

How the UN Covers for US Aggression

For decades the American Right has decried the U.N. for encroaching on American sovereignty, but the truth is that the U.N. is a chief U.S. accomplice in violating the sovereignty of other nations, notes J.P. Sottile.

By J.P. Sottile

President Trump opened his big United Nations week ... and his famous mouth ... with a predictable plug for one of his properties and some playful glad-handing with French President Emmanuel Macron. Trump also scolded the U.N.'s unwieldy scrum for "not living up to its potential." He made a passing reference to the U.N.'s wasteful use of American money. And he called for "reform" of the much-maligned international forum.

It was a stolid prelude to what will no doubt be "must-see" TV when he speaks to the UN General Assembly on Tuesday about North Korea and Iran. And it was a far cry from the way America's leading "America Firster" spent the campaign lamenting how unfair the U.N. is to the poor schlemiel we call Uncle Sam.

He is likely to use his speech to throw a little bit of that same red meat to his base, but his call for reform falls well short of what his supporters want ... which is an abrupt end of U.S. involvement in the international body. They are motivated by a grab-bag of reasons that point to the U.N. being a threat to their guns, their bank accounts and their God-given freedom.

Oddly enough, these conspiratorial narratives have been around for decades and they mostly center on a grand plan by U.N. elites to abscond American sovereignty and dissolve the U.S. into a U.N.-led world government. And the evidence of this is the way the U.N. harasses and restricts Uncle Sam while siphoning-off America's wealth. At least, that's what some think.

Most ominously, many object to the way U.N. funds are being used to quietly deploy gun-grabbing U.N. soldiers in advance of the big takeover. But like so much of Trump's intoxicating irredentism ... this is a grievance more likely rooted in a three-day meth bender in a Tallahassee trailer park than it is from shocking evidence gathered from well-traveled observation. It's paranoia. But really, it's worse than that.

Why? Because the U.N. has basically been the complete opposite of what its angriest critics claim. It is not out to get the U.S. Rather, it has largely been America's tool since its inception and, in particular, it has repeatedly covered Uncle Sam's overly-exposed butt as he (a.k.a. "the royal we") has gone

around the world on a three decade-long military bender since the end of the Cold War.

Yes, the Gulf War was U.N. approved and the whole world got behind it because (April Glaspie's backstory notwithstanding) the *prima facie* case was strong and it was a fairly clear-cut example of unwarranted aggression. That was an easy call.

Global Violence

But since then, the calls have been nothing short of murky as the U.S. has bombed and droned and deployed and invaded and covertly-acted and regime-changed all around the globe. And the unspoken truth is that the United Nations has been America's all-too silent partner as Uncle Sam traipsed around the planet with a loaded gun, remote control assassination machines and paper-thin rationales for intervention.

Although the U.N. occasionally puts a bug up Israeli Prime Minister Bibi Netanyahu's ass on the issue of the slow-motion ethnic cleansing in the West Bank ... what other issue is there where the U.N. has taken a real stand against the U.S. or U.S. policy objectives?

Where is the U.N.'s punishment for being lied to by then-Secretary of State Colin Powell? And where is the punishment for destroying a bystander nation under false pretenses? Where is the punishment for Abu Ghraib or Gitmo?

Where is the punishment for America's summary execution of "suspected militants" around the Muslim world simply because they are of "military age" and in the wrong place at the right time ... and for the CIA, it is always the right time to kill a suspect no matter how wrong the place may be. And where is the condemnation of America's destabilizing role as the world's leading supermarket of military hardware?

How about mounting civilian casualties from an ever-widening bombing campaign? The U.N. can say the killings are "unacceptable," but does it really matter if there is no sanction? There haven't been any sanctions after children were killed in a "U.S.-backed raid" in Somalia. Go figure, right?

Or what about America's complicity in the catastrophe of Yemen? Where are those sanctions? And what exactly has the U.N. done to punish any number of extra-legal maneuver by a succession of American presidents over the course of the "Global War on Terror"? The simple answer is nothing.

Instead, the Secretary General is largely beholden to the disproportionate influence of the United States. The Security Council's agenda is basically set

by the United States ... and that's particularly true since the Soviet Union collapsed. At the same time, the U.N.'s occasionally contentious debates do little more than offer the imprimatur of international approbation or well-noted disdain despite the functionally inconsequential nature of those debates.

A Fig Leaf for Empire

Either way it is a win for Uncle Sam because the presence of a neutered United Nations provides the United States with a fig leaf just big enough to cover the dangly parts of America's otherwise naked empire.

The money that does go from the U.S. Treasury into the minutia around the margins ... like UNESCO programs and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the World Health Organization (WHO) and all the other little crumbs that get thrown around the world ... these are payoffs. This is what the world gets for mostly keeping its mouth shut in the face of America's globe-spanning empire. The tiny amount of aid that trickles down past the bureaucracy ... much like the bureaucracy itself ... is not an example of America "getting played" by wasteful foreigners with hidden agendas. This is America paying to play the world like organ grinder with a hurdy-gurdy monkey.

Frankly, the "28.5% of the overall peacekeeping bill" that Trump calls "unfair" (about \$2.2 billion of the \$3.3 billion the U.S. gives to the UN annually) is a pittance ... particularly if you want the unchecked right to tell Persians what they can and cannot do in the Persian Gulf, to tell the Chinese what they can and cannot build in the South China Sea, and to tell every other power on the face of the earth why they cannot have the same nuclear capability America not only has ... but is currently "upgrading" to the tune of \$1.5 trillion.

Even more amazingly, the U.S. wants to deny these nations the only real insurance policy against U.S.-led regime change. And why is that? Because there ain't a Curveball's chance in Hell that the U.N. will ever be able to stop Uncle Sam from marching where he wants, when he wants and for whatever reason he wants to cook-up. That's a historically provable fact.

The only real check on U.S. power is the ability of an asymmetrical power to go nuclear. And let's admit it, they are ALL asymmetrical powers when compared to America's gargantuan, trillion-dollar national security beast. And this is why the U.N.'s "partnership" with International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is the only U.N.-associated agency that really matters. They can't do much, but they can throw a wrench into another WMD snipe hunt ... like they are doing now with the Iran Nuclear Deal.

But like it was tested by Team Bush, the IAEA is going to be tested again as

Trump and Netanyahu make their bogus case ... without a hint of irony ... that Iran is the world's greatest threat. But that's really just par for a course that's riddled with falsified flags haphazardly stuck into the shallow holes of a back nine that's actually been built by and for a club-wielding Uncle Sam.

A Cult of Grievance

And therein lies the truly pernicious part of the Trumped-up case against the U.N. ... because, like so much of America's growing cult of grievance, it reflects an ever-widening gap between America's stated ideals and its self-serving behavior around the world.

As we are learning almost daily, Americans tried to square that circle by electing a profligate liar who fully embodies America's insatiable desire to take credit, particularly where none is due ... and to outsource the blame to scapegoats like the U.N., particularly when the only alternative is a long look into the mirror.

And in the case of the U.N., that projected guilt is in spite of the fact that it is often tasked with quietly cleaning up some of the collateral damage wrought by their main accuser. They just have to do so without any real power or the funds to do the job. That's the simple truth you won't hear in Trump's speech ... or any speech, for that matter.

It's the fact that the U.N.'s meager amount of "wasteful spending" doesn't even begin to cover the cost of doing business when your business depends on paying the world to look the other way while you get away with murder.

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