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Obama, Monopoly Capitalism, and Global Hegemony

Time for an Accounting

by NORMAN POLLACK

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We've seen enough to know that the US is on track to push structural-ideological tyranny to a new level, not so much the reproduction of 20th century fascism (although that historical experience has created an indelible mark on the mindset of present-day geopolitical strategists in defining what might be possible in violating international law without thoroughly antagonizing the world community) as, instead, using a cloak of liberal humanitarianism to assert military power in pursuit of traditional imperialism. The same goals, different label.

America transcends the recent past, including its share in constructing a system of power politics, in favor of more ambitious unilateral dominance which takes advantage of the increasing cultural pluralism arising from the fragmentation of the commercial-financial order. Counterterrorism is the fig leaf for achieving greater wealth-concentration at home, aided by massive surveillance to induce social control of the population (informal boundaries on permissible dissent) for purposes of creating on the base of formal democracy a national-security state, and for achieving in the world, a predator state charged with the mission of resisting the societal democratization of

emerging and industrial economies alike. Both are necessary, compliancy here and abroad, a tightly-woven structure of wealth and power, if US capitalism, penetrating every nook and cranny of the globe, followed—or sometimes preceded—by military intervention, bases, naval power, hard-nosed diplomacy, paramilitary efforts at regime change, is to sustain acceptable rates of profits at acceptable levels of risk. American capitalist preeminence in a not-deviating capitalist world, firmly grounded in the dynamics of counterrevolution (the US as guardian of the global system) is at the crux of what others perceive as the Exceptionalist Nightmare or the divine right of hegemony.

The fig leaf of counterterrorism, which has supplanted anticommunism to the same end of habituating the American people to still more invidious extremes of wealth differentiation and resulting class power, is still, however, not sufficient for the stabilization of capitalism at this level of intense concentration; for needed as well is the popularization of Reaction and Repression. Obama is the man for the job. His race —thanks to liberal guilt and political correctness—alone saves him from critical scrutiny (neatly played out, as though making Reagan’s Teflon presidency amateurish by comparison), as he, like none before him, integrates capitalist, military, intelligence, and media resources, i.e., the communities represented by the elites of each, into a finely-honed authoritarian backdrop for manifesting and executing national power. And yet, liberals slobber at his feet, their moral bankruptcy and lack of political wisdom and will nowhere more evident.

The putsch has become outmoded; the bowdlerization of race and gender is a sufficient cause of false consciousness, of feel-good celebration of diversity, as the upper 0.1% tightened their hold on the levers of power. A black president? a woman president? What would Paul Robeson think—or Rosa Luxemburg! If a white president abused power, from Espionage Act prosecutions to the hit list of drone assassinations, in the way Obama has, one might hope to see street demonstrations—a hope perhaps futile given the decline of societal awareness already rife in the way war crimes, corporate giveaways, and the celebration of wealth pass unnoticed.

Time for an accounting, then, before it’s too late. From whence, though? It is important to recognize how much America has changed, since, say, the early 1950s. At least, then, anticommunism was met by (often painful and unsuccessful) resistance, for as repression mounted so also did the clarity of struggle and need to fight back. Taft-Hartley, Peekskill, legislation, events, large and small, the purging of “reds” from labor unions (and like UE, whole unions themselves)—a time to be alive, the very lies being met in response by forthright declarations of freedom.

Those who took the Fifth, and found themselves fired; those like Claude Pepper of Florida, who in the 1950 Senate race had been smeared by the Miami Herald with a faked composite showing him embracing Joe Stalin, and Pepper's opponent, campaigning around the state hissing that his opponent's sister was a—thespian. Even as late as 1956, I followed Adlai Stevenson for three days during the California Democratic primary, and while hardly a flaming radical, he had, as I recall, dead-tired, standing on the railroad tracks somewhere around San Jose, expressed a vision of social awareness seldom found since. With Kennedy, the fascistization of America had begun in earnest.

The process continues, now accelerated.