



## CANADA AND THE NEW AMERICAN EMPIRE

edited by George Melnyk

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**THINKING: CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT  
IN AMERICAN WARS**

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## THE U.S. OR THE UN: A CHOICE FOR CANADA

*Senator Douglas Roche*

*On 19 March 2003, U.S. President Al Gore called together his National Security officials to decide whether war would be necessary in Iraq to cleanse the country of weapons of mass destruction. U.S. forces, deployed in Kuwait and offshore, were poised to attack. The UN Security Council was in almost continuous session. The latest reports of the UN inspection team, headed by Hans Blix and Mohammed elBaradei, were being scrutinized. Russia, France, Germany, and China, all heavyweights in the Security Council, were insisting that the inspection process – though rebuffed at first by Saddam Hussein – was working. Eighty-four professional inspectors had conducted 500 inspections at 350 sites in Iraq and turned up no evidence of weapons of mass destruction. Six smaller states on the Security Council, Mexico, Chile, Pakistan, Guinea, Cameroon, and Angola, were sending signals to Washington to show restraint and give the inspection process more time. Pentagon officials warned that the decision on whether to go to war could not be deferred any longer.*

*President Gore looked around the room before speaking. All eyes were on him. "If the Security Council will*

*not authorize military action, the United States will not strike," he said. "But we will insist that the UN double the number of inspectors in Iraq. We will comb every square inch of the country." The augmented inspection process continued for another month. No weapons of mass destruction or any facilities to produce them were found, but the Security Council decided to leave inspectors inside Iraq for the next several years. The United States stood down its forces.*

*"Rather than spending money on war, let's put more money into all the UN processes," President Gore told his cabinet shortly after the Iraq crisis. "Let's show the world the United States wants to strengthen the rule of law." In quick order, the U.S. Senate ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Kyoto Protocol on the environment. The Gore Administration signed onto the International Criminal Court and pledged that it would never put weapons of any kind in space. President Gore himself instructed his arms control and disarmament negotiators to fly to Moscow, London, Paris, and Beijing to press the other Nuclear Weapons States to commence immediate negotiations on a ten-year plan for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.*

*The President found time for a one-day visit to Ottawa. The Prime Minister escorted Gore into a cheering House of Commons. "Thank you, Canada," President Gore said as he began his speech. "Your constant work to shore up the United Nations as the most important instrument for peace in the world, your professional scientific and political work for verification methods, your unwavering commitment to the use of your armed forces for peace-building have been an inspiration to the people of the United States and indeed the world. Canada is the kind of neighbour the United States cherishes." The parliamentar-*

*ians were on their feet, yelling "Gore, Gore, Gore!" Svend Robinson, M.P., darted from his seat to present the U.S. President with a red rose....*

*Zzzttt!*

That abrupt sound you just heard was my alarm clock going off. Rudely awakened, my dream shattered, I got up to face another day in the cold, real world of politics. The United States was cheering President George W. Bush (it was Bush, after all, not Al Gore, who emerged from the Florida debacle with a U.S. Supreme Court-backed claim to the presidency) for having liberated Iraq from the demonized Saddam Hussein. Kofi Annan was expediting humanitarian aid to Iraq and struggling to have the UN play a central role in the reconstruction of the country. "The feeling of global insecurity has seldom, if ever, been greater than it is today," he told the Security Council. "We are clearly at a crucial juncture in the development of international relations." The Arab world, relieved that Saddam Hussein was gone, wondered if the United States would strike again.

In Canada, two back-to-back debates took place in the House of Commons: one, on a motion sponsored by the Canadian Alliance, calling on the House of Commons to apologize to the United States for offensive comments made by some of its members and to reaffirm that the United States is "Canada's closest friend and ally," and the other, on a motion sponsored by the government, reaffirming the government's decision not to participate in the Iraq war, and restating "the unbreakable bonds of values, family, friendship and mutual respect that will always characterize Canada's relationship with the United States...."

It is a hallmark of Canada's obsession with Canada-U.S. relations that, at the very moment the world is agitated with the United States for trampling on international political and legal systems, Parliament is focusing on not hurting U.S.

feelings. Unbreakable bond or not, Bush cancelled his planned visit to Ottawa.

## **The UN or the U.S.**

The world is at a turning point in history, brought on by the United States and its assertion that a pre-emptive attack on Iraq in order to change the leadership regime was justified. This sea-change in international relations, for this is what it is when the world's most powerful state adopts a policy to depose governments it finds unfavourable, has opened a void that will be filled by one of two scenarios: either the world will be run by international law, centring in the UN system, or it will be run by the United States, by far the strongest military power ever seen.

Let it be said at the outset that the Government of Canada did the right thing when Prime Minister Jean Chrétien stood up in the House of Commons two days before the U.S. and U.K.-led coalition launched its attack on Iraq, and said: "If military action proceeds without a new resolution of the Security Council, Canada will not participate." Eight months earlier, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade had crafted a memo, which Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham took to Cabinet. The memo foresaw that the Bush Administration was determined to oust Saddam Hussein with or without United Nations' approval. Whether the UN inspection process, resumed after Resolution 1441 was adopted, found anything or not, the United States was going to war. The memo recommended that, absent UN authorization, Canada stay out of the war. Prime Minister Chrétien had no trouble with this advice. Skeptical of U.S. intentions, but wary of giving offence to a trading partner that is like an elephant in the Canadian living room, Chrétien accepted the memo.

Nor did he have much trouble with his Cabinet, although the embassy in Washington was warning of dire consequences if Canada did not support the United States.

But Chrétien then made a mistake. He thought that, although it threatened war, the United States would not actually launch an attack without any evidence of Iraq producing weapons of mass destruction. Chrétien's logic led him to believe he could finesse Canada's public position so that it would never have to actually say no to the United States. A full-fledged communications strategy, making clear the reasons for Canada's principled position, was never invoked. When the final hours loomed and Chrétien realized the United States was indeed going to war, he quickly put together a short statement that he used to answer the lead question in Question Period.

Public opinion in Canada at first gave substantial support to the prime minister's position. But as the war progressed, a rally-round-the-troops feeling took hold in Canada, mirroring increased support for the war in the United States and the United Kingdom. On White House orders, U.S. Ambassador to Canada Paul Cellucci publicly complained about Canada's demurral, and then it became known that Canada had some thirty armed forces personnel serving on an exchange basis with U.S. and UK forces who were caught up in combat operations, even if from a distance. Suddenly, the Canadian stand did not look so principled. And when a few members of the Liberal government made none-too-flattering comments about U.S. leadership (Bush was called a "moron" and a "failed statesman," and Americans were damned as "bastards"), the right-wing press in Canada turned on Chrétien for damaging Canada's pre-eminent international relationship. Canada-U.S. relations were wrecked, they intoned. Chrétien did his usual dance in Parliament – and now the Canada-U.S. relationship



has once again become the preoccupation of Canadian foreign policy.

### **The Pitfalls of Unilateralism**

While Chrétien has been hard-pressed to stave off domestic attacks on his reluctance to fall in line behind U.S. policy in Iraq, the fallout from the American invasion, which is turning out to be a crash-course for the Pentagon in peace-building, is showing the wisdom of his position more and more. Though the U.S. military has proven very effective in toppling Saddam from power and winning the war, faced with a devastated Iraqi infrastructure as a result of the much celebrated “shock and awe” campaign, a lack of functioning state institutions, and a colossal power vacuum created by the exit of the all-powerful Baath party, it has been markedly less successful in winning the peace. In confronting all these challenges, the military has also been faced with an ongoing guerrilla campaign conducted by Saddam loyalists and others that has resulted in an ongoing string of American casualties.

