



RED LINE! Imperialists Must NOT Take Syria.

'We are here faced by fascists ... and what we know about fascists is that they need to be defeated'. So declared Shadow Foreign Secretary, Hilary Benn, in December 2015. He wasn't talking about Syria or its government but their 'Daesh' enemies. And when he cited article 51 of the UN Charter, the right to self defence, he wasn't talking about Syria but 'our' right to defend ourselves from this 'deadly threat'.

If the concept of 'self defence' is different here so too the perception of 'great' oratory. In our Parliament great speeches are made not by those ashamed of war but by those for whom the oppression of poor countries is a source of pride.

We should not get sidetracked by questions over whether Wednesday's sarin attack in Idlib was a false flag. Only one reason truly explains why they didn't wait for proof of the crime; they don't care who did it. What must occupy us is the process, which is always the same as are the consequences for the people of the target countries.

When you hold as norms values which are abhorrent to everyone else, the atrocities of war become subordinated to your needs just as the fate of the small nations you attack. Like all US Presidents, and for that matter British Prime Ministers, Donald Trump is a 'war criminal'. No investigation is needed, they don't deny what they have done.

According to the NGO 'Airwars', since his inauguration Trump has stepped up US attacks in Yemen, Syria and Iraq. Last month coalition airstrikes killed one thousand civilians, including two hundred in Mosul a fortnight before Idlib. Schools, hospitals and a mosque were among the collateral damage. The new President has made it clear he has no problem with war crimes. He would authorise torture and assassination and kill the families of suspected terrorists. If the fate of entire nations, most recently Libya, can be sealed without a ripple in the public conscience, no 'line' exists for the leaders of the 'free world'.

So long as we see others as servants of our 'interests', the unverified atrocity stories that often precede our leaders attacks on sovereign states, including the Iraqi babies in incubators, the now discredited 'crimes' of Milosevic, the 'genocide' that didn't

happen in Kosovo and the 'massacres' being 'planned' by Gaddafi will do nothing more than 'confirm' our 'responsibility' to subjugate others.

When the US Ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, flourished photographs of Idlib's dead babies before telling the Security Council America had a right to 'respond' she knew the US is dropping white phosphorous on these countries as well as the depleted uranium with which in 1991 it poisoned the population of southern Iraq. Since she doesn't recognise 'subject' nations as 'sovereign', the people never acquire the right to be protected from 'us'.

In June 2007, the former Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, General Wesley Clark told 'Democracy Now' that the US has a list of seven countries to 'take out' among them Iraq, Libya, Syria and Iran. Inside those countries, he said, it was actively fuelling, supporting and arming opposition groups.

Since the end of the Soviet Union, Russia and China have acquiesced at the UN in the desecration by NATO powers of Yugoslavia, Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya as well as in numerous interventions and coups.

The Western sponsored overthrow of an elected government in Ukraine may well have been the cause that ended Russia's policy of appeasement. Still, in Russia's defence of Syria we might have hoped for an end to the Western programme of destabilisation and war and the refugee horrors it spawned. But this was another false flag.

The US and its allies continue to support their 'good' rebels. As in Libya, and as happened on Thursday, the 'coalition' will escalate at the merest suspicion that the war might be ended or government control restored.

If they don't stop now, when Syria has the powerful support Iraq and Libya never got, it suggests they will never stop. This is the red line. If you haven't raged before, you must do so now. Syria must survive!

Kim Bryan

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