

Ukraine, Asterix and Rules: Notes from the Birthplace of American Empire. Nebojsa Malic

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"The first parliamentarian summit of the International Crimea Platform showed the world Europe ALMOST entirely united against Russian aggression," the US embassy in Belgrade [posted on Twitter](#) last week, accompanied by a map showing all of the continent in blue - with Belarus, Serbia and the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad in grey.

No doubt the embassy thought this would bring home the "isolation" of Serbia. Not the first time, however, the Imperial legation had miscalculated. The map made Serbia look more like the "one small village of indomitable Gauls" from the famous prologue of Asterix, while the representation of "Kosovo" as a separate, independent state just lost Washington another 10 points in favorability polls. I know this, because I had just come back from several weeks in Serbia and Bosnia, where the vibe was very much in evidence.

American ambassadors in Belgrade have acted less like diplomats and more like imperial gauleiters ever since the October 2000 "color revolution" that ousted the legitimately elected Slobodan Milosevic and installed a US-friendly regime. Activists trained in Hungary by the National Endowment for Democracy went so far as to sack the Yugoslav National Assembly and torch the ballots, so no one could dispute their claims. Yet the Western media did not label them "insurrectionists" or "election deniers," but celebrated them as democratic democrats. The model was then applied elsewhere, including Ukraine - twice, in 2004 and 2014 - triggering the conflict that eventually went fully kinetic.

The current gauleiter is one Christopher Hill, a 1990s sidekick of Richard Holbrooke. Not a day goes by that the condescending Hill doesn't lecture the Serbs on what they "must" do to please him and the Globalist American Empire (aka Our Democracy). His predecessor Anthony Godfrey was a gaffe machine in his own right, but at least he had enough charm - genuine or manufactured - to compliment the country's cuisine. The dour Hill can't be bothered; he's a downgrade even from Godfrey's humorless predecessor Kyle Scott, who had actually forced Serbian media to transliterate his surname as "Scat" instead, believing it

less offensive.

Hill objective is the same as it has been for ambassadors over the past 21 years: compel the Serbian government to recognize “Kosovo” as independent, and thereby retroactively justify NATO’s 1999 air war that resulted in the province’s occupation. Whatever one wishes to hold against current president Aleksandar Vucic, he has – so far – refused to do so, even when told outright this would be the necessary precondition for Serbia’s (still very hypothetical) entry into the EU. Yet Vucic’s continues to maintain Serbia’s future is with the bloc, even as the EU is imploding from a combination of consequences from pandemic lockdowns and hare-brained trade embargoes against Russia over the conflict in Ukraine.

The vast majority of Serbs are opposed to recognizing Kosovo and embargoing Russia. The rest amount to professional “woke” activists reciting Imperial talking points in Western-owned media to justify their grants and projects, their words falling on deaf ears. Much like their US counterparts, they are unable to be decent, even tactically: When the women’s volleyball team defended their world title, these moral busybodies insisted the patriotic song belted out by the celebrating crowd (“Rejoice the Serbian kindred”) amounted to bigotry.

Their approach is about as effective as the Ukrainian method of pressuring Belgrade to side with Kiev: phoned-in bomb threats against the airport, schools and other public buildings. All have been fake, so far, but with a regime perfectly willing to assassinate Darya Dugina or suicide-bomb the Crimean Bridge, one can never tell.

If Serbia is quasi-occupied but defiant, the neighboring Bosnia is simply schizophrenic. The US-brokered deal to end the civil war in 1995 partitioned the country into the Muslim-Croat Federation and the Serb Republic (RS), with a rudimentary central government. Rather than find a modus vivendi and live side by side in peace, however, the Muslims continued to claim the country was rightly their nation-state and demand centralization.

Party politics has entirely coalesced around ethnic interests. The only major upset in the October general election was the defeat of Bakir Izetbegovic, whose nepotism and corruption must have finally angered enough Muslims. Even so, the setback was only personal – his party still got the most votes in Muslim jurisdictions. However lackluster Bakir (and his vain, power-hungry wife) may be, the vision of his father Alija – wartime leader of the Bosnian Muslims, who in 1971 wrote a manifesto urging the rejection of democracy and socialism alike and RETURN to Islamic political forms – continues to hold sway.

Over in the Serb Republic, the US-backed opposition tried to stage a “color revolution,” accusing the dominant SNSD party of election shenanigans in order to stop Milorad Dodik from becoming president. It didn’t work: even when the central elections authority in Sarajevo – illegally – took over the vote-counting, they found no irregularities. Meanwhile, over 50,000 people rallied in Banja Luka in support of Dodik.

Bosnia’s domestic deadlock translates into external policy as well: the Serbs don’t mind joining the EU but are absolutely against membership in NATO – which Muslims want – and sanctions against Russia. Officially, the tripartite presidency cannot make decisions except by consensus. That hasn’t stopped the Muslim member from unilaterally endorsing the “Crimea Platform,” which is why Bosnia was shaded blue on that US embassy map mentioned earlier. So much for the “rule of law” or “norms” or “rules” the world order is supposedly based on: turns out the “international community” doesn’t care about any of

those, if violating them achieves the desired result.

Sojourning in Serbia and Bosnia this October, I was once again reminded that is where the Globalist American Empire arose in the 1990s. Far from bringing order or prosperity, either to the American people or the foreigners it sought to conquer, it has fueled chaos and misery at home and abroad. Its obsession with power is now destroying lives and livelihoods in Ukraine and raising the specter of a nuclear war. Meanwhile, that “one small village” indomitably abides.

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