Faced with falling troop morale and increased costs of occupation estimated at \$4 billion per month (double initial projections), the United States has been forced to reach out to the international community for help. However, traditional U.S. allies have been reluctant to commit money or troops so long as the United States refuses to cede additional authority to the UN. (While the UN was given a supporting role under Security Council Resolution 1483, passed in May, 2003, the U.S.-led coalition retained responsibility for security and for the administration of reconstruction contracts.) International calls for a stronger UN role have been echoed by prominent Iraqi civilians, who argue that its neutrality gives the UN added legitimacy.

In his customarily wise and calm manner, Kofi Annan sized up the dilemma the United States found itself in:

*I think that the message that comes through loud and clear, given reactions of other Member States, is that multilateralism is important for many States around the world, that for many States the United Nations is important, that the imprimatur of the United Nations – the legitimacy the United Nations offers – is important. I think that this is a very clear message, particularly for those who thought that the United Nations was dead and had no influence. I must admit to you that I did warn those who were bashing the United Nations that they had to be careful, because they might need the United Nations soon.<sup>1</sup>*

Canada–U.S. relations in the aftermath of the U.S. invasion of Iraq reflect Canada's perceived need to continue to support the primary role of the UN in authorizing the use of force to settle disputes, while at the same time avoiding antagonizing the Bush administration and risking devastating economic consequences. Immediately following the launch of the invasion of Iraq, Washington said it was "disappointed" with Canada's refusal to participate. Facing ongoing trade disputes with the United States over softwood lumber, the mad cow crisis, and a steep decline in summer tourism revenues over the outbreak of SARS in Toronto, Chrétien carefully avoided criticizing American policy in Iraq.

There is clearly a growing concern among Canadians about the direction of U.S. foreign policy. Polls revealed in June 2003 that only 63 per cent of Canadians viewed the United States favourably, down from 72 per cent a year earlier. The feeling was mutual, as the percentage of Americans who viewed Canada favourably dropped to 65 per cent from 85 per cent in 2002. Hostility towards the United States rose even

more dramatically in other states, particularly in the Muslim world. Growing concerns about the validity of U.S. and British intelligence on Iraq's WMD programs have only fuelled this growing resentment toward the United States, and Bush and UK Prime Minister Tony Blair faced calls for a comprehensive investigation into charges that they may have deliberately manipulated information to justify war.

While other states have cited the need for a further UN resolution before peacekeepers can be sent, Canada's reluctance appears to be at least in part the result of an over-extended military, strained to its limits by the deployment of a large force to Afghanistan in the summer of 2003. To show its support for the United States (and the Iraqi people), Canada has committed some \$100 million to aid in the reconstruction of Iraq. Furthermore, concern over relations with the Bush administration led the government on 30 May 2003, to agree to begin negotiating its participation in the U.S. missile defence program. This came after putting off formal consultations for years amid concerns that the program could destabilize international security, in part by leading to the weaponization of space.

The handling of the Iraq war has clearly knocked Canada off balance in its longstanding juggling act trying to keep the U.S. and UN balls in the air at the same time. This juggling act is known in the trade as the internationalists vs. the continentalists. They are struggling anew for control of Canadian foreign policy. The UN route or the U.S. route? Which shall Canada follow? The question is not new, but the circumstances are, since U.S. dominance now threatens to emasculate the UN, which for Canada has always been a prime outlet for its foreign policy.

## The 'Balance' Strategy

There are many memoirs and analyses of the Canada–U.S. relationship emphasizing the historical difficulty for Canada to maintain a distinct foreign policy while living beside an economic giant which, given the chance, would smother Canada in a benign embrace. The cross-border disputes over fish, beef, lumber, wheat, and a host of commodities are legion. Canada's economic and environmental dependence on U.S. good will toward us is certainly not new, as the long dispute over acid rain illustrated. The good will was substantially drawn upon in getting the U.S. Senate to agree to "fast track" negotiations for the Free Trade Agreement – which otherwise reluctant senators agreed to because Canada had agreed to test U.S. cruise missile delivery systems over its territory. The increasing integration of the two countries' defence industries, making Canada unduly dependent on U.S. technology and equipment and the policy decisions that underpin this production, also illustrates the integral relationship.

U.S. administrations made it very clear throughout the Cold War that they expected Canada's support on security policies. Canada allowed cruise missile testing, softened its call for a nuclear test ban, and supported the U.S. invasion of Grenada and Panama, not out of conviction, but because of U.S. determination. Prime Minister Trudeau's 1983 peace initiative was doomed from the start through the derision of U.S. officials. U.S. antipathy to new approaches to human security has continued to constrain what should otherwise be Canadian promotion of the kind of international security regime that Canadian values have long espoused.

Canada supported its neighbour in 1991, when the United States pushed the UN Security Council into authorizing military action against Iraq. When, without a UN mandate, the U.S.-led NATO bombed Serbia and Kosovo in 1999, Canada

played the faithful ally. So Canada is not above sublimating its UN values. But when the second Iraq war loomed, ostensibly over the issue of inspections but in reality to depose Saddam Hussein, Canada balked. No specific UN mandate, no war for Canada.

The “balance” strategy is embedded in Canadian foreign policy. The 1995 document, *Canada in the World*, spells it out:

*The Government agrees that Canada intensify its efforts to advance the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime.... The United Nations continues to be the key vehicle for pursuing Canada's global security objectives.... As an active member of NATO and a net contributor to overall Alliance Security, as a friend and neighbour of the United States and its partner in NORAD ... Canada balances its Alliance obligations with its disarmament and non-proliferation goals.<sup>2</sup>*

The “balance” argument presupposes that the United States will at least stay on an even keel. But the Bush Administration has plunged the United States into a new era in which domination is its clear goal. This domination is, of course, marketed as the route to peace for the world. The peace foreseen by the hard-right ideologues driving the Bush agenda is based on overwhelming military and economic power. This is the very kind of “Pax Americana” that President John F. Kennedy warned the American people against in 1963. But because the Bush Administration has been able to sell at least some of the world on the idea that the UN cannot keep the peace, the United States has presented itself as the new saviour.

## **U.S. Policy on Nuclear Weapons**

The National Security Strategy, which calls for pre-emptive attack against an opponent the U.S. Administration deems threatening, and the Nuclear Posture Review, which asserts that nuclear weapons will remain the cornerstone of U.S. military doctrine, have turned upside down both the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the very processes of international law.

The United States may still be a member of the United Nations, but it has turned its back on the multilateral world body. The Bush Administration has contempt for the UN. This ugly trait reveals itself in many global security issues but none more so than in the thorny questions surrounding the future of nuclear weapons.

The promises the United States made when the Non-Proliferation Treaty was indefinitely extended in 1995 – to participate actively in the total elimination of nuclear weapons – have become worthless. Under the guise of nuclear disarmament initiatives made in the Moscow Treaty of 2002, the United States is retaining huge stocks, developing a new nuclear weapon, deflecting criticism for rejecting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and rushing ahead with the development of a missile defence system, which many experts argue can only lead to the weaponization of space. The Nuclear Posture Review establishes expansive plans to revitalize U.S. nuclear forces, and all the systems and doctrines that support them, within a New Triad of capabilities that combine nuclear and conventional offensive strikes with missile defences and nuclear weapons infrastructure. The NPR assumes that nuclear weapons will be part of U.S. forces for at least the next fifty years. Ten U.S. senators, led by Senator Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts, have expressed “grave concern” about the widened U.S. rationale for the use of nuclear weapons.

Faced with a constantly modernizing U.S. nuclear arsenal and new high tech systems of which missile defences are only one part, existing nuclear weapons states are likely to retain their nuclear stocks. And more states, seeing that nuclear weapons are the true currency of power, may follow India, Pakistan, and Israel's recourse to acquiring nuclear weapons. The controversy over North Korea's missile testing shows how precarious the non-proliferation regime is. The danger of a nuclear catastrophe grows.

