

## The Last Racketeers - Part 3

Written by Alex Baer

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"War is a racket. It always has been. It is possibly the oldest, easily the most profitable, surely the most vicious," wrote two-star, Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Smedley Butler in 1935. He was a two-time Congressional Medal of Honor winner, and rescuer of the United States from overthrow by fascist bankers and financiers.

The Racket continues. War is such a profitable plaything for capitalists, all the high priests of the monetary system agree: *Can't wait for the next one, can't wait for the next spree!* They are never careful what they wish for; no need -- their hands cover all the controls.

From 2-star then, now, onward, to 4-star, Army General Wesley Clark, recounting some informal discussions he's had with those in the inner sanctum, having been told, he says, "We're going to take out seven countries in five years, starting with Iraq, and then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, and, finishing off, Iran."

War's quite a racket: We got 'em all lined up, like tennis balls poured into the automated machine, ready and waiting, all set to launch whenever we are ready to swing.

Cold-hearted stuff -- like the word "*fascism*." Time for a definition, seeing as how that word gets lobbed around a lot by many players these days, and, almost always, wrongheadedly so.

Like anything else in this world, what you see depends a lot on whatever you already have in your head, and what else you're willing to let in. The word "*fascism*" gets framed, blamed for a lot -- it's an *-ism*," you see, so, right off the racket or bat, many people don't trust it. Framing is everything: You may want a svelte racing kayak, but, good luck to you, if the only construction plans you have on hand are for an obese, oil-fired, politically-driven Ark.

Taking it slow, then, here we go, and, right from the dictionary: "*Any right-wing nationalist ideology or movement with an authoritarian and hierarchical structure that is fundamentally opposed to democracy and liberalism; any ideology that may be characterized as right-wing, chauvinist, authoritarian...*" and so on. Interesting stuff --from Latin,

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*bundle.*

In another book bundled with words, this one says fascism is *"A government system led by a dictator having complete power, forcibly suppressing opposition and criticism, regimenting all industry, commerce, etc., and emphasizing an aggressive nationalism and often racism."*

And, if you prefer your words all boiled down and streamlined, here's a short one that'll fit: *"The unholy alliance of unbridled business greed enforced by unilateral government powers."*

Business gets all starry-eyed about fascism: Democracy tends to bog down quick action, while fascism lets things zip through in a flash -- usually before anyone knows what's flashed past. *We the People* must still be strong enough to cause such panicked and flustered end runs by the powerful. We're still slowing things down a bit in our sleep, even if we're not yet wakeful enough to mow all these things down, put an end to the nightmares of greed games and power.

The reason *"fascism"* shows up so much in our conversations these days is partly from our having a good look around, at ourselves, and our country's actions -- at the cozy seamlessness between government and business: Business is hungry to plunge on, drive this whole show.

*Seven countries in five years: □ How many wars do you want, how much racket can you take?*

When Maj. Gen. Butler ended the fascist traitors' plots, these scheming high priests of finance obeyed only King Profit, not some poor prophet in robes. Butler hauled them all up short, and, for a moment, the money-lenders may have all had a faint chill at their temples, a memory winding through, of an Almighty God they had betrayed, and had long ago kicked to the curb, too busy worshipping golden images instead.

Our acts betray our beliefs -- an always-uncomfortable mixture to have stuffed into one's pipe, an especially bitter blend to be forced to smoke, but, there you go.

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Thanks to Butler's courage and action, no more fascist paradise, no more fascist heaven, no more fascist kingdom to come.

Sometimes, even snakes retreat when they see they have slithered out a little too far, when the machete gets a little too close.

\* \* \* \* \*

Seven countries, five years -- that is a *LOT* of real-life theaters of war, lots of tangles with Medusa ahead.

To quote another hero, this one from a movie-show theater, one called Indy for short, we're all left pondering the current reptilian tangles, cold-blooded fiascos, and serpentine crap:

*"Why does it always have to be snakes?"*

\* \* \* \* \*

Here, the temptation is just too great, so, we must stop a sec, and ask, *"What would Indy do -- what would Indy or Butler do with all these thugs and snakes we have around us today?"*