



Our One-World Sphere of Influence

I used to think you had to have a sense of humor to survive in politics. I am now becoming convinced that a great many politicians have a tin ear for humor-or at least for irony. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, for example, has called Russia on the carpet for that country's invasion and "continued occupation" of Georgia. Maybe I have a warped sense of humor, but I think that's funny. Maybe not laugh-out-loud (or lol in techy talk) funny, but rich in irony nonetheless. And I'm pretty sure Mme. Hillarious doesn't get it.



If memory serves, the United States invaded Iraq a few years back in an invasion authorized by a resolution supported by then-Senator Clinton and the vast majority of her colleagues. Seven and a half years later, we're still there and still involved in the fighting. And we're still in Afghanistan in our ninth year of fighting there. And we're carrying out military strikes in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, according to recent reports. In all those places we are a long way from home. Georgia, by contrast, is next door to Russia and was part of the Soviet Union. But that doesn't matter to our Secretary of State or, apparently, to the president she serves.

"The United States does not recognize spheres of influence," Clinton said, refuting Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's claim that his country has "privileged interests" and special influence in Georgia and other former Soviet states. Surely the Secretary of State knows better than I what the United States does and does not recognize. But I do find it strange that the country that created the Monroe doctrine, telling the European powers to butt out of the Western hemisphere, does not recognize "spheres of Influence." I guess the only sphere of influence the United States claims now, with the exception of outer space, is the entire blessed planet. America, like Caesar, "doth bestride the narrow world like a colossus."

Secretary Clinton has charged the Russians with failing to live up to the cease-fire agreement with Georgia that it signed two years ago, citing the building of permanent Russian military bases in parts of Georgia as a violation of the truce. We might guess then that none of our military bases in Iraq are permanent, though surely the world's largest embassy will be.

"The United States is steadfast in its commitment to Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity," she said. That's another howler. The United States is not even committed to our own "sovereignty and territorial integrity," as evidenced by our willingness to have our trade policy ruled by NAFTA and the World Trade Organization and our failure to secure our southern border against waves of illegal immigrants.

Russia and Georgia had a military clash two years ago over South Ossetia, a country that had seceded from Georgia and was recognized by Russia as an independent country. When the fighting broke out, John McCain, that year's Republican nominee for President, was quick to jump into the fray, taking Georgia's side. Claiming he was confident he could speak for all Americans, the Arizona senator



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on July 6, 2010

declared, "Today we're all Georgians." I don't know where global citizen McCain got his authority to speak for all Americans, but I think most of us would rather just be Americans and leave Russia and Georgia to settle their differences without us. Besides, if I wanted to anything over there, I might prefer to be a South Ossetian, though I admit I'd never heard of the place before the fighting broke out. Where does McCain get off giving me to the Georgians?

When Gen Petraeus took over command of operations in Afghanistan, I was struck once again by the job he was leaving. He was head of U. S. Central Command, with operational command of all U.S. forces in Southwest Asia, the Middle East and East Africa. Apparently, we have the whole world divided into various U.S. command zones. Maybe there really is, near the bottom of the globe, somewhere south of Australia, a sign that says. "PROPERTY OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT."

Just above the "Made in China" stamp.

Photo: U.S. General David H. Petraeus, former commander of United States central Command, CENTCOM, speaking at the Royal United Service Institute, Land Warfare conference in London, England, June 9, 2010: AP Images



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