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Scoring the Global War on Terror
Andrew Bacevich, Op-Ed, TomDispatch, Feb. 19, 2012. “With the United States now well into the second decade of what the Pentagon has styled an ‘era of persistent conflict,’ the war formerly known as the global war on terrorism (unofficial acronym WFKATGWOT) appears increasingly fragmented and diffuse. Without achieving victory, yet unwilling to acknowledge failure, the United States military has withdrawn from Iraq. It is trying to leave Afghanistan, where events seem equally unlikely to yield a happy outcome.”

READ | DISCUSS | SHARE http://www.nationofchange.org/scoring-global-war-terror-1329668103 http://tomdispatch.blogspot.com/2012/02/from-liberation-to-assassination.html
“Rights Chief Slams EU For Cooperation In U.S. Renditions”

Council of Europe (COE) Human Rights Commissioner Thomas Hammarberg
European Union Human Rights Council, European Union Renditions, US. Renditions,
BRUSSELS — Europe's human rights chief launched a blistering attack Thursday on European
governments' counterterrorism actions, accusing them of helping the United States commit "countless"
crimes in the past 10 years.

The 10-year anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks is an occasion to analyze whether the official responses
have been proper and effective, said Thomas Hammarberg, the Council of Europe's rights
commissioner.

"In attempting to combat crimes attributed to terrorists, countless further crimes have been committed
in the course of the U.S.-led 'global war on terror,'" he said in a statement. "Many of those crimes have
been carefully and deliberately covered up."

European governments were "deeply complicit" in U.S. counterterrorism strategies, including
torture, Hammarberg said. In a 2007 probe, Swiss politician Dick Marty accused 14 European
governments of permitting the CIA to run detention centers or carry out rendition flights between 2002
and 2005.

"They permitted, protected and participated in CIA operations which violated fundamental
tenets of our systems of justice and human rights protection," Hammarberg said, adding that the
governments involved have blocked proper investigations into rendition cases in line with
Washington's wishes.

"The message is clear – good relations between the security agencies are deemed more important than
preventing torture and other serious human rights violations," he said.

The 47-nation Council of Europe believes more than a dozen European nations colluded in the CIA's
rendition program, in which suspects were secretly sent to be held in nations that allow torture.

The Council of Europe and the European Parliament have repeatedly criticized states such as Germany,
Italy, Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Sweden and Britain for allowing CIA and other U.S.
government agencies to use their airspace and airports while transporting abducted terror suspects.

On Monday, the Council will publish its comment about CIA "black sites" in Poland, Lithuania and
Romania where detainees are believed to have been held covertly, an official speaking on condition of
anonymity said.

Hammarberg cited the cases of several victims, including German car salesman Khaled El-Masri who
underwent two renditions, first to Afghanistan and then to Albania, where he was dumped on a remote
hillside in an apparent effort to cover up what officials later conceded was an error.

Hammarberg urged European governments to allow judicial scrutiny of abuses arising from the
rendition operations, and to stop shielding those who collaborated with U.S. intelligence agencies in
organizing the operations.

"So far Europe has granted effective impunity to those who committed crimes in implementing the
rendition policy. An urgent rethink is required to prevent this misjudged and failed counterterrorism
approach from having a sad legacy of injustice," he said.

May 29, 2012
Tomgram: Andrew Bacevich, The Golden Age of Special Operations
They have a way of slipping under the radar, whether heading into Pakistan looking for Osama bin Laden, Central Africa looking for Joseph Kony, or Yemen assumedly to direct local military action against al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. I’m talking, of course, about U.S. special operations forces. These days, from Somalia to the Philippines, presidential global interventions are increasingly a dime a dozen; and they are normally spearheaded by those special ops troops backed by CIA or Air Force drones. Few Americans even notice.

An ever expanding secret military cocooned inside the U.S. military, special operations types remain remarkably, determinedly anonymous. With the exception of their commander, Admiral William McRaven, they generally won’t even reveal their last names in public, which only contributes to their growing mystique in this country.

But for a crew so dedicated to anonymity, they also turn out to be publicity hounds of the first order. In 2011, for instance, active-duty U.S. Navy Seals (first-name only please!) became movie stars, spearheading a number one box office hit, Act of Valor. It was the film equivalent of a vanity-press production, focused as it did on their own skills in battle in... hmmm, the Philippines (to prevent a terror strike against the U.S.). A team of SEALs even parachuted onto Sunset Boulevard for the film’s Hollywood premiere.

