

Obama-Biden — Osama bin Laden: A coincidence? I think not.

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Im sorry to say that I think that John McCain is going to be the next president of the United States. After the long night of Bush horror any Democrat should easily win, but the Dems are screwing it up and McCain has been running more-or-less even with Barack Obama in the polls. The Democrats should run on the slogan “If you liked Bush, you’ll love McCain”, but that would be too outspoken, too direct for the spineless Nancy Pelosi and her spineless party. Or, “If you liked Iraq, you’ll love Iran.” But the Democrat leadership is not on record as categorically opposing either conflict.

Nor, it seems, do the Democrats have the courage to raise the issue of McCain not having been born in the United States as the Constitution requires. Nor questioning him about accusations by his fellow American prisoners about his considerable collaboration with his Vietnamese captors. Nor a word about McCain’s highly possible role in the brutal Georgian invasion of South Ossetia on August 7. (More on this last below.)

Obama has lost much of the sizable liberal/progressive vote because of his move to the center-right (or his exposure as a center-rightist), and he now may have lost even his selling point of being more strongly against the war than McCain — if in fact he actually is — by appointing Joe Biden as his running mate. Biden has long been a hawk on Iraq (as well as the rest of US foreign policy), calling for an invasion as far back as 1998.[1] In April, 2007, when pressed in an interview about his vote for the war in 2003, Biden said: “It was a mistake. I regret my vote. ... because I learned more, like everybody else learned, about what, in fact, we were told.”[2] This has been a common excuse of war supporters in recent years when the tide of public opinion turned against them. But why did millions and millions of Americans march against the war in the fall of 2002 and early 2003, before it began? What did they know that Joe Biden didn’t know? It was clear to the protesters that George W. Bush and Dick Cheney were habitual liars, that they couldn’t care less about the people of Iraq, that the defenseless people of that ancient civilization were going to be bombed to hell; the protesters knew something about the bombings of Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Panama, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan; they knew about napalm, cluster bombs, depleted uranium. ... Didn’t Biden know about any of these things? Those who marched knew that the impending war was something a moral person could not support; and that it was totally illegal, a textbook case of a “war of aggression”; one didn’t have to be an expert in international law to know this. Did Joe Biden think about any of this?

If McCain had a role in the Georgian invasion of breakaway-region Ossetia it would have been arranged with the help of Randy Scheunemann, McCain’s top foreign policy adviser and until recently Georgia’s principal lobbyist in Washington. As head of the neo-conservative Committee for the Liberation of Iraq in 2002, Scheunemann was one of

America's leading advocates for invading Iraq. One of McCain's primary campaign sales pitches has been to emphasize his supposed superior experience in foreign policy matters, which — again supposedly — means something in this world. McCain consistently leads Obama in the opinion polls on "readiness to be commander-in-chief", or similar nonsense. The Georgia-Russia hostilities raise — in the mass media and the mass mind — the issue of the United States needing an experienced foreign policy person to handle such a "crisis", and, standard in every crisis — an enemy bad guy.

Typical of the media was the Chicago Tribune praising McCain for his statesmanlike views on Iraq and stating: "What Russia's invasion of Georgia showed was that the world is still a very dangerous place," and Russia is a "looming threat". In addition to using the expression "Russia's invasion of Georgia", the Tribune article also referred to "Russia's invasion of South Ossetia". No mention of Georgia's invasion of South Ossetia which began the warfare.[3] In a feature story in the Washington Post on the Georgia events the second sentence was: "The war had started, Russian jets had just bombed the outskirts of Tbilisi [Georgian capital]." The article then speaks of "the horror" of "the Russian invasion". Not the slightest hint of any Georgian military action can be found in the story.[4] One of course can find a media report here or there that mentions or at least implies in passing that an invasion from Georgia is what instigated the mayhem. But I've yet to come upon one report in the American mass media that actually emphasizes this point, and certainly none that put it in the headline. The result is that if a poll were taken amongst Americans today, I'm sure the majority of those who have any opinion would be convinced that the nasty Russians began it all.[5]

What we have here in the American media is simply standard operating procedure for an ODE (Officially Designated Enemy). Almost as soon as the fighting began, Dick Cheney announced: "Russian aggression must not go unanswered." [6] The media needed no further instructions. Yes, that's actually the way it works. (See Cuba, Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Iran, Bolivia, etc., etc.)

