

The Real Invasion of Africa is Not News, and a Licence to Lie is Hollywood's Gift

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A full-scale invasion of Africa is under way. The United States is deploying troops in 35 African countries, beginning with Libya, Sudan, Algeria and Niger. Reported by Associated Press on Christmas Day, this was missing from most Anglo-American media.

The invasion has almost nothing to do with "Islamism", and almost everything to do with the acquisition of resources, notably minerals, and an accelerating rivalry with China. Unlike China, the US and its allies are prepared to use a degree of violence demonstrated in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Palestine. As in the cold war, a division of labour requires that western journalism and popular culture provide the cover of a holy war against a "menacing arc" of Islamic extremism, no different from the bogus "red menace" of a worldwide communist conspiracy.

Reminiscent of the Scramble for Africa in the late 19th century, the US African Command (Africom) has built a network of supplicants among collaborative African regimes eager for American bribes and armaments. Last year, Africom staged Operation African Endeavor, with the armed forces of 34 African nations taking part, commanded by the US military.

Africom's "soldier to soldier" doctrine embeds US officers at every level of command from general to warrant officer. Only pith helmets are missing.

It is as if Africa's proud history of liberation, from Patrice Lumumba to Nelson Mandela, is consigned to oblivion by a new master's black colonial elite whose "historic mission", warned Frantz Fanon half a century ago, is the promotion of "a capitalism rampant though camouflaged".

A striking example is the eastern Congo, a treasure trove of strategic minerals, controlled by an atrocious rebel group known as the M23, which in turn is run by Uganda and Rwanda, the proxies of Washington.

Long planned as a "mission" for NATO, not to mention the ever-zealous French, whose colonial lost causes remain on permanent standby, the war on Africa became urgent in 2011 when the Arab world appeared to be liberating itself from the Mubaraks and other clients of Washington and Europe. The hysteria this caused in imperial capitals cannot be exaggerated. NATO bombers were dispatched not to Tunis or Cairo but Libya, where Muammar Gaddafi ruled over Africa's largest oil reserves. With the Libyan city of Sirte reduced to rubble, the British SAS directed the "rebel" militias in what has since been exposed as a racist bloodbath.

The indigenous people of the Sahara, the Tuareg, whose Berber fighters Gaddafi had protected, fled home across Algeria to Mali, where the Tuareg have been claiming a separate state since the 1960s. As the ever watchful Patrick Cockburn points out, it is this local dispute, not al-Qaeda, that the West fears most in northwest Africa... "poor though the Tuareg may be, they are often living on top of great reserves of oil, gas, uranium and other valuable minerals".

Almost certainly the consequence of a French/US attack on Mali on 13 January, a siege at a gas complex in Algeria ended bloodily, inspiring a 9/11 moment in David Cameron. The former Carlton TV PR man raged about a "global threat" requiring "decades" of western violence. He meant implantation of the west's business plan for Africa, together with the rape of multi-ethnic Syria and the conquest of independent Iran.

Cameron has now ordered British troops to Mali, and sent an RAF drone, while his verbose military chief, General Sir David Richards, has addressed "a very clear message to jihadists worldwide: don't dangle and tangle with us. We will deal with it robustly" - exactly what jihadists want to hear. The trail of blood of British army terror victims, all Muslims, their "systemic" torture cases currently heading to court, add necessary irony to the general's words. I once experienced Sir David's "robust" ways when I asked him if he had read the courageous Afghan feminist Malalai Joya's description of the barbaric behaviour of westerners and their clients in her country. "You are an apologist for the Taliban" was his reply. (He later apologised).

These bleak comedians are straight out of Evelyn Waugh and allow us to feel the bracing breeze of history and hypocrisy. The "Islamic terrorism" that is their excuse for the enduring theft of Africa's riches was all but invented by them. There is no longer any excuse to swallow the BBC/CNN line and not know the truth. Read Mark Curtis's *Secret Affairs: Britain's Collusion with Radical Islam* (Serpent's Tail) or John Cooley's *Unholy Wars: Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism* (Pluto Press) or *The Grand Chessboard* by Zbigniew Brzezinski (HarperCollins) who was midwife to the birth of modern fundamentalist terror. In effect, the mujahedin of al-Qaida and the Taliban were created by the CIA, its Pakistani equivalent, the Inter-Services Intelligence, and Britain's MI6.

Brzezinski, President Jimmy Carter's National Security Adviser, describes a secret presidential directive in 1979 that began what became the current "war on terror". For 17 years, the US deliberately cultivated, bank-rolled, armed and brainwashed jihadi extremists that "steeped a generation in violence". Code-named Operation Cyclone, this was the "great game" to bring down the Soviet Union but brought down the Twin Towers.

Since then, the news that intelligent, educated people both dispense and ingest has become a kind of Disney journalism, fortified, as ever, by Hollywood's licence to lie, and lie. There is the coming Dreamworks movie on WikiLeaks, a fabrication inspired by a book of perfidious title-tattle by two enriched Guardian journalists; and there is *Zero Dark Thirty*, which promotes torture and murder, directed by the Oscar-winning Kathryn Bigelow, the Leni Riefenstahl of our time, promoting her master's voice as did the Fuhrer's pet film-maker. Such is the one-way mirror through which we barely glimpse what power does in our name.

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