with Americans who turn into a stone wall upon hearing the United States accused of acting immorally; America, they are convinced, means well; our motives are noble. And if we do do something that looks bad, and the badness can't easily be covered up or explained away ... well, great powers have always done things like that, we're no worse than the other great powers of history, and a lot better than most. God bless America.

A certain percentage of such people do change eventually and stop rationalizing; this happens usually after being confronted X-number of times with evidence of the less-than-beautiful behavior of their government around the world. The value of X of course varies with the individual; so don't give up trying to educate the hardened Americans you come in contact with. You never know when your enlightening them about a particular wickedness of their favorite country will be the straw that breaks their imperialist-loving back. (But remember the warning from Friedrich Schiller of Germany: *Mit der Dummheit kämpfen Götter selbst vergebens*. — "With stupidity even the gods struggle in vain.")

Here's a recent revelation of wickedness that might serve to move certain of the unenlightened: New evidence has recently come to light that reinforces the view of a CIA role in the murder of Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of The Congo following its independence from Belgium in 1960. The United States didn't pull the trigger, but it did just about everything else, including giving the green light to the Congolese officials who had kidnaped Lumumba. CIA Station Chief Larry Devlin, we now know, was consulted by these officials about the transfer of Lumumba to his sworn enemies. Devlin signaled them that he had no objection to it. Lumumba's fate was sealed. [2](#)

It was a classic Cold War example of anti-communism carried to absurd and cruel lengths.

Years later, Under Secretary of State C. Douglas Dillon told a Senate investigating committee that the National Security Council and President Eisenhower had believed in 1960 that Lumumba was a “very difficult if not impossible person to deal with, and was dangerous to the peace and safety of the world.” [3](#) This statement moved author Jonathan Kwitny to observe:

How far beyond the dreams of a barefoot jungle postal clerk in 1956, that in a few short years he would be dangerous to the peace and safety of the world! The perception seems insane, particularly coming from the National Security Council, which really does have the power to end all human life within hours. [4](#)

President Eisenhower personally gave the order to kill the progressive African leader. [5](#)

We can't know for sure what life for the Congolese people would have been like had Lumumba been allowed to remain in office. But we do know what followed his assassination — one vicious dictator after another presiding over 50 years of mass murder, rape, and destruction as competing national forces and neighboring states fought endlessly over the vast mineral wealth in the country. The Congo would not hold another democratic election for 46 years.

Overthrowing a country's last great hope, with disastrous consequences, is an historical pattern found throughout the long chronicle of American imperialist interventions, from Iran and Guatemala in the 1950s to Haiti and Afghanistan in the 1990s, with many examples in between. Washington has been working on Hugo Chávez in Venezuela for a decade.

Just like the commercials that warn you “Don't try this at home”, I urge you not to waste your time trying to educate the likes of Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times*, who not long ago referred to “the men and women of the US Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps” as “the most important peacekeepers in the world for the last century.” [6](#) What can you say to such a man? And this is the leading foreign policy columnist for America's “newspaper of record”. God help us. The man could use some adult supervision.

A man named Barack Obama

For many years I have not paid a great deal of attention to party politics in the United States. I usually have only a passing knowledge of who's who in Congress. It's policies that interest me much more than politicians. But during the 2008 presidential campaign I kept hearing the name Barack Obama when I turned on the radio, and repeatedly saw his name in headlines in various newspapers. I knew no more than that he was a senator from Illinois and ... Was he black?

Then one day I turned on my kitchen radio and was informed that Obama was about to begin a talk. I decided to listen, and did so for about 15 or 20 minutes while I washed the dishes. I listened, and listened, and then it hit me ... This man is not *saying* anything! It's all platitude and cliché, very little of what I would call substance. His talk could have been written by a computer, touching all the appropriate bases and saying just what could be expected to give some hope to the pessimistic and to artfully challenge the skepticism of the cynical; feel-good language for every occasion; conventional wisdom for every issue. His supporters, I would later learn, insisted that he had to talk this way to be elected, but once elected — Aha! The real genuine-progressive, anti-war Barack Obama would appear. “Change you can believe in!” Hallelujah! ... They're still saying things like that.

Last week Obama gave the traditional annual speech at the opening of the United Nations General Assembly. [7](#) To give you an idea of whether the man now sincerely expresses himself “outside the box” at all, here’s what he had to say about Pakistan: “Since the rains came and the floodwaters rose in Pakistan, we have pledged our assistance, and we should all support the Pakistani people as they recover and rebuild.” Does he think no one in the world knows about the American bombs? Did he think he was speaking before sophisticated international diplomats or making a campaign speech before Iowa farmers?