That catastrophe may well be set off by terrorists. Immediately after September 11, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan went to Ground Zero in New York and said that, as horrible as the destruction was, it would have been much worse had the terrorists used nuclear devices. He called on nations to "re-double" efforts to implement fully the relevant treaties to stop the spread of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

It is the lack of an enforceable convention to shut off the development and production of nuclear weapons and fissile materials that has resulted in the new risk of nuclear terrorism. There has been resolution after resolution at the UN for a Nuclear Weapons Convention; the resolutions actually pass with handsome majorities (although Canada has never voted in favour). Public opinion polls throughout the world show that people heavily favour the abolition of all nuclear weapons. But the United States and the other nuclear weapons states refuse to enter such negotiations, so determined are they to preserve their nuclear power. Now the world faces not only the traditional prospect of a nuclear war between states but the use of a nuclear weapon by terrorists who steal, or are given, nuclear materials. In this new age of suicidal mass terrorism, the threat of attacks using weapons of mass destruction has grown exponentially. Virtually all experts on the subject say

it is not a question of whether a massive attack will occur, but when.

The new U.S. policies have brought the world to a new moment regarding nuclear weapons. In fact, the United States has introduced the world to the Second Nuclear Age, and Russia is following quickly on U.S. heels. Instead of progress towards elimination, we are seeing the dismantling of the non-proliferation regime, constructed so laboriously over the past three decades. NATO is caught up in this dismantling. And so is Canada.

### **Canada's Nuclear Ambiguity**

Foreign Minister Bill Graham is well aware of this new dilemma. It was Graham, after all, who chaired the Parliamentary Committee that, in 1998, recommended that Canada press NATO to review its nuclear policies. A review was started but it came to naught. Six NATO countries, Belgium, Greece, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and Turkey, which are classified as non-nuclear, actually have a total of 180 tactical U.S. nuclear weapons stationed on their soil. When the New Agenda Coalition<sup>3</sup> submitted a resolution to the UN in 2002 calling for these tactical nuclear weapons to be included as an integral part of the nuclear arms reduction and disarmament process, Canada abstained. However, in a courageous move, Graham authorized a yes vote on a New Agenda omnibus resolution, which reaffirmed the Thirteen Practical Steps for nuclear disarmament adopted at the NPT 2000 Review. Canada was the only NATO country to vote in favour of the new resolution.

Canada would like to see the world rid itself of nuclear weapons. There is no doubt of that. But the government allows itself to remain in an incoherent posture: wearing its NPT



hat, Canada subscribes to the elimination of nuclear weapons; wearing its NATO hat, Canada stays loyal to NATO's insistence on the retention of nuclear weapons. The contradiction of Canada's nuclear weapons policies going in two opposite directions at the same time is the direct result of Canada's subservience to U.S. nuclear policies. This ambiguity was clearly depicted by Project Ploughshares, a leading analytical NGO, which said:

*Nearly sixty years after the advent of the nuclear age, Canada still maintains a fundamentally ambiguous policy toward nuclear weapons. The Canadian government rules out acquiring its own nuclear weapons, opposes nuclear proliferation, and asserts that "the only sustainable strategy for the future is the elimination of nuclear weapons entirely." But it also supports the continued possession of nuclear weapons by its allies, participates in a nuclear-armed alliance, and endorses NATO's plan to retain nuclear weapons "for the foreseeable future." The Canadian government continues to state that the defence of Canada must rely on the "nuclear umbrella" that the United States and other NATO allies have unfurled above this country, and it continues to provide both physical and political support for those weapons in a variety of ways. In short, while the Canadian government condemns any reliance on nuclear weapons by non-allied countries, it continues to treat those same weapons as a useful – even necessary – element of Canada's defences and those of its allies.<sup>4</sup>*

Now, as a result of U.S. policies, the Non-Proliferation Treaty – the centrepiece of Canadian policy – is unravelling. A policy that was justified as "balanced" is now facilitating the collapse of the NPT and the undermining of the UN. Each day, the warning of the Canberra Commission, organized a few years ago by the Government of Australia, rings more true: "The

possession of nuclear weapons by any state is a constant stimulus to others to acquire them.” Jayantha Dhanapala, former UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, calls the gulf between declarations and deeds in nuclear disarmament “alarming.”

In this suddenly more perilous international system, what can Canada do?

### **A New International Initiative**

The Canadian Pugwash Group, the Canadian branch of the international Pugwash movement, which won the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize for its work on nuclear disarmament, has recommended that Canada launch what would be the nuclear equivalent of the “Ottawa Process” on landmines. Just as the initiative of the Government of Canada, in calling for an international conference, led to the Anti-Personnel Landmines Treaty, so too an international conference could put a world spotlight on a principal recommendation from the Final Document of the NPT 2000 Review: “... the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.”<sup>5</sup>

An international conference on nuclear dangers is the original idea of Kofi Annan. He needs a credible state to host it. In holding such a conference, to which all the governments of the world would be invited, including India, Pakistan, and Israel, which do not belong to the NPT, the Government of Canada would contribute greatly to strengthening the role of the UN in nuclear disarmament. Such a concerted effort would advance another important Canadian objective: strengthening the legal regime that underpins the multilateral system. This concentrated attention on the objective of nuclear disarmament – the elimination of nuclear weapons – would re-focus the at-

tention of the public in a truly constructive way. If Sweden can sponsor a new International Commission on Weapons of Mass Destruction, headed by Hans Blix (an action announced in July 2003), why cannot Canada sponsor an international conference to review its findings?

Advancing such a policy may well incur the displeasure, if not the hostility, of the United States. But Pugwash argues:

*It must be explained that the object of the policy is not to counter the U.S., but to advance Canadian interests in breaking out of the incoherent posture we and NATO are now in, and also to save the legal regime for the elimination of nuclear weapons. It is entirely proper for a friendly neighbour to point out to the U.S. that its nuclear weapons policies must implement legal commitments.<sup>6</sup>*

Naturally, no one conference can by itself resolve the nuclear weapons crisis. The work of implementing all Thirteen Practical Steps must go on. But the conference would be a method of stimulating renewed international energy. Canadian leadership at this moment would be realistic as well as courageous.

It is the new extreme actions of the United States that render Canada's "balance" approach outdated. Canadians must understand how deeply the terrorist attack of September 11 has affected the American psyche. It has produced a fortress mentality and a new conviction that only the United States can enforce international law and order. The right-wing core of the Bush Administration is using this fear of terrorism to undermine the UN; it wants to render it toothless, to reduce it to a global welfare agency carrying out the orders of the United States. This destruction of the UN's primary role to maintain peace and security in the world will pose the gravest challenge to Canadian foreign policy in the history of Canada-U.S.

relations. The struggle inside Ottawa – about which way to go, with the United States or the UN – will be fierce.

A continued attempt to maintain a “balance” will paralyze Canada’s foreign policy over the security issues that are at the core of the UN. To keep the Bush Administration happy, Canada will have to swallow its values. The new Conservative Party will be glad to see this happen and so will the right-wing press. They do not share the values of the UN system as the heart of law and order in the new world. They want more of “Pax Americana.” These voices are very loud in Canada and constantly inhibit politicians and government officials who would like to uphold UN values.

The composition of the Cabinet and the assessment of the situation by Canada’s prime minister will determine whether Canada will stand up for UN values or cozy up to the United States for the sake of good relations. Lester B. Pearson made his choice for the UN. Brian Mulroney stayed with the United States. Jean Chrétien has tried to be both an internationalist and a continentalist. Now the spotlight falls on Paul Martin. An astute and highly experienced politician, Paul Martin’s inclinations may well be to put a foot in both camps. But the Bush Administration will test him early on – to determine if he is “with us or against us.”

