

## With Gates, Obama Opts for Empire

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Global Research, December 02, 2008

[The Progressive](#) 26 November 2008

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

Barack Obama's got a big problem.

He's suckered himself into believing that we need a bipartisan foreign and military policy.

And so he's reappointing Robert Gates as head of the Defense Department.

Let's remember: Gates was head of the CIA during Bush I. As such, he was involved in the invasion of Panama, the funding of a genocidal regime in Guatemala, the support of Suharto's brutal government in Indonesia, and the overthrow of Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Haiti.

With Bush I, he pushed the first war against Saddam Hussein, even when it seemed that Saddam was preparing to withdraw from Iraq.

And now with Bush II, he's been running the Iraq War, which Obama vowed to end.

And Gates has come out with modernizing our nuclear weapons arsenal—that means making new nukes—even though Obama talked about nuclear disarmament during the campaign.

Something's terribly wrong with this picture.

And it's simply this: Obama doesn't really want a change in foreign and military policy. He said as much during the campaign when he praised Bush Sr. and said he wanted to return to the bipartisan consensus of the last forty years.

In those forty years, the United States waged war against Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. It helped overthrow the Allende government in Chile. It supported Suharto's invasion of East Timor. It financed and trained death squads in Central America. And on and on.

With the Gates choice, Obama proves he's not about ending the U.S. empire.

He's about running the U.S. empire—with less bravado than Bush-Cheney, but perhaps more efficiently.

And he's perfectly willing to use the old hands like Gates, bloody as they are, to get that job done.

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