

The BLACK C o M M e n t a t o r

An independent weekly internet magazine
dedicated to the movement for economic justice,
social justice and peace - Providing commentary,
analysis and investigations on issues affecting
African Americans and the African world.

www.BlackCommentator.com

Dec 6, 2012 - Issue 497

Global Neoliberalism: "The Nation of an American Empire" Represent Our Resistance By Dr. Lenore J. Daniels, PhD BC Editorial Board

Neo-liberal policies, as well as the financial and political powers backing them, ensured that the City and its most vulnerable citizens would be adversely affected. Infrastructure deteriorations, breakdown of water and sanitation and prolonged electrical blackouts are products of *public disinvestment* and private profit-taking; delays in repairing the electric grid are products of cuts in the labor force. While the state and federal government compiles detailed data files on every mosque, and Muslim charity donor and whoever else might voice a criticism of the State of Israel, it has no 'data' on our vulnerable elderly and disabled citizens trapped in high rises, public housing and nursing homes. *These citizens* suffered cold, thirst and hunger in darkness and many lacked medicine. Some died. None existed in the priority registries of Homeland Security.

-James Petras, "Tropical Storm Sandy: Natural Disaster or Political?" November, 13, 2012.

[A}fter the ethnic cleansing of Bosnia and Kosovo in the early 1990s we were not all suddenly oppressed Muslims; after the Central African genocide of the mid-1990s - at the expense of perhaps 700,000 lives - the citizens of the world did not all become Tutsis; nor did we become Timorese nor Palestinians nor Guatemalan peasants. After the horrific bombing of trains

in Madrid in 2004, we did not all become Spaniards, nor Russians after Beslan.

-Neil Smith, *The Endgame of Globalization*

Five miles outside of Birmingham, writes Douglas A. Blackmon, "spread in haphazard rows across the forest floor...were sunken graves of the dead from nearby prison mines once operated by U.S. Steel."

Long ago, they tell us.

Title to Indian lands passed to the English Crown, thanks to the Doctrine of Discovery. This international law, explains Robert J. Miller, "preempted sales of these lands to any other European country or any individual, and granted sovereignty and commercial rights over Indian Natives to the Crown and its colonies."

Yet this is older still! Only look to the future, warns President Obama as did his predecessors.

"Never again a November 1918," shouted Hitler. And Hitler became a politician (Chris Hitchens, "Imagining Hitler," *Arguably Essays by Christopher Hitchens*, 2012). His first act of business once he took office? Naturally repressive:

[He}shut down the unions and then viciously pillaged the galleries of a once civilized nation to hang most of the best modern painting in Germany in a wildly philistine 1937 exhibition - in Munich - entitled (sic) 'Degenerate Art.'

The past is never the past for those whose task is to conceal and to manipulate.

Never again, shouted Nixon, will Black leadership muster the courage to resist and gain support of Red, Brown, Yellow, and white Americans, workers, poor and middle class, anti-war activists, housewives and feminists, youth and student organizations.

Never again!

In the United States, we are at a stage in the globalization process where it is less about forgetfulness and more a blatant display of

ignorance and indifference, no care whatsoever about the country's violent role in world affairs, past or present.

In May 2008, Bush II celebrated Israel's 60th birthday. Israelis and Americans cheered. "Many Israelis look at Bush as one of the best friends we've ever had in terms of understanding our problems and his attitudes toward Israel," said Elihu Ben-Onin, former Israeli general (*Huffington Post*). Bush was the best friend of Israel, but now it has another.

Netanyahu praised Bush's successor this past March 2012 when he visited the White House. The friendship of the Israeli prime minister and the president of the United States is of utmost importance and rest, states Netanyahu in Israel's ability "to make its own decisions" as a sovereign state. "it must have the ability to defend itself, by itself, against any threats." Of course, billions in U.S. funds and U.S. weaponry is a given. Obama, the newest friend's response: The bond between our two countries is unbreakable" (*The Daily Mail*).

So congratulations on your victory, Mr. Obama!

Continuity!