Then last week another special ops team, in coordination with their Norwegian and Australian counterparts, heroically rescued the mayor of Tampa Bay, held "hostage." They also rappelled down from helicopters and arrived in Humvees to secure the area around the Tampa Convention Center, which will service 15,000 members of the media when the Republicans hit town to nominate Mitt Romney for president. Whew! Another close publicity call!

It was a mock assault on terror watched by thousands of Tampa residents, all timed to the annual Special Operations Forces Industry Conference, also in town and swarmed by 8,000 attendees, including McRaven. Its goal: to bring together special operators from around the world and the industry that arms and accessorizes them. (U.S. special ops forces have a $2 billion purchasing budget each year for all the gadgets the defense industry can produce.)

Oh, and if you want a measure of how hot the special ops guys are these days, how much everyone wants to horn in on their act, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton spoke before the conference, offering, according to Danger Room’s David Axe, “a vision in which shadowy U.S. and allied Special Operations Forces, working hand in hand with America’s embassies and foreign governments, together play a key role preventing low-intensity conflicts.” And if those conflicts aren’t prevented, then the Foreign Service, Clinton assured her listeners, will be happy to lend its “language and cultural skills” to the fighting prowess of the special ops troops. Diplomacy? It’s so old school in such a sexy, new, “covert” war-fightin’ world.

The basic principle is simple enough: if you see a juggernaut heading your way, duck. As TomDispatch regular Andrew Bacevich, editor most recently of The Short American Century, makes clear, war American-style is heading back "into the shadows" and it's going to be one roller-coaster of a scary ride. (To catch Timothy MacBain's latest Tomcast audio interview in
which Bacevich discusses what we don’t know about special operations forces, click here http://tomdispatch.blogspot.com/2012/05/andrew-bacevich-retired-army-colonel.html?utm_source=TomDispatch&utm_campaign=ae49a00d2-TD_Bacevich5_29_2012&utm_medium=email or download it to your iPod here.)

Tom

Unleashed: Globalizing the Global War on Terror
By Andrew J. Bacevich
As he campaigns for reelection, President Obama periodically reminds audiences of his success in terminating the deeply unpopular Iraq War. With fingers crossed for luck, he vows to do the same with the equally unpopular war in Afghanistan. If not exactly a peacemaker, our Nobel Peace Prize-winning president can (with some justification) at least claim credit for being a war-ender.

Yet when it comes to military policy, the Obama administration’s success in shutting down wars conducted in plain sight tells only half the story, and the lesser half at that. More significant has been this president’s enthusiasm for instigating or expanding secret wars, those conducted out of sight and by commandos.

Click here to read more of this dispatch http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/175547/tomgram%3A_andrew_bacevich%2C_the_golden_age_of_special_operations/?utm_source=TomDispatch&utm_campaign=ae49a00d2-TD_Bacevich5_29_2012&utm_medium=email#more

Exposes exaggerated warnings, lies, and flawed assumptions in how the US Government has responded “in the interest of national security.”
America is frightened.
Forget what you read in the newspapers and magazines, see on television, or hear on the radio. Despite what the pundits, politicians, bureaucrats and security experts say, an international network of terrorists is not poised to attack America again. It doesn’t have to anymore. America’s worst enemy has become its obsession with terrorism and the mythology that surrounds it. Here’s the straight dope on:
The phantom enemy “Al Qaeda”
The real motives behind 9/11
Nukes and “dirty bombs”
Plastic and liquid explosives
Airport security
“Terrorism” convictions

Terrorist Plots, Hatched by the FBI
Excerpt: "The United States has been narrowly saved from lethal terrorist plots in recent years - or so it has seemed."
READ MORE http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/277-75/11191-focus-terrorist-plots-hatched-by-the-fbi
“TERRORISM EXPERT”

Colombia: Class Warfare, Imperialism, and “War on Terror”

Cocaine, Death Squads, and the War on Terror: U.S. Imperialism and Class Struggle in Colombia by Oliver Villar and Drew Cottle with a foreword by Peter Dale Scott
Kindle, Sony Reader, Nook

We're Sorry

Since the late 1990s, the United States has funneled billions of dollars in aid to Colombia, ostensibly to combat the illicit drug trade and State Department-designated terrorist groups. The result has been a spiral of violence that continues to take lives and destabilize Colombian society. This book asks an obvious question: are the official reasons given for the wars on drugs and terror in Colombia plausible, or are there other, deeper factors at work?

