

U.S. exploits Somalia

Badi M. Ali
Special to The Guilfordian

The famine in Somalia is undoubtedly serious; however, the U.S. is exploiting the famine as a pretext to send thousands of troops that might form the backbone of a permanent American occupation in the horn of Africa. Even if such forces were to be reduced in the future, the U.S. would have installed a puppet regime similar to that of Ziyad Barre, the past president of Somalia—a regime that would serve American interests.

It may be important to note that Barre was supported, sponsored and armed by the Americans as well as his policies which caused this horrifying famine. After Barre's ouster in January, 1991, the U.S. and UN did nothing to help the people of Somalia or prevent the deliberate practices of withholding aid and food from

reaching the people of Somalia.

The US supports their international dictatorship with the support of the media. Before the army landed in Somalia, the media were present. Ironically, the U.S. stated they were unable to control the media. The government uses the media in Somalia to portray the US missionary image to the world and reinforce this image through continual pictures on television. The media benefits the West. For example, soldiers are present in Somalia from many different countries but the ones seen on television are always American. The glory and credit are reserved for the U.S. troops.

Also, the government and media depicted the Somalis as well-armed gunmen and used this position as rationale for the troops going to Somalia. If the gunmen were well-armed, where are they now? Were they, in fact, more like the four-

teen-year-old who traded his AK-47 for a balloon? French television in fact captured a haunting image of American GI's in heavy boots which were pressed

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against the necks of Somali youths

forced to lie spread-eagled on the ground.

On television we don't see Somalis involved in the government of their country. Instead we see representatives from the US and UN. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the UN Secretary-General, has proven to protect Western interests in the past as engineer of the Israel-Egypt treaty. Robert Oakley, leader of the U.S. Special Envoy to Somalia, is an expert on the Middle East. He was an ambassador to Somalia during the Ziyad Barre era.

He was also an ambassador to Pakistan who played a leading role in involvement in Afghanistan.

Oakley is depicted as running the country, calling meetings, giving orders without consulting Somali leadership. This practice is justified by conversely depicting the Somali leadership as out-of-control clans who are always fighting each other.

It is important to keep in mind that the U.S. is not willing to shed an ounce of blood for genuine humanitarian causes. It simply is not its tradition. The US will protect U.S. and western corporate interests. The American presence in Somalia is an intervention and occupation. The truth is that nearly a century of colonial rule followed by decades of western influence, culture and political governing systems did not work in Africa.

So Americans had to go there to preserve Western interests in light of the awakening and growing awareness of Africa to international opportunities.

The U.S. invasion of Somalia is a trial and experiment for similar attacks and covert operations against Middle Eastern and African countries under the guise of humanitarian solutions. Let's hope the next country will not be Sudan.

Cheers and Jeers

Cheers to the student security guards who've worked so many hours overtime in the last few months. We appreciate you!

Jeers to the person or persons who stole the gumball machine out of the Underground! (It's been replaced.)

Jeers to the 535 students that did not vote in Senate and Union elections!

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