

South Ossetia: Looking behind the media

RTE reached a new low in subservient broadcasting in its coverage of the Georgian invasion of Ossetia and the resulting conflict with Russia. News coverage on both radio and television, on such programmes as “Morning Ireland,” “Drive Time” and other current affairs programmes, allowed spooks and apologists for both the United States and the European Union to present a very false picture of events in their efforts to shape Irish public opinion.

Sections of the Western media have been attempting to gloss over the fact that it was Georgia that started this conflict.

Although the Yanks have claimed not to have had any prior knowledge of what the Georgian president was planning, this is very hard to believe. The Georgian army is equipped and trained by US military advisers at all levels. More than two thousand Georgian soldiers were involved in the occupation of Iraq; they were flown home by the Yanks to bolster its collapsing puppet regime.

Is it really believable that the Georgian government could mobilise its armed forces, tanks and rocket-launchers and the American military advisers did not notice or ask the lads where they were going with all the gear? The United States may have used and sacrificed its puppet for geo-political reasons as well as domestic electoral advantage: if not Iran, then why not Russia?

Iran is too well organised and internally coherent for the United States to attack at this point, as it would possibly unravel US plans in the Middle East, with the resulting collapse of its friendly regimes, such as the Saudis.

By sacrificing Georgia they have exposed how vulnerable Germany and France and the rest of the European Union is to Russian oil and gas supplies, teaching the Germans and French a lesson for blocking Georgia’s membership of NATO. Events in Georgia have shown that the United States can make life difficult for them if they don’t toe its line.

It gives the Republican Party in the forthcoming election in the United States an opportunity to re-establish itself as the only party that can defend US imperialist interests in a dangerous world—a world in which, according to them, the United States faces many enemies and the Russians are as good a bogey as any, as they are a nuclear military power.

They did not expect the swift response from the Russians that did emerge.

As in the past, in times of economic crisis spending on the military increases, and wars have been provoked in order to marshal the populace under a reactionary banner,

sidetracking them away from those responsible for the economic problems faced by society.

To younger political activists, this is a taste of what the intense struggles during the Cold War and the twisting and shaping of public opinion were really about.

We need to ask a very simple question. If NATO was established to protect the West from the Soviet Union (the Warsaw Pact was established in response to the establishment of NATO), since the Soviet Union no longer exists, what is the need for NATO today?

Does its expansion eastwards not prove the point made by a generation of communists that it was NATO that posed the gravest threat to world peace and stability?

NATO was not about defending the world from “evil” communists, but was aimed at preventing the rise of progressive forces within its sphere of influence.

Another point for young activists to remember, there was a parallel organisation called SATO which was the southern flank of NATO, which was supposed to control the countries - Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan - on the southern flank of the Soviet Union. This military grouping collapsed after the Shah of Iran was overthrown in the seventies and the establishment of a progressive left government in Afghanistan. So, this is an attempt at the reconstruction a previous military strategy.

Putin is no friend of Russian workers, but he has reasserted Russian independence and dropped the subservient relationship with the USA and the EU that Gorbachev and Yeltsin had acquiesced in. What is clear is that the uni-polar world of the last two decades is now over and USA and its EU imperialist allies can't decide the future of the world as they have done.

As history has shown sometimes anti-imperialist forces have only the division and contradictions between imperialist blocks to work and struggle for a way forward and to exploit those tensions and divisions.