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## **The Hypocrisy of Powell's Lecture**

**by Jacob G. Hornberger**

Well, no one can ever say that the retired army general and U.S. secretary of state, Colin Powell, doesn't have gall. In Moscow, Powell criticized the Russian government for "certain developments in Russian politics and foreign policy in recent months" which "have given us pause." In an obvious attempt to extend the world policemen's role to the internal affairs of Russia, Powell was complaining about

1. the arrest and prosecution of a prominent Russian businessman and the seizure of his assets;
2. the lack of several political parties in Russian parliamentary elections;
3. the need for the Russian government to stay out of the affairs of neighboring countries.

If only Russian officials had answered as follows:

"We thank you for your lecture, General Powell. Now, would you please explain your system of politics in which ballot-barrier laws are commonly used to bar third parties from competing against the two-party political monopoly in America?"

"Also, would you mind explaining the federal prosecution of prominent businesswoman Martha Stewart for proclaiming her innocence of ludicrous economic crimes in your country?"

"And speaking of interference with the affairs of other countries, perhaps you wouldn't mind explaining the many U.S. invasions of Latin American countries, including the invasion of Panama in an alleged attempt to win the decades-long U.S. war on drugs."

"While we're on the subject of your drug war and asset seizures, doesn't your government have a very active campaign of asset forfeiture without due process and trial, the fruits of which help to fund government activities?"

"And oh, while we're on the subject of invasions and interferences with the internal affairs of other countries, perhaps you can also explain the failure to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, given your unequivocal statements to the contrary to the United Nations when you were trying your best to frighten your people into supporting your actions."

The American people are faced with two conflicting foreign-policy paradigms:

(1) Unrestrained government power overseas, isolating the American people from foreigners; and

(2) Reining in government power overseas, freeing the American people to interact with foreigners.

In determining which direction would be the better one for our nation, ask yourself the following question, especially in light of Powell's conduct in Russia: Whose actions are more likely to increase tensions in the world and the budget of the military-industrial complex, and whose actions are more likely to increase friendships and harmonies in the world — those of U.S. government officials or those of the American people?

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