Martin will inherit a new team of managers installed in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade immediately after the U.S.-Canada fallout from the Iraq war. The instructions they received were to get the relationship back on track. The continentalists argue that Canada simply cannot afford to have the United States mad at it. The internationalists argue that Canada cannot effectively cede its sovereignty to the United States and still remain a country. Who does Canada need more: the United States or the UN? The resolution of that agonizing question will not be done by the managers but by the prime minister himself.

Paul Martin brings to office the internationalist credentials inherited from his father, Paul Martin Sr., one of the great “international” Canadians of the past. He also understands the continentalist argument well and, as a former finance minister, knows where Canada’s bread and butter lies. Although Martin was somewhat reluctant to make his policy preferences clear while Chrétien was still prime minister, a speech delivered 30 April 2003 entitled “Canada’s Role in a Complex World” does give some clues. In the speech, Martin adopts the cautious approach favoured by Chrétien and characterizes the crisis over Iraq as a failure “of the international community to forge a shared consensus,” sidestepping the crucial role of the United States in preventing any consensus from emerging. Other speeches have revealed Martin’s support for Canadian participation in the U.S. missile defence program, and his willingness to engage the Canadian military in operations outside of the authorization of the UN Security Council, when such operations are based on Canadian values. However, he has also shown his support of UN initiatives to end the worst forms of poverty and declared a willingness to take account of the opinions of caucus, some of whom oppose Canadian participation in missile defence, when formulating policy. As prime minister, Martin will be forced to more fully expose his position on this essential debate between the continentalist and internationalist approaches.

This will not be just a struggle for Ottawa mandarins, the Liberal caucus, or even the prime minister to sort out. This struggle will be for the soul of Canada. It will play out directly on the steps Canada takes – or does not take – to build the conditions for enduring peace in the world. Kofi Annan believes that the world has entered a “crisis of the international system,” and wants this debated by world leaders. In this debate, Canada’s vision must go far beyond Canada–U.S. relations and analyze anew world values for peace. Nothing in

our past will equal the importance of the looming showdown on values. The public will be deeply involved, and future elections may be fought on the issue. The future foreign policy of Canada will become domestic policy of the highest order.

## Notes

- 1 Press Conference, SG/SM/8803, 30 July 2003.
- 2 Government of Canada, "Canada in the World: Canadian Foreign Policy Review," 1995.
- 3 The New Agenda Coalition, founded in 1998, comprises Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, and Sweden. Its goal is to advance the nuclear disarmament agenda contained in the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- 4 Bill Robinson, "Canada and Nuclear Weapons: Canadian Policies Related to, and Connections to, Nuclear Weapons," Project Ploughshares Working Paper 01-5, October 2002.
- 5 "The Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," NPT/CONF.2000/28.
- 6 Canadian Pugwash Group, "The Only Absolute Guarantee: A Brief on Canada's Nuclear Weapons Policies," presented to DFAIT Foreign Policy Review, April 2003.

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## CANADIAN MASS MEDIA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

*Tareq Y. Ismael and Jacqueline S. Ismael*

In a recent study on the Canadian media's portrayal of Muslims and Arabs in Canada and the Middle East following the terrorists attacks in the United States on September 11th, and the subsequent U.S. "war on terrorism," we were amazed by the sheer volume of anti-Arab, anti-Muslim, and anti-dissent materials and opinions contained within mainstream media.<sup>1</sup> Long-standing Canadian commitments to democracy, multiculturalism, tolerance of dissent, and multinational efforts for the maintenance of peace and security seemed to have been abandoned in the emotive response to September 11. However, the bias may be more systemic than that, as coverage of Iraq in the main press reflects similar stereotypes and bias. An example is an article in CanWest Global's *National Post* on 14 April 2003, by Mark Steyn, stating that, as a result of American involvement, "Iraq will be, at bare minimum, the least worst governed state in the Arab world, at best, pleasant, civilized and thriving." Many such core stereotypical images were found in the Canadian press justifying war against Iraq.<sup>2</sup>

It is generally understood that a main function of the news media is to inform the public about current events in the world. The role of informant, however, is not neutral. The media filters information about current events through an ideological



matrix. Media bias and self-censorship arise from internalized pre-conceptions, pre-selection of the “right-thinking” people, and the adaptation of reporters and commentators to the realities of ownership constraints based on corporate and political centres of power.<sup>3</sup> This paper explores the nature of the filter that informs the media’s coverage of the Middle East.

The Canadian media relies heavily on its American counterparts for acquiring and reporting news, as well as on global newswire services like the British *Reuters*, the French *Agence France-Presse*, and the American *Associated Press* and *United Press International*. These four news agencies account for more than 80 per cent of international news. The two American wire services in particular, while they operate internationally, remain subject to American organizational and political pressures.<sup>4</sup> Thus, foreign news content in the Canadian press is, more often than not, a reproduction of the American news wires and reports from the *New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Cox News*, *Knight Rider*, and *Scripps Howard*. Dependence on foreign news content can be attributed to the insignificant presence of the Canadian press in foreign countries. This becomes critical when American foreign reports cover regions in which the American administration has a strong interest, such as the Middle East. In this situation the Canadian consumer receives an almost unadulterated American version of the event depicted as fact and reality.<sup>5</sup> The production of news is never value-free; news does not just happen; ideas and pictures represent reality through an interpretive lens that filters information through a preset paradigm.

The journalist reduces a complex and unmanageable reality into a story or news material according to tacitly agreed upon rules, and in so doing, he or she communicates the core context of the pre-conceptions, prevalent ideas and the implicit

assumptions of the larger society, or a particular sector of that society. The core context, here, refers to the paradigm setting, its place in reality, and the implicit values and the attitudes it promotes.<sup>6</sup> Through its reliance on American news services, Canadian coverage of foreign affairs implicitly promotes American foreign policy objectives. For example, in covering the 1982 and 1984 elections in El Salvador, the Canadian media portrayed the elections in essentially the same terms as the American press. In reporting the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the *Globe and Mail*, and the *Toronto Star* depended largely on the American news services and missed the opportunity to report on the Canadian angle of the revolution.<sup>7</sup>

In 2003 the American government strictly controlled the media coverage of the war in Iraq by sponsoring “embedded” journalists to follow the “coalition of the willing” forces. This is evidence of an American policy directly affecting the ability of foreign states, in this case Canadian, to report the war. According to one Canadian reporter, journalists from states that opposed the war were denied access to the war zone. The military command referred to independent journalists as “unilaterals,” while “embedded journalists [were] given exclusive access to the war.” In an online essay for the CBC, “unilateral” reporter Paul Workman argued that, by “keeping ‘unilateral’ journalists out of Iraq, the Americans have succeeded in reducing independent reporting of the war, and I believe this was exactly their plan from the beginning.”<sup>8</sup> Of course, there is little Canadian news agencies could do to change the policy of the American and British military. Considering that the only journalists with access to the war were “embedded” journalists picked by the Pentagon, the world relied on two sorts of coverage: the “embedded” journalists with access and those reporting on the war from a distance. The CBC reported that there were a thousand reporters, producers, and technicians from around the world who were not allowed into

Northern Kuwait or Iraq to report on the war and were forced to do their work from Kuwait City. This means that Canadian news coverage relied on the official narrative, with limited opportunity or ability to provide alternative interpretations or questions about the war's development. This was seldom mentioned or debated in the Canadian reportage of the war.