Why, asked geographer and historian Neil Smith, did citizens around the world respond to the World Trade Center attacks by shouting, "We are all Americans now?"

A certain racism - perhaps more accurately a sense of some differential value of citizens from different groups, countries, or hemispheres - surely framed some of the differential response to September 11th, and the global power of U.S.-owned and controlled media, for whose executives these events were obviously highly personal, accentuated response. (*Endgame of Globalization*, 2005)

And after all, Americans are the "good guys," the saviors of the world - but American will not tolerate anti-Americanism! The piercing look of the American Eagle, a donkey on one side and an elephant on the other, searching for advantages in the adversity it creates, only mean the "revolution" for "peace" can proceed...Proceed where?

To a course of action begun in its past and continuing, according to Smith, in what he calls "the endgame global America," the

"culmination of a U.S.-centered (but *not exclusively American*) political and economic globalization."

All those dead millions and millions of people, all the suffering, and struggling, not at the hands of communism or fascism, but in the name of "democracy," is sponsored by "U.S. repression and exploitation," denied or justified, writes Smith, "as a pragmatic necessity for the nefarious enemies."

While despised worldwide, "many U.S. multinational firms and their subsidiaries and contractors," manage to attract many, at home and abroad, to the American Dream. Victims they may be of the corporate mentality, worse, they display the posture of indifference toward their fellow citizens. As Marxist economist David Harvey notes, Thatcher famously announced that there was "no such thing as society, only individual men and women," - and she subsequently added, their families" (*A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, 2007).

In America, all are welcome to our one, big, prosperous community where there is a slice of the pie for everyone. America, the Empire, has enemies. The Empire's crusade against terrorism concedes certain levels of collateral damage to the ideals of liberty, equality, and democracy.

The idea of freedom 'this degenerates into a mere advocacy of free enterprise,' which means 'the fullness of freedom for those whose income, leisure and security need no enhancing, and a mere pittance of liberty for the people, who may in vain attempt to make use of their democratic rights to gain shelter from the power of the owners of property.' (Karl Polanyi qtd. in Harvey, *The Brief History*)

The hungry child in Cleveland, the farmer in India, the millions of homeless in the proxy state of Ethiopia, the Bradley Mannings, Darius Williams, and Trayvon Martins, the hounded and deported mothers and fathers, and the invisible Indigenous Americans in the U.S. are marked as expendable as those daily victims of U.S. drone attacks.

Smith: the conservative leadership wish away the contradictions while liberals "fold the contradictions into a narrative of realities verses ideals and focus on a moral parsing of specific events and episodes, sorting apart the regrettable failings of the ideal, the causes thereof and their implications" (*The Endgame*). Listen carefully to the donkeys and the elephants! In the language of

"freedom, equality, and rights," Smith continues, "measures and agreements" that sound as if for the good of the world's citizens, are actually "proposed on terms heavily favorable to U.S. economic interests." The "global ambition" of the U.S., voiced by the donkeys and elephants is, writes Smith, "constitutively nationalist." In other words, "American nationalism is founded on globalist claims."

When Hitler's Nationalist Nazi regime sought "Lebensraum," that is, living space, the Roosevelt administration advisor Isaiah Bowman offered this: The Nazis will get a Lebensraum - "only this time it would be an *economic* - not a geopolitical - Lebensraum, it would be *global*, and it would be *American*."

Bowman aside, does Hitler smile? All the non-pure made to comply, scabble or die! All the resources amassing wealth and workers on the cheap! All the global living space under the control of a Superpower!

Continuity!

Bush II's "more direct means of global economic dominance...as the platform for this restructuring of the global economy," writes Smith, falls in line with the neoliberal brand of nationalism. He could and did claim himself heir of Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt.

In Weimar, the democratic idea was pushed aside and the doors opened for a Hitler to wave across the aisles and across the ocean. In the U.S., Roosevelt, (later echoed by Bush II) spoke to his "base":

I was convinced we'd have a revolution in [the] US and I decided to be its leader and prevent it. I'm a rich man too and have run with your kind of people. I decided half a loaf was better than none - a half loaf for me and a half loaf for you and no revolution. (FDR)

Never again! Continuity for US!

