

UNITED NATIONS. IN THE USA ENSLAVEMENT.

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After 14 months of painful labour, the 16 experts named by Kofi Annan gave birth to a genetically modified mouse: that of the enslaved United Nations. In a world in which there is a desperate need to find powers and institutions able to counterbalance the unilateralist and warmongering driftage of Bush's administration, the commission chaired by the thailandese ex prime minister Anad Panyarachun is trying to design a UN compatible with the ambitions of the USA's republican extreme right. No matter how much the report tries to accurately avoid the thorny issue the invasion of Iraq, it is evident that the commission's objective is to render less striking the existing gap between the real power (USA) and the international rule of law. But to ignore the UN means paying a very high political price, even greater than the one imagined by Donal Rumsfeld and the *neo-cons*.

This attempt to render the UN more pliable to the USA's desires is therefore not so surprising. Of the 101 recommendations put forward by the Panarachun Commission, many are uncontroversial and common sense. However the venom is concentrated in just a few recommendations that have substantial political relevance. They concern 1) preventive war, 2) humanitarian intervention, 3) nuclear proliferation prevention and 4) the reform of the Security Council.

As regards the preventive war, the *Panel* suggests to enable the Security Council to authorize military intervention against a country which constitutes a threat, which greatly expands, relative to the existing Charter, the legitimacy of using force. But any state, at any moment, can feel threatened. Authorizing one of them to use its strength as a preventive action can only legitimize the rule of the strongest. A weak country attacked by a stronger one has not the chance to preventively defend itself. To preserve peace and security, the UN members have to collectively commit themselves to preventively defend the weaker states in case of attack. This would imply, rather than the modification of the Charter, its full accomplishment, building a unity that was foreseen in 1945 but never realized because of the rise Cold War.

Equally equivocal are the motivations in favour of the humanitarian intervention. To ratify a right or even a duty in the case of genocide and harsh violations of human rights has no sense if one does not create the multi-lateral institutions able to decide when, who and how to intervene. The cases of justified interventions for humanitarian reasons in the last 15 years (Somalia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone) have demonstrated that the so called international community governed by the democratic states administers cures that are worse than the diseases. It is also true that the lack of intervention (like in Rwanda, Bosnia and today in Sudan) is as destructive, but the willingness to intervene it is not enough to solve the problems. It would be good and right for United Nations to take charge of a core to intervene in humanitarian emergencies, composed of soldiers and civilians. However, this option goes in the opposite direction of the one of appointing each time only to one state the responsibility to intervene.

The Commission has noted US government's concern (it would be better to say the obsession) for weapons of mass destruction. The nuclear proliferation certainly today needs to be regulated and controlled. What the report does not grasp is that the philosophy of preventive war could paradoxically become an accelerator for states in equipping themselves with nuclear power, because

in doing so each state could only feel safe from eventual invasions if it could resort to a nuclear defence. The stick proves to be less effective than the carrot in forbidding the proliferation and it would have been usefull to make profit from the partial success obtained by the European Union in the Iranian case.

With regards the thorny issue of enlarging the Security Council, it is certainly significant that the Commission has not come to an agreement and instead offered two solutions. The former suggests to give a permanent chair (even if without veto powers) to 6 new members (the countries could be India, Japan, Germany, Brasil, Egypt and South Africa). On the other hand, the latter, proposes to create 8 new chairs of semi-permanent members to be given to pairs of countries for a period of 4 years. This second alternative would not exist without the Italian democracy's tenacity and, in particular of the ambassador Fulci in the 90s, but it is inconceivable that a man like the newly appointed minister Fini will take credit for it.

The Panel's proposals can only make the current situation worsen. If the reforms pointed out by the Panyarachun Commission were to be introduced, we can only expect a proliferation of wars and a continuous calsh of different cultures.

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