Exacerbating this, the Canadian mass media has progressively moved towards concentration in conglomerates. Media barons argue that, as mass media fall into fewer hands, monopoly media markets emerge with more money to invest in quality reportage and more power to withstand pressure from advertisers who might wish to exercise editorial influence. This is contrary to the core arguments in favour of a free press, which maintain that competition breeds choices that are threatened by mergers and acquisitions. A free press is designed to allow for the expression of divergent views about single events or issues, and this helps to ensure that the news media can never be exploited for a private purpose. However, whatever the argument for or against media conglomerates, the fact is that the media are the gatekeepers of information, and what passes through these gates enters into the public consciousness and becomes part of the collective memory. It follows that the more avenues that are open to diverse representations of news, the more media, as an institution, will represent diverse values and dissenting views within a multicultural society.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the news media serves as a representation of the truth, meaning that the more these representations are streamlined into one or two acceptable interpretations, the more there is a limitation of the ability for public debate and discourse, two necessary activities for a viable democracy. A centralized and concentrated media has the effect of limiting the public space available for individuals to question what they see in the media, and consequently define for themselves the world around them: the cornerstone of a healthy democracy.

The concentration of Canada's mass media is evidenced in several communication empires. The major players are CanWest Global, Bell Globemedia, Rogers Communications Inc., Quebecor Inc., and Le Groupe Videotron. A focus on the first two illustrates the pitfalls of media concentration. The Asper family owns 45 per cent of CanWest Global. CanWest Global has operations in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland. In July 2000, CanWest signed a \$3.5-billion deal to purchase a Hollinger-owned controlling interest in the Southam newspaper chain, including all of its newspapers, magazines, and Internet assets. The Hollinger acquisition gave CanWest overlapping television and newspaper coverage in twenty-five out of twenty-six markets, with a 35 per cent share of the Canadian advertising market. The purchase included 15 metropolitan papers and 126 community newspapers. The group covers TV broadcasting that reaches 94 per cent of English-speaking Canada and engages in other related information activities like radio, TV production, advertising, distribution, and multimedia.<sup>10</sup>

Following this CanWest acquisition, professor David Spencer, an expert on newspaper history, said that the deal had serious implications for democratic discourse and added that he was convinced that there was a need for strong counter-voices to behave much like a parliamentary opposition to keep "those folks on their toes, and we just do not have it."<sup>11</sup> In an operating system of free presses, these voices are supposed to be coming from alternate news services and mediums. The late Mr. Asper, former executive chairman of CanWest Global Communications, expressed candidly his opinions on a number of issues in the weekly program *Eye on Media*. Mr. Asper found his critics "blind, one eyed critics"; "CTV has gone out of its way to slag and smash and denigrate Global"; "CBC is dangerous, has become a state within a state and should be

expunged”; and the “CRTC must be reformed because license renewal is utterly archaic.”<sup>12</sup>

The other media giant is Bell Globemedia, based in Toronto. Bell Canada Enterprises owns 70 per cent, while the Thomson family has the other 30 per cent. Much like CanWest, it encompasses national commercial TV, multimedia, national newspapers, and Internet services. CTV is the largest commercial television network, with wholly owned stations covering 80 per cent of the Canadian market. Bell Globemedia also owns CTV specialty channels that slice out as much as half of the Canadian market, in addition to the *Globe and Mail*, which is the nation’s largest newspaper. This media giant employs four thousand people and generates some \$4.3-billion revenue, most of it through the Bell Canada arm.<sup>13</sup>

Concerns about homogenization of news were voiced “loud and clear” as a result of the duopoly of the Canadian media system. An October 2001 survey, conducted by the University of British Columbia, on the impact of ownership on content looked specifically at CanWest Global and Bell Globemedia. The results of the survey are indicative, though not conclusive, because the survey compared only the *National Post* (newspaper) and *Global National* (TV channel) from CanWest with the *Globe and Mail* (newspaper) and *CTV News* from Bell Globemedia in a relatively short collection period of only four weeks (between October and November 2001). Nevertheless, the study indicated that there was more cross-promotion and convergence of news among the properties of CanWest Global than among those of Bell Globemedia.<sup>14</sup>

The findings might not be surprising because the factor of proprietorship in CanWest bears significantly on policy, content, and reportage. The late Mr. Asper, by his admission, was a “hands-on” owner. News reporting reflects not only pre-conceived ideas and values but also the implicit assumptions of what is “normal” in the cultural setting of the reportage and the professional

communication environment. Mr. Asper, unlike Bell Canada, was vociferous about his views on the culture of the Middle East, the Israeli–Palestinian problem and about his pride in supporting Israeli policies and passionately decrying its critics. News coverage in his papers reflected his views and reinforced his policy of news convergence to get his message across amongst the Canadian public.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) serves as the national regulator of the telecommunications industry. In July 2003, it called for comments on a list of fifteen proposed new ethnic satellite channels to be offered in Canada before approving the licenses. The application for Al-Jazeera, the Arab news channel based in Qatar and broadcast to North America from Rome, caused the most controversy. The Canadian Jewish Congress, through its president and head of the Quebec region branch, referred to the station as “Osama bin Laden’s bullhorn to the world,” arguing that it is “virulently anti-Semitic and racist, and likely to contravene Canadian law.” Writing in the *Globe and Mail*, John Doyle concludes:

*It would be best if we could all judge for ourselves. There are laws that govern broadcasting and there are hate laws in Canada. If Al-Jazeera is available here, as it should be, it can be measured against those laws and its carriers in Canada punished if those laws and regulations are broken.<sup>15</sup>*

While Al-Jazeera certainly holds different interpretations of the world, specifically the war in Iraq and the “war on terrorism,” this should not be cause for alarm in a multicultural and open society. This hesitation is perhaps a signal that alternative viewpoints have become less acceptable in the mainstream Canadian mass media market. CanWest Global journalist Les MacPherson echoed the calls of the Canadian Jewish

Congress, claiming, "Al-Jazeera is blatantly anti-American and anti-Israel."<sup>16</sup> To take only the "anti-Israel" claim: the Israel–Palestinian conflict is a difficult and emotional issue and is certainly not settled. Large sections of Canada's population remain committed to the idea of Palestinian liberation. Certainly Canada can handle differing interpretations of the current violence in the region. In addition, Al-Jazeera provides an alternative source for world news and representations of the truth that a healthy democracy depends upon.

In sum, the Canadian mass media provides the primary interpretation, not only of the events that take place in the world, but also of issues that are critical to consensus. Mass media operates as a cultural guide to norms and understandings, and it is through these that enemies are defined for the public. Examples of critical matters defined by the mass media are: the right to power, legitimate use of violence, illegitimate opposition to order, and accepted hierarchies among nations. Within Canadian media, references to the war in Iraq have tended to unilaterally defend the American war while discrediting its opposition by labelling those participating in Iraqi resistance as "Saddam loyalists," "terrorists," "Baathists," or those "opposed to freedom," as President Bush likes to say. The wholesale acceptance by Canada's biggest news conglomerates of these loaded terms limits the ability for Canadians to foster alternative and independent viewpoints of the situation in Iraq. The media engineers consensus on the basis of the global media narrative. However, Canadian newspapers are so absorbed into the global narrative that, during the hostage-taking crisis in Beirut in the later 1980s and early 1990s, they paid less attention to the Canadian than to the American and British hostages.<sup>17</sup>

## **Middle East Reportage in the Canadian Media**

Although Canada has never been an imperial power, nor a colonizing force, it inherited the British legacy of inter-cultural power discourse that is commonly referred to as Orientalism. The fact that Canadian society is premised on multiculturalism does not obviate an ingrained bias that views Canadians as having British values and customs while allowing immigrants to celebrate their past culture on certain occasions, in a formalized manner, after which everyone goes back to the *normal way*, or the British way.