Scholars Villar and Cottle suggest that the answers lie in a close examination of the cocaine trade, particularly its class dimensions. Their analysis reveals that this trade has fueled extensive economic growth and led to the development of a “narco-state” under the control of a “narco-bourgeoisie” which is not interested in eradicating cocaine but in gaining a monopoly over its production. The principal target of this effort is the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), who challenge that monopoly as well as the very existence of the Colombian state. Meanwhile, U.S. business interests likewise gain from the cocaine trade and seek to maintain a dominant, imperialist relationship with their most important client state in Latin America. Suffering the brutal consequences, as always, are the peasants and workers of Colombia. This revelatory book punctures the official propaganda and shows the class war underpinning the politics of the Colombian cocaine trade.

Exceedingly well researched and written, this book lays bare the putrid essence of an important component of U.S. imperialism in its current form. Villar and Cottle are to be commended for their vital contribution to our understanding of the structures and dynamics we now confront.
This timely and important book unravels the ‘official discourse’ of the war on drugs and the related war on terror. It tells where the vast majority of profits from the multi-billion dollar Colombian cocaine trade go - certainly not to the impoverished people growing coca leaves - how the profits get there, and how this ill-gained wealth furthers the imperial interests of the U.S. and its collaborators in the ‘narco-bourgeoisie’ in South America. A definitive account.

—Douglas Valentine, author, The Strength of the Pack: The Politics, Personalities and Espionage Intrigues That Shaped the DEA

Villar and Cottle’s profound and courageous book shows forcibly that the ‘war on drugs’ in Colombia, as elsewhere, entrenches narco-states in the interests of the empire from which it emanates, even as its war on terrorism perpetrates and institutionalizes terror. Their forthright findings rest firmly on overwhelming evidence, carefully compiled.

—Scott Poynting, professor of sociology, Manchester Metropolitan University

Colombia has long been at the center of diverse studies into and debates on the workings of U.S. imperialism in Latin America, as well as the political dynamics of class warfare and narco-state formation, but rarely with such solid research and sharp theoretically informed analysis. This book is a tour de force of rigorous Marxist class analysis, reconstituted after its abandonment by many who succumbed to the virus of postmodernism. It is also very well written, a surprisingly readable account of the contours of class struggle in one regional context of what we might describe as the capitalism of the twenty-first century. A must read for all progressive and critical thinkers.

—Henry Veltmeyer, professor of sociology and international development studies, Saint Mary’s University

Just like those who become addicted to cocaine, the American public is in denial about its government’s long history of using narcotics—their production, use, and prohibition—as an integral part of its imperial political arsenal. But drugs have been a part of the Great Games from the 18th century, when the British East India Company’s factories produced opium to enslave the Chinese. Villar and Cottle’s work, focusing on Colombia, is an important contribution to exposing this particularly monstrous imperial byway and its very ‘deep political’ repercussions.

—Eric Walberg, author, Postmodern Imperialism: Geopolitics and the Great Games

To go against the flow is a great feat. In this work Oliver Villar and Drew Cottle have done that. In short supply indeed are those who show, as they do, that the real ‘histories’ of violence, drug trafficking and guerrilla war in Colombia are not those repeated by the great majority of media and ‘experts.’ The authors have not tried to be
neutral: they have taken pains to be objective and honest.

—Hernando Calvo Ospina, author, *El equipo de Choque de la CIA (The CIA Shock Team); Colombia, democracia y terrorismo de Estado (Colombia, Democracy and State Terrorism)*

**Oliver Villar** is a lecturer in Politics at Charles Sturt University. For the past decade his research has been devoted to this book. Much of the research is based on his PhD dissertation on the political economy of contemporary Colombia in the context of the cocaine drug trade. He has published broadly on the Inter-American cocaine drug trade, the U.S. War on Drugs and Terror in Colombia, and U.S.-Colombian relations. **Drew Cottle** is a senior lecturer in Politics at the University of Western Sydney. He has written extensively on international political economy and revolutionary struggles in the Third World. His book, *The Brisbane Line: A Re-Appraisal* was a study of inter-imperialist rivalry and potential collaboration in Australia prior to the Pacific War.