The "new" unilateralism of the U.S. in global affairs predates the Clinton administration's mobilization of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) "to liberalize - deregulate and re-regulate - the financial sectors of economies across the world." Truman fostered the business of "freeing" people, for it's a "liberator's prerogative" to install capitalist governments, particularly wherever democratic nationalism elsewhere threatens to challenge the American Empire.

Neoliberalism's business of "freeing of people" flourished with the flames from Little Boy and Fat Man, and the U.S. hailed, as the savior of lives has been working toward "peace," with its friends and allies.

In its own backyard, Smith writes, "the U.S. struggled against the democratic nationalism of peoples who refused the American yoke." Reagan defined "freedom fighters" and hissed fire and brimstone at the contras. Carter had his Paul Volcker and Clinton his Rubin. Obama had Petraeus to strategize, his Geithner to oversee funding, and his Duncan to dull the senses of a new generation of American citizens. "Just wars," drones, and the NDAA further open doors, so the rulers believe, for the U.S. to achieve the goal of One Nation under neoliberalism. "Any political movement that holds individual freedoms to be sacrosanct is vulnerable to incorporation into the neoliberal fold." (Harvey, *The Brief History*).

It all looks similar to freedom and equality for all! It is no wonder, as Smith notes, (*The Endgame*), Kerry found it difficult to distinguish himself from Bush. Well, no surprise: Obama and Romney, covered in the red, white, and blue of neoliberal nationalism, one way or the other, would continue, to use Harvey's words, to restore and, in some cases, to create "the power of an economic elite" (*A Brief History*) - that is, corporate ruled, answering to the political and military interests of the U.S. Empire.

In this big, endgame, for now, there are no losers: Only winners and enemies. *Citizens of the U.S. stand with the government, right or wrong! No need to know the details or the past! Everyone wants to partake in this brand of nationalism!*

Liberals, too, traditionally endorse empire, writes Smith (*The Endgame*). Proponents of neoliberalism openly embrace "the nation of an American Empire." What is so paradoxical about a philosophy that overwhelmingly relies on military, economic, political, and cultural power "rather than immediate territorial control?" This is progress, and if this philosophy resonates with the neoconservative platform - well, yes! As Smith argues, neoliberalism gave birth to neoconservatism: "the reinvention of anomalous left-wing liberalism in the US in the twentieth century has, quite ironically, paved the way for a global rediscovery of some of the basic tenets of liberalism as the conservatism of capitalism *par excellence*."

Neoliberalism preserves conservative values! The neoliberals emphasis on "property, the market, state-mandated individualism (and the wealthier the individual the more sacrosanct the individualism)" promotes *the American future!* "When viewed outside the twentieth century American box, liberalism is not the antithesis of contemporary conservatism, but its political backbone," Smith writes. We should not be confused when witnessing liberals "outing themselves as pro-war, worse, pro-empire!" because, as Smith explains, it simply represents "an historical reconstruction to liberal roots."

Never Again! "We are all Americans now" - except for the poor, the working class, the "have-nots," the "terrorists."

"That a global American imperialism looks set to fail is the good news; the tragic news, of course, is that in the course of that failure, a flailing Americanism may exact a horrific cost in human lives," Smith concludes - unless we seek an alternative vision for the nation and the world. A nationalism, he argues, such as the U.S.'s, "located within the borders of a global hegemony...is...likely to enhance rather than diminish violence.

That leaves organized opposition as the most realistic alternative to the clash of terrorism. Tackling that clash of terrorisms requires opposition to war. It also requires opposition to the political economic interests and logics of globalization that fuel such an impossible war.

BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board member and Columnist, Lenore Jean Daniels, PhD, has a Doctorate in Modern American Literature/Cultural Theory. Click [here](#) to contact Dr. Daniels.



Copyright © 2002-2012
www.BlackCommentator.com
All Rights Reserved