Plus endless verbiage about the endless Israeli-Palestine issue, which could have been lifted out of almost any speech by any American president of the past 30 years. But no mention at all of Gaza. Oh, excuse me — there was one line: “the young girl in Gaza who wants to have no ceiling on her dreams”. Gosh, choke. One would never know that the United States possesses huge leverage over the state of Israel — billions/trillions of dollars of military and economic aid and gifts. An American president with a minimum of courage could force Israel to make concessions, and in a struggle between a thousand-pound gorilla (Israel) and an infant (Hamas) it’s the gorilla that has to give some ground.

And this: “We also know from experience that those who defend these [universal] values for their people have been our closest friends and allies, while those who have denied those rights — whether terrorist groups or tyrannical governments — have chosen to be our adversaries.”

Such a lie. It would be difficult to name a single brutal dictatorship of the Western world in the second half of the 20th Century that was not supported by the United States; not only supported, but often put into power and kept in power against the wishes of the population. And in recent years as well, Washington has supported very repressive governments, such as Saudi Arabia, Honduras, Indonesia, Egypt, Kosovo, Colombia, and Israel. As to terrorist groups being adversaries of the United States — another item for the future Barack Obama Presidential Library; as I’ve discussed in this report on several occasions, including last month, the United States has supported terrorist groups for decades. As they’ve supported US foreign policy.

“Yes, of course it’s nice to have a president who speaks in complete sentences. But that they’re coherent doesn’t make them honest.” — John R. MacArthur, publisher of Harper’s Magazine. [8](#)

The secret to understanding US foreign policy

In one of his regular “Reflections” essays, Fidel Castro recently discussed United States hostility towards Venezuela. “What they really want is Venezuela’s oil,” wrote the Cuban leader. [9](#) This is a commonly-held viewpoint within the international left. The point is put forth, for example, in Oliver Stone’s recent film “South of the Border”. I must, however, take exception.

In the post-World War Two period, in Latin America alone, the US has had a similar hostile policy toward progressive governments and movements in Guatemala, Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Grenada, Dominican Republic, Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Cuba, and Bolivia. What these governments and movements all had in common was that they were/are leftist; nothing to do with oil. For more than half a century Washington has been trying to block the rise of any government in Latin America that threatens to offer a viable alternative to the capitalist model. Venezuela of course fits perfectly into that scenario; oil or no oil.

This ideology was the essence of the Cold War all over the world.

The secret to understanding US foreign policy is that there is no secret. Principally, one must come to the realization that the United States strives to dominate the world. Once one understands that, much of the apparent confusion, contradiction, and ambiguity surrounding Washington's policies fades away. To express this striving for dominance numerically, one can consider that since the end of World War Two the United States has:

- Endeavored to overthrow more than 50 foreign governments, most of which were democratically-elected.
- Grossly interfered in democratic elections in at least 30 countries.
- Waged war/military action, either directly or in conjunction with a proxy army, in some 30 countries.
- Attempted to assassinate more than 50 foreign leaders.
- Dropped bombs on the people of some 30 countries.
- Suppressed dozens of populist/nationalist movements in every corner of the world. [10](#)

The United States institutional war machine has long been, and remains, on automatic pilot.

The 9/11 Truth Movement

The Truthers have long been pressing me to express my support for their cause. Here's how I stand on the issue. I'm very aware of the serious contradictions and apparent lies in the Official Government Version (OGV) of what happened on that fateful day. (Before the Truthers can be dismissed as "conspiracy theorists", it should be noted that the OGV is literally a "conspiracy theory" about the fantastic things that a certain 19 men conspired to do.) It does appear that the buildings in New York collapsed essentially because of a controlled demolition, which employed explosives as well as certain incendiary substances found in the rubble. So, for this and many other questions raised by the 9/11 Truth Movement, the OGV can clearly not be taken entirely at face value but has to be seriously examined point by point. But no matter what the discrepancies in the OGV, does it necessarily follow that the events of 9/11 were an "inside job"? Is it an either/or matter? Either a group of terrorists were fully responsible or the government planned it all down to the last detail?

