

Terror in Myanmar as US Faces Off Against China's "Belt and Road"

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China's Belt and Road Initiative portends a monumental transformation of the global economic order; one which poses an existential threat to the Pax Americana which has existed since the end of the Cold War. Understanding this context is critical to making sense of the current hysteria gushing from the NGO-Industrial complex and being fuelled by Western liberal punditry.

As I've argued previously, decisions taken by the Trump administration since January indicate a shift in US foreign policy. No longer concerned with waging petty wars on behalf of the Israel lobby and the billionaire class, attention has been focused acutely on Asia, and in particular China. Former White House **Chief Strategist Steve Bannon** was quite forthright about this in his August 16 interview with *American Prospect* magazine:

"To me, the economic war with China is everything. We have to be maniacally focused on that. If we continue to lose it, we're five years away, I think, 10 years at the most, of hitting an inflection point from which we'll never be able to recover."

Without a hint of irony, Bannon later added

"China right now is Germany in 1930. It's on the cusp. It could go one way or the other." "A hundred years from now, this is what they'll remember — what we did to confront China on its rise to world domination." "We have to reassert ourselves as the real Asian power: economically, militarily, culturally, politically."

China's BRI is an \$8 trillion infrastructure project which aims to rebuild the ancient Silk Road, integrating the Eurasian continent in a vast network of road, rail and sea routes across 60 plus countries, and absorbing much of China's current overcapacity in what **President Xi Jinping** describes as an open, innovative path to win-win cooperation. It also signals the end of permanent US global hegemony.

Significant foreign policy decisions taken so far under the Trump administration include strategic retreat from Syria, increased hostilities toward Iran, dropping the 11-ton mother-of-all-bombs on eastern Afghanistan, and a doubling down on troop deployment in America's longest war. All of these are signs of a single-minded approach focused on disrupting China's growing regional influence by any and all means possible.

One of six economic corridors making up the BRI, the 2800 km Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) corridor will link Kolkata in India with Kunming in China's Yunnan province, via Dhaka (Bangladesh) and Mandalay (Myanmar). The central hub of this corridor is the Kyaukphyu Special Economic Zone (KSEZ), which includes an express railway and deep water port, and has the potential to turn Myanmar into a regional logistics hub drawing in trade from neighbouring Thailand and Laos.



Source: International Road Transport Union / Los Angeles Times

But rather than a great opportunity for regional development, the generals at the Pentagon see the BCIM as an enemy supply line. With the US flexing its military muscle in the South China Sea and eyeing off the Strait of Malacca - a potential choke point for the supply of oil into China - the \$10bn Sino-Myanmar pipeline running from the Bay of Bengal to China's Yunnan province is now critical to China's energy security. Placing Rakhine state under US/NATO protection would be an obvious way to sabotage this project.

Like the Uighur of China's Xingxang province, Myanmar's Rakhine Muslim minority, known more widely as 'Rohingya', include insurgent groups backed by Western political interests, such as Harakah al-Yaqin, the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army. Playing the role of agents provocateur in the latest round of psy-ops, reports from locals accuse these radicals of burning their own villages and killing their own people in order to incite violence. Additionally, their violent crimes against the local Buddhist population have provoked brutal counter attacks against ethnic Muslims across the country - violence which the "international community" blames on the Burmese authorities.

Aung San Suu Kyi has been the darling of the liberal 'free press' for two decades. The poster child for Burmese independence, her opposition to Myanmar's military Junta earned her a Nobel Peace Prize and 15 years under house arrest before her National League for Democracy finally won a landslide victory in 2015. Suu Kyi now finds herself in the illustrious company of **Saddam Hussein**, **Manuel Noriega** and **Ngo Dinh Diem** - a rogue asset whose lease has expired and who is about to be thrown under the proverbial bus.

So far the Russian foreign ministry is not buying the imperial line on Myanmar, and China has refused to support UN involvement in the crisis.

Turkey has been most vocal in its calls for humanitarian intervention, which comes as no surprise given its track record. It was Turkey after all which led the call to arms on behalf of Libyan Muslims, allegedly the victims of rape and genocide under the *brutal dictatorship* of **Muammar Gaddafi**. Embarrassingly Amnesty International would later be forced to admit that these claims weren't based on any actual evidence - sadly too late for Ghadaffi, whose capture and extra-judicial execution set a new low standard for network TV voyeurism. Turkey was also an important player in the six year effort to topple Syria's secular democracy and replace it with a Wahhabist theocracy favourable to Western oil interests. Unlike Libya, which was completely destroyed and handed over to terrorists within six months, Syria has so far survived, thanks to the dedication and determination of its army and its allies, Russia, Iran and Hezbollah.

Before we allow our emotions to be manipulated into supporting more humanitarian violence, we should have no illusions about what comes next. *Responsibility to Protect* is

almost always a precursor to genocide. One of the principle advocates of the Libyan war was French public intellectual and media personality **Bernard-Henri Lévy**. When asked by BBC Hard Talk's **Stephen Sackur**

"Would you agree that the military intervention in Libya is not going the way you hoped it would?",

Lévy replied

"No (laughs) No no, I never doubted it would go this way."

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