Burdened by the persistence of British ethnocentrism, most Euro-Canadians tend to identify themselves by contrast with non-Euro-Canadians, like the Native people and immigrants that constitute the “other” from the Canadian self. The “other” is an imaginary category that is built from stereotypes that maintain the status quo without factual reference to the actual identity of the imagined “other.”<sup>18</sup>

The inter-cultural discourse between a powerful colonizer and a powerless colony underlies the concept of Orientalism, which necessarily emerged and became normal during the era of Imperialism in the nineteenth century. The roots of Orientalism go back centuries, from the epoch of the Crusades and onward. Europeans, in writing about the Middle East and its formative force, Islam, in the thirteenth century, combined wholly inconsistent passages, even extremes of accuracy and inaccuracy for amusement, instruction, and controversy. Even the best-informed minds in that period failed to discriminate between reliable and unreliable sources, combined conflicting material, and sometimes preferred the poorest.<sup>19</sup> The writings on Islam spread the idea that Islam was “a religion of outward forms, the virtuous actions of Muslims were vain, and they could not avail to salvation because in the mediaeval



consciousness Islam was not as edifying as Christianity.”<sup>20</sup> The Christian medieval canon on Islam survived the Enlightenment and passed to the age of colonization and imperialism to form a congruent and neat underpinning of the power discourse in Orientalism that characterizes the cultures of Europe and North America.

The essential aspects of modern Orientalist theory and practice are premised on an inherited set of past structures that were secularized and reformed by disciplines such as philology, which in turn were modernized and naturalized substitutes for the supernaturalism of medieval Christian understanding. The Christian religious paradigms of human history, encounters with the Muslim east and destiny, were not expunged from Orientalist texts. The religious patterns were simply redeployed and redistributed in a secular framework. First, colonization brought geographic expansion that augmented the biblical frame of reference. Second, there was a historical self-confrontation, which meant that understanding Europe meant also understanding the objective relations between Europe and its previously temporal and cultural frontiers. Third, character-designation, as a physiological-moral classification gathered power. In the nineteenth century it became a genetic type that enhanced moral generalization. In this way, it became possible to refer to the Oriental in his “primitive state,” “backward” conditions, or “violent” spirit, and furnished a creative and unflagging source of stereotypes that posited the West in a superior position and sustained that myth into the new millennium.<sup>21</sup>

The popular image fashioned by Orientalism of the “dirty Arab,” amply illustrated with the unphotogenic image of Yasser Arafat, competes in the media with the more photogenic image of Saddam Hussein, who personified the uncivilized, unscrupulous, immoral, and sadistic character of “the dirty Arab.” In American discourse on both the Palestinian-Israeli

conflict and Iraq, these images are used in the place of a serious analysis of the context of violence and conflict. In the lead-up to the American invasion of Iraq, for example, the portrait of Saddam Hussein was overtly used by the White House to obfuscate the unilateralism versus multilateralism debate raging in the Security Council. These images also reverberated in Canadian newspapers. In this Orientalist polemic and imagery, the Arab, the Middle East, and Muslims in general are fixed as transgressors of peace and security in an otherwise civilized world of law and order.<sup>22</sup>

The structure and development of Orientalism took place in the world of European academia and then passed to North America. As such, the concepts and the associated imagery of the “other” versus “us” has pervaded North American culture at various levels through the vehicle of the mass media. The media “raided the cupboard of Orientalism for alimentation, picking up old prejudice and bits of morbid information” in their pursuit of engineering consensus amongst people whose receptive pre-disposition derives from a British cultural legacy of superiority and bias.<sup>23</sup> The media employ stereotypes that derive from structured concepts of Orientalism and continue to define an image of the “other,” that sustains a self-image of superiority.

During the expanded “war on terror” and the American-led war in Iraq, similar terms describing the people of the region remained pre-eminent. Specifically, following the declaration of victory by U.S. President George W. Bush, the Canadian media began referring to those resisting U.S. occupation as “suicidal Arabs,” “insurgents,” “terrorists,” “Baathists,” and “the kind of savages the allies are fighting.” Clearly, the language used is not unbiased. Similarly, although Canada was not a party to war and opposed it diplomatically, Canadian media referred to the U.S.-led military force as the “allies” or “coalition forces” and preferred the term “nation-building” to

occupation. Furthermore, the media presented an image of Iraq centred on the image of Saddam Hussein: brutal, corrupt, dictatorial, and inhumane. The images of Saddam's numerous and opulent palaces ran beside pictures of the "looting" Iraqis, and, following the assassinations of Hussein's sons, the media became obsessed with the use of bounties to gain the assistance of local Iraqis. Referring to "post-Saddam Iraq," the media consistently used the terms "de-Baathification," "Iraqization of the new Iraq," and "grinding war of pacification" and adopted the term "hunting" to describe the war's new techniques. While it would be unfair to argue that the Canadian media did not participate in a wider debate about the occupation of Iraq, the debate was centred on how long, or simply how, to occupy the country, avoiding the larger questions of its legality and morality.

Thus we find basic clusters of thematic stereotypes about the Arabs, the Middle East, and Islam that came into more intensive circulation after the rise in oil prices in 1974 and following the Iranian Revolution in 1979. Basic stereotypes are the core reservoir of images that the mainstream media (including their affiliates of "experts" and pundits) use to generate specific rhetoric for a specific event. Stereotyping functions as an ongoing cementing of the legitimization process of the ideological structure and simultaneously justifies a certain policy drawn to deal with any given event. In doing so, the analytical context of the event, as well as different or oppositional views, are usually omitted or slighted. The public is generally left with one resonating dominant discourse from the media.<sup>24</sup> In 1986, the stereotypical cluster of themes that framed mass media references to the Arabs, Islam, and the Middle East – all cognitively linked – were observed to be as follows.<sup>25</sup>

1. The representation of Arab Muslim states in the Middle East as networks of terrorists; and terrorism

- as congenital and unrelated to political conflict, or long-standing grievances derived from prior violent intervention;
2. The reduction of Islamic discourse to extremist fundamentalist doctrines advocating political violence and repression of human rights;
  3. The dissociation of outbreaks of violence in the Middle East from their historical and political context, associating these with ethnic and religious diversity;
  4. The association of civilization and democracy in the Middle East with Israel, while neglecting its systematic violation of human rights, Security Council resolutions, and international law;
  5. The equation of Arab opposition to Israel with anti-Semitism.

Combinations and permutations of these themes constructed the mainstream media portrayal of events in the Middle East, adding in time more evocative images to the imaginings of Orientalism. In addition to the 'fabulously wealthy barbaric Arab,' there emerged the 'sex maniac with penchant for white slavery' and the 'naturally predisposed terrorists.' The media employ such evocative phrases to build the frame of reference in which the Western audiences internalize the essence of the Arabs and their culture. The intermingling of the stereotypes generates the understanding that violence in the region is linked to the nature of Islam and its adherents; this image in turn dovetails into the Arabs as indolent, oversexed, and brutish sheiks who misused their oil wealth in the pursuit of worldly pleasures and/or fanatical power. This exposition of the Arabs is frequently juxtaposed against the technological, cultural, and intellectual superiority of the West.<sup>26</sup>

A kaleidoscope of the same stereotypical themes has been in place for more than two decades. However, after the tragedy of

September 11 when the American media's rallying cry (which the Canadian media echoed) became one of war on terrorism and terrorists, these stereotypes were overtly legitimized by those with power and authority to set public discourse. While the U.S. or Canadian media are not monolithic, dissenting views from the main Orientalist discourse are few and usually buried in the avalanche of consensus-manufacturing articles and op-eds. For example, right after September 11, Eric Margolis, an internationally syndicated columnist who writes in the *Toronto Sun*, was invited by "Bynon" on cable channel 49 (Prime Time) to talk on the event. Based on his knowledge of Afghanistan, he maintained that neither the resources of Osama bin Laden nor the tribal mentality of the Taliban could have orchestrated such a sophisticated act. He was not invited back.