The president of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili, is an American poodle to an extent that would embarrass Tony Blair. Until their 2,000 troops were called home for this emergency, the Georgian contingent in Iraq was the largest after the US and UK. The Georgian president prattles on about freedom and democracy and the Cold War like George W., declaring that the current conflict "is not about Georgia anymore. It is about America, its values,".[7] (I must confess that until Saakashvili pointed it out I hadn't realized that "American values" were involved in the fighting.) His government recently ran a full-page ad in the Washington Post. The entire text, written vertically, was: "Lenin ... Stalin ... Putin ... Give in? Enough is enough. Support Georgia. ... sosgeorgia.org"[8]

UK prime minister Gordon Brown asserted that Russia's recognition of the independence of Georgia's two breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia was "dangerous and unacceptable." [9] Earlier this year when Kosovo unilaterally declared its independence from Serbia, the UK, along with the US and other allied countries quickly recognized it despite widespread warnings that legitimating the Kosovo action might lead to a number of other regions in the world declaring their independence.

Brown's hypocrisy appears as merely the routine stuff of politicians compared to that of John McCain and George W. re the Georgia fighting: "I'm interested in good relations between the United States and Russia, but in the 21st century, nations don't invade other nations," said

McCain [10], the staunch supporter of US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and leading champion of an invasion of Iran.

And here is Mahatma Gandhi Bush meditating on the subject: "Bullying and intimidation are not acceptable ways to conduct foreign policy in the 21st century." [11]

Hypocrisy of this magnitude has to be respected. It compares favorably with the motto on automobile license plates of the state of New Hampshire made by prisoners: "Live Free or Die".

Our beloved president was also moved to affirm that the Russian recognition of the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia: was an "irresponsible decision". "Russia's action only exacerbates tensions and complicates diplomatic negotiations," he said. [12] Belgrade, are you listening?

It should be noted that linguistically and historically- distinct South Ossetia and Abkhazia had been autonomous Russian/Soviet protectorates or regions from early in the 19th century to 1991, when the Georgian government abolished their autonomy.

So what then was the purpose of the Georgian invasion of Ossetia if not to serve the electoral campaign of John McCain, a man who might be the next US president and be thus very obligated to the Georgian president? Saakashvili could have wanted to overthrow the Ossetian government to incorporate it back into Georgia, at the same time hopefully advancing the cause of Georgia's petition to become a member of NATO, which looks askance upon new members with territories in dispute or with military facilities belonging to a nonmember state such as Russia. But the nature of the Georgian invasion does not fit this thesis. The Georgians did none of the things that those staging a coup have traditionally found indispensable. They did not take over a TV or radio station, or the airport, or important government buildings, or military or police installations. They didn't take into custody key members of the government. All the US/Israeli-armed and trained Georgia military did was bomb and kill, civilians and Russian peacekeeper soldiers, the latter legally there for 16 years under an international agreement. For what purpose all this if not to incite a Russian intervention?

The only reason the United States did not itself strongly attack the Russian forces is that it's a pre-eminent principle of American military interventions to not pick on anyone capable of really defending themselves.

Unreconstructed cold warriors now fret about Russian expansionism, warning that Ukraine might be next. But of the numerous myths surrounding the Cold War, "communist expansionism" was certainly one of the biggest. We have to remember that within the space of 25 years, Western powers invaded Russia three times — World War I, the "intervention" of 1918-20, and World War II, inflicting some 40 million casualties in the two world wars alone. (The Soviet Union lost considerably more people to international warfare on its own land than it did abroad. There are not too many great powers who can say that.) To carry out these invasions, the West used Eastern Europe as a highway. Should it be any cause for wonder that after World War II the Soviets were determined to close down this highway? Minus the Cold War atmosphere and indoctrination, most people would have no problem in seeing the Soviet takeover of Eastern Europe as an act of self defense. Neither does the case of Afghanistan support the idea of "expansionism". Afghanistan lived alongside the Soviet Union for more than 60 years with no Soviet military intrusion. It's only when the

United States intervened in Afghanistan to replace a government friendly to Moscow with one militantly anti-communist that the Russians invaded to do battle with the US-supported Islamic jihadists.

During the Cold War, before undertaking a new military intervention, American officials usually had to consider how the Soviet Union would react. That restraint was removed with the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. We may now, however, be witnessing the beginning of a new kind of polarization in the world. An increasing number of countries in the Third World — with Latin America as a prime example — have more fraternal relations with Moscow and/or Beijing than with Washington. Singapore's former UN ambassador observed: "Most of the world is bemused by western moralising on Georgia" ... While the western view is that the world "should support the underdog, Georgia, against Russia ... most support Russia against the bullying west. The gap between the western narrative and the rest of the world could not be clearer." [13] And the Washington Post reported: "Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi's influential son, echoed the delight expressed in much of the Arab news media. 'What happened in Georgia is a good sign, one that means America is no longer the sole world power setting the rules of the game ... there is a balance in the world now. Russia is resurging, which is good for us, for the entire Middle East'." [14]

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