

**Jesus loves me this I know...
but we're not all Saints!**

St. Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Sienna, Mahatma Ghandi, Mother Teresa, Che Guevara, Gotama the Buddha, Desmond Tutu, Martin Luther King and even Jesus of Nazareth- we know their names. We honour their teachings. We pretend to think about trying to occasionally sort of emulate their lives in some small way. But even that lame commitment is usually for most of us just Sunday lip service. Their lives were about a full time sense of duty to others. It was about what's right and wrong in our dealings with fellow humans.

Instead we take care of numero uno. Ourselves for the most part. We are weak and insecure as the world around us erupts into conflict. We believe "we can win the war on terrorism". But this war is one manufactured by the USA who needed an enemy after the fall of the Soviet Union. We needed an evil empire in order to keep the industrial military complex firing on all twelve cylinders, the behemoth that it is.

U.S. imperialist aggression is all about oil, oil to keep our rampant consumer Western society "healthy". And it is anything but healthy. It is extremely sick. First of all, oil is needed to keep the war machine running. On that point I wouldn't even want to imagine how much energy and pollution just one US Aircraft carrier is responsible for- perhaps equivalent to that of a small city?!

Imperialism is a spectrum extending from passive, more like Canada's to hyperactive as in that of the USA. The US is the most active protector of this most backward and inhuman of social structures that still exist in the world today.

The aggressive imperialism of England, the American Colonies, Spain, Portugal, France and the Dutch carried out through

colonialism throughout the old world based on lock and chain slavery is rightfully gone, but imperialism exists to this day. We in the consumer society with our closet full of Nike/ Reebok and Adidas... our cheap consumer goods are keeping a host of countries economically enslaved. Our Starbucks Mocha made from unfair trade coffee and cocoa which is tended and gathered by mothers with pesticide blinded babes packed on backs because there is no day-care provided by big coffee in third world countries. We justify our actions with the self serving excuse - "but without us they'd have even less in their backward country".

Imperialism will exist as long as Canadians (and Americans) enjoy a far superior level of cheap labour based living. It will flourish as long as we keep hundreds of millions living at a level far below ours. We live on the backs of slave labour as much as any Roman citizen, King, Tzar or Maharaja did. We control their standard of living as long as we control the international banks and the IMF. We subjugated, raped and economically drained these countries over centuries and they have never recovered. Today, we claim they are in debt to us for trillions and it is an excuse to keep them enslaved.

This is hardly at all what our Saints and Greats - St. Frank, Catherine, Ghandi, et al were emulating and we all know it... we're just too weak to help ourselves change, eh!

Lance Read – A Canadian in Cuba