In the wake of 9/11, the mainstream media accepted the U.S. government's version at face value and voluntarily censored any critical investigation of the event. Such absence of scrutiny underlines the impact of the media propaganda in filtering information to the public and blocking the process of public scrutiny. In contrast, in Europe there has been more than one attempt to raise penetrating questions about the validity and authenticity of the evidence presented by the U.S. government.<sup>27</sup> The contrast became manifest in the Security Council debates over the passage of a resolution to sanction the U.S. invasion of Iraq. Contrary to its usual alignment with the United States on Middle East policy, and to the chagrin of the United States, Canada was an active participant in the debate. The Canadian public broadcasting service (CBC), both radio and television, provided a forum for the public airing of all stakeholders in the debate to enlighten the Canadian public fully on the issues involved and their multifaceted implications. However, this kind of scrutiny has not carried over to the post-invasion situation in Iraq. Like Afghanistan, events in Iraq are

detached from their context and from policy. To illustrate my point, we quote from a recent email sent by a colleague:

*I talked this morning to my sister [in Baghdad] for about a half hour. She told me stories you cannot believe. She wept and was so demoralized. Being a doctor and a humanist, she felt that she would never see such a thing done by any occupier. American troops going to houses, throwing people out, pillaging, stealing, and shooting if they feel like it! Abu Dhabi, Al-Jazeera, and other TV and radio stations reported on these. She said even their reports are very unusual as they state it in the most blatant terms.*

There has been a virtual blackout in North America of any critical news stories coming out of Iraq. The core context for the war remains, unquestioned and unscathed: that the U.S.-led war in Iraq is a war of liberation and a democratic mission to bring peace and freedom to a troubled region. Through design or circumstance, the Canadian news media have forgone their responsibility to Canadians to be a critical, responsible, and independent window to the world.

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## **THE JOHN WAYNE FALLACY: HOW LOGIC CAN HELP US LOSE OUR FAITH IN VIOLENCE**

*Trudy Govier*

Among the many factors that contribute to our acceptance of war and violence is bad logic. This claim may seem surprising, in the light of other notorious causes of political violence such as greed, competition for power and domination, racism, social inequality, and imperialism. Feelings of fear, humiliation, resentment, and revenge are also powerful factors; so too are religious differences and value disagreements about justice, democracy, and freedom. Many factors influence our acceptance of the recourse to physical violence, but in all this, our reasoning matters too. It plays a central role in the arguments we use to justify policies and actions. There is an abundance of careless argument and faulty logic in our reflections about physical violence. Not only do leaders and pundits use and repeat bad arguments when seeking to justify violence to the public, members of the public often swallow the discourse uncritically, reproducing the fallacies with fatal effect.

## **The John Wayne Fallacy<sup>1</sup>**

A major problem with our thinking about violence is the highly unrealistic nature of expectations about what it can accomplish. Among the many sources of this error is the fact that our expectations come more from dramatic narratives than from life itself. Think, for instance, of western movies. Plots are structured around a competition between the Good Guys and the Bad Guys. As these stories are told, the Bad Guys, who are truly and fully bad (no ambiguities here), have caused some sort of problem that has to be solved. A quick and efficient solution is needed. The Good Guys will have to win a victory over the Bad Guys in a violent struggle, after which they will eliminate the Bad Guys, preferably by killing them off. The physical violence of the struggle makes for drama and excitement, and the victory of the Good Guys provides a satisfying and tidy end to the story. In a typical final scene, the Good Guy, in the person of John Wayne or some similarly masculine type, stands victorious holding his rifle at his side. Or he strides triumphantly off into an orange and pink sunset – the implication being that he is leaving a much better world behind him.

It's a stark struggle between Good and Bad and the moral of the story is clear: the Good are entitled to use physical violence against the Bad and they can win a moral victory, and solve a serious Problem when they do. That's conflict at the movies.

The basic dichotomy between good and bad or good and evil needs to be questioned – and we'll come to that point later. But first let's scrutinize the tidy ending. The narrative ends at the point of victory, when the conquering hero has supposedly made his world happy and safe. But in real life – as distinct from the movies – there are serious after-effects when physical violence is used.<sup>2</sup> War, terrorism, and violent revolution

are notoriously painful in appalling ways. People are killed and injured, usually in strikingly large numbers, and many suffer terribly. The resentment and hatred in survivors propels quests for retaliation and revenge; thus violence has a decided tendency to provoke more of itself. Needed facilities for water, sewage, medical treatment, schools, and power generation are disrupted, with the result that millions of vulnerable people lack necessities of modern life. Physical and cultural environments are seriously damaged. Economies are shattered. The people who live through all this are real human beings, not characters on a screen.

John Wayne and the other heroes of violent drama never have to clean up after the struggle. Movies never show the great masculine heroes removing debris, treating the sick and injured, rebuilding hospitals, schools, highways, and bridges, or restoring power lines and factories – much less facing tasks of reconciliation so that coexistence becomes possible. Dramatic narratives have form, form that is lacking in life itself. People write narratives and among their narratives are these standard scripts, which move to a tidy ending and omit the mess of reconstruction. In the real world, violent struggles do not end neatly. The aftermath of violence is nearly always a situation in which injured, frightened, starving, and furious people try to cope with dislocation and hunger while warding off attacks from the victorious.

Forgetting about the aftermath might be all right if you're writing scripts, but it's desperately misleading if you're thinking how to resolve a serious political conflict. The John Wayne fallacy occurs when we assume life will be like the movies and infer that once the militarily victorious party has triumphed, there will be no further problems. The faulty comparison and its implication that the aftermath is nothing make violence look good. Media coverage of conflicts tends to contribute to the John Wayne fallacy, because when the drama and excite-

ment of the physical adventure end, coverage stops.<sup>3</sup> Rarely if ever do we read reports about grieving relatives, struggling doctors and teachers, UN peacekeepers trying to monitor wobbly borders, shaky ceasefires, and devastated hospitals. Just a little common sense should tell us that killing and generalized, authorized mayhem will produce an awful mess in physical and human terms. But there is little to encourage us to reflect on such facts and much to distract us. So we don't reflect. It's a big mistake.

## **False Dichotomies**

False dichotomies are another aspect of stereotypical narratives of conflict. A dichotomy, of course, is a binary opposition; a false dichotomy is what you get when you treat such an opposition as purely and simply binary, even though it's not.<sup>4</sup> To see this, think of some binary contrasts: good/evil; friend/enemy; beautiful/ugly; fat/thin. In dichotomous thinking, what is good is not bad and what is bad is not good. He who is friend is not enemy, and he who is enemy is not friend. It all seems trite, but reasonable. Call these oppositions *contraries*.<sup>5</sup> We couldn't get along without contraries because distinctions are essential for language and logic. But contraries can be problematic in some deep ways, because we so easily turn them into contradictories. We begin to think of the binary oppositions as exhaustive, when they are not. Take "beautiful" and "ugly," for example. Obviously, many people and many things are neither beautiful nor ugly, but something in between. The same can be said of "fat" and "thin" and – to more closely approach the situation of conflict – "friend" and "enemy." Your friend is not your enemy and your enemy is not your friend – but many people are neither friend nor enemy. To believe otherwise is to engage in paranoid thinking and step along a

route to insanity. For all these contrary predicates, there is an important middle range of indeterminacies, borderline cases, and ambiguities.