What if the government, with its omnipresent eyes and ears, discovered the plotting of Mideast terrorists some time before and decided to let it happen — and even enhance the destruction — to make use of it as a justification for its "War on Terror"? The Truthers admit that they can't fully explain what actually took place, but they argue that they are not obliged to do so; that they have exposed the government lies and that the fact of these lies proves that it was an inside job. The Truthers have done great work, but I say that for me, and I'm sure for many others, to accept the idea of an inside job I have to indeed know what actually took place, or at least a lot more than I know now. It is, after all, an incredible story, and I need to know how the government pulled it off. I need to have certain questions answered, amongst which are the following:

1. Were the planes that hit the towers hijacked?
2. Did they contain the passengers named amongst the dead?
3. Were they piloted or were they flying via remote control?
4. If piloted, who were the pilots?

5. Did a plane crash in Pennsylvania? If so, why? What happened to the remains of the plane and the passengers?
6. Did a plane crash into the Pentagon? What happened to the remains of the plane and the passengers?
7. Why do Truthers say that some, or many, of the named Arabic hijackers have been found alive living abroad? Why couldn't their identity have been stolen by the hijackers?

If the Truthers can't answer any or most of the above questions, are they prepared to consider the possibility of 9/11 being a "let-it-happen" government operation?

Do words have to mean something?

"Holocaust denier barred from leading tour at Auschwitz". That was the headline over a short news item in the *Washington Post* on September 22. The story, in full, read: "British historian and Holocaust-denier David Irving will not be permitted to give tours at Poland's Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, museum officials said Tuesday after the controversial historian arrived in Poland to lead a tour of Nazi sites. Irving told the British Daily Mail on Friday that Treblinka was a genuine death camp but that Auschwitz was a 'Disney-style tourist attraction'."

So how can Irving be called a "Holocaust-denier" if he says that the Nazi concentration camp at Treblinka "was a genuine death camp"? I don't know. Do you? Why don't you ask the *Post*? They never reply to my letters. And while you're at it, ask them why they and their columnists routinely refer to Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as a "Holocaust-denier". You might even point out to them that Ahmadinejad said in a speech at Columbia University (September 24, 2007), in reply to a question about the Holocaust, "I'm not saying that it didn't happen at all. This is not the judgment that I'm passing here."

Indeed, I don't know if any of the so-called "Holocaust-deniers" actually, ever, umm, y'know, umm ... *deny the Holocaust*. They question certain aspects of the Holocaust history that's been handed down to us, but they don't explicitly say that what we know as the Holocaust never took place. Yes, I'm sure you can find at least one nut-case somewhere.

Speaking of nut-cases, two days after Ahmadinejad spoke at Columbia, Congressman Duncan Hunter (R.-CA) introduced legislation "To prohibit Federal grants to or contracts with Columbia University" (HR 3675, 110th Congress). I'm surprised he didn't call for a Predator to fly over the campus and drop a few bombs. Don't ya just love our Congressmembers? Soon to be joined it seems by a few Teaparty types who think that Barack Obama is a socialist. (If Obama is a socialist, what, I wonder, do they call Hugo Chávez? Or Karl Marx?) The new Madame Speaker of the House may be Alice in Wonderland.

Notes

1. *Wikipedia*, [Drone attacks in Pakistan](#) ←
2. *AllAfrica.com*, [New Evidence Shows U.S. Role in Congo's Decision to Send Patrice Lumumba to His Death](#), August 1st 2010 ←
3. The Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities (US Senate: The Church Committee), *Interim Report: Alleged Assassination Plots Involving Foreign Leaders*, November 20, 1975, p.58 ←

4. Jonathan Kwitny, *Endless Enemies: The Making of an Unfriendly World* (1984), p.57↵
5. *New York Times*, February 22, 1976, p.55 ↵
6. *New York Times*, October 11, 2009↵
7. White House Press Office, [Remarks by the President to the United Nations General Assembly](#), September 23, 2010↵
8. *The Providence Journal*, "[Obama a very smooth liar](#)", June 17, 2009 ↵
9. Reflections by Comrade Fidel, "[What they want is Venezuela's oil](#)", September 27, 2010 ↵
10. A link to any of the first five lists can be obtained by writing to William Blum at bblum6@aol.com. The sixth list has not yet been uploaded to the Internet. ↵

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William Blum is the author of:

- *Killing Hope: US Military and CIA Interventions Since World War 2*
- *Rogue State: A Guide to the World's Only Superpower*
- *West-Bloc Dissident: A Cold War Memoir*
- *Freeing the World to Death: Essays on the American Empire*

Portions of the books can be read, and signed copies purchased, at www.killinghope.org

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