We too easily distort spectrum concepts so as to omit that middle range. We use our concepts to mark the extreme ends of the spectrum and neglect to consider the substantial middle. President George W. Bush's statement, shortly after the attacks of September 11th, that "you are either with us or with the terrorists" is a classic example of a false dichotomy. It was a rhetorical attempt to structure the world into Good and Evil, leaving honest intellectuals and skeptics no place to stand.

The idea that the Bad Guys are worse than Bad, being, in fact, Evil, and even members of an Axis of Evil, supports an especially insidious polarization. The term "evil" is so strong that we are highly unlikely to accept that it has any application to our own side. ("I might have a fault or two, I might have done some bad things on occasion, I might have a few flaws of character, sure; but I would never actually be *evil* – and the same is true for my group and my nation. Mistakes maybe, sins occasionally, but evil? Never.") The rhetoric of the Bush administration implies a dangerously distorted picture of a world polarized between good and evil. Not only do the theological overtones of the flawed logic suggest a need for a Crusade or Holy War, the emotional overtones of the word "evil" are strong enough to create enemies by themselves. In fact, the defence analyst Gwynne Dyer explained North Korea's nuclear threats in just this way, interpreting them as a result of that country's shocked anger at suddenly being made a member of an "axis of evil."<sup>6</sup> Stark and exaggerated dichotomies of good and evil, friend and enemy, can polarize reality as well as thought. When we think in false dichotomies of *either/ors*, we over-simplify and fail to consider the *neither/nors* – instances of ambiguity, complexity, indeterminacy that

for various reasons fall in the middle of spectrum we have severed into two poles.

False dichotomies don't always concern our classifications of people and things. There are plenty of false dichotomies regarding action and policy. In this context, false dichotomies take the form of failing to consider alternatives. People, including even many well-educated policy analysts, are so ready to assume we face the stark choice between responding with violence and doing nothing at all. "Well what *are* you going to do? Just sit there?" people will ask, expecting and hoping that the critics of violence can provide no answer. They assume that if we reject violence, we will do nothing at all.

But the argument based on omitting alternatives is a kind of manipulation. Alternatives do exist. It's not true that we had a choice between authorizing war on Iraq and doing nothing. That false dichotomy neglects such alternatives as the prolonged and intrusive presence of international inspectors in Iraq or the exiling of Saddam Hussein from his country. The same can be said of the manipulative warning in February 2003 that members of the UN Security Council faced a stark choice between supporting the U.S. position on Iraq and making the United Nations irrelevant to issues of international security. In this case, the false dichotomy structured a threat.

## **Our Side Bias**

The situation of the United Nations points to another subject: unilateralism on the part of the United States.<sup>7</sup> This, you might say, is far from a matter of reasoning. Doesn't such unilateralism find its sources in power? More specifically, the unparalleled military, economic, and cultural power that make the United States the world's only remaining superpower? And the culture and history of the United States, which contribute

to its quite particular sense of its historical uniqueness and special destiny? You could ask what reasoning and logic have to do with all this. I think that question can be answered because making an exception of your own case is a form of *inconsistency* or *bias* in favour of your own side. Unilateralism, which is tremendously tempting, especially for the powerful, is a pronounced expression of a partisan bias. We can call it “*our side bias*.”

So far as war and violence are concerned, the temptations of *our side bias* arise from the fact that the devastation wrought by violence is obvious and severe when *we* experience it on *our side*, but less obvious and (apparently) not severe at all when *we* impose it on *them*. The three thousand deaths from the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11th, were deplorable, awful, and painful – and were understood and publicized as such. The destruction was costly and horrendous, and we heard about that. But killings by American and other forces in Iraq, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and elsewhere receive relatively little attention in most western media. We feel pain in our own bodies, not in others; we live our lives in our own countries, not those others; our media cover our interests, and not those others. To sit in a bomber is one thing; to sit under a bomb, another. Thus, *our side bias* is likely to seem natural to many people.

In October, 2001, Tony Blair travelled through the Middle East in an effort to persuade a number of Middle Eastern leaders of the justifiability of bombing Afghanistan as an element of the “war against terrorism.” Blair was surprised to find that many leaders did not follow his reasonings on the topic of justifying violent responses to conflicts. They didn’t classify suicide bombers as terrorists; in fact, they didn’t even think these attackers were committing suicide. They were martyrs and heroes. Blair, who failed to understand that double standard, seemed to feel no doubt about preaching according to a double



standard of his own. To him, bombing by a state, even with resultant deaths of innocent civilians, would clearly be properly authorized and legitimate, whereas, in contrast, explosive attacks by non-state agents killing innocent civilians were clearly deplorable and merited the terminal epithet, "terrorism." Thus, double standards abound. In this context, Blair's was a bias in favour of states and against non-state agents.

The case of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq provides an even more powerful example of *our side bias*. Assume, as is plausible, that it is dangerous and seriously wrong for a nation to use weapons of mass destruction. Assume, as is also plausible, that any nation could at some point have leaders who could make risky and unwise decisions. The conclusion would seem to mandate generalized disarmament: it is dangerous for *any* nation to possess weapons of mass destruction. In the fall of 2002 and the winter of 2003, there was an enormous amount of discussion about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq – whether there were any, whether they were hidden, whether and how they had been destroyed, whether inspectors were finding any. Long speeches were given; maps and drawings were provided; satellite pictures were analyzed; Britain's MI5 plagiarized a graduate student paper and Colin Powell, in turn, copied from them; inspectors submitted huge reports; Iraq submitted a twelve-thousand-page document about the state of its weapons.

No such weapons have been located. There was intense criticism on the point, both in the United States and in the United Kingdom. Queries were raised about the quality of the intelligence reports and the reliability of those, inside and outside government, who had expressed their firm conviction such weapons existed in large numbers, were a threat to the world, and legitimated the attack on Iraq. The situation seems to have involved a mix of sloppy evidence-gathering and

reasoning, absence of critical thinking, self-deception, and deception and manipulation of others.

In the context of *our side bias*, what is noteworthy here is that virtually *nothing* was said about the possession of weapons of mass destruction by the United States, Britain, France, and other nuclear powers. The whole debate illustrated a double standard between the West and the Others; this was pernicious selectivity, an especially clear case of *our side bias*. Any human beings, anywhere, could be killed or maimed by weapons of mass destruction: biological, chemical, or nuclear. Human life on earth could be terminated by nuclear weapons. Any human being has a warrant to be worried and a right to protest these weapons; it's a universal. The second dimension of universality is that these weapons are threatening and dangerous in any hands and in any country. The United States could have a rash leadership ready to act prematurely and place the peoples of this earth in great danger, in order to pursue what it understands as its own interests. Weapons of mass destruction are an appalling threat in the hands of Saddam Hussein and in the hands of George W. Bush or any other leader. It is an enormous and multi-faceted problem – not, incidentally, a problem likely to be overcome by killing the Bad Guys. And it is a general problem, not a problem restricted to Iraq and North Korea and some other “evil” regimes. To think that only *their* weapons of mass destruction are problematical, while *ours* are necessary and safe amounts to an egregious form of *our side bias*.

## **False Analogies**

To list all the errors of reasoning connected with our thinking about violence is not possible here, but one more form of reasoning deserves special attention: arguing by analogy. In principle, this approach should have something to offer

because the teachings of history could hardly be applied in any other way. In practice, though, arguments from historical analogy are often shockingly weak. The all-time favourite strategy is to enlist the assistance of Hitler, who is compared to a contemporary demonized leader. Because war was needed to defeat Hitler, it's claimed that, in virtue of the analogy, we also need war in the current case. Pretty well everybody agrees about Hitler and the need for a war against him, so critics of contemporary militarism can be made to look very naïve and very bad when they are portrayed as defenders of the "appeasement" of 1939. A moment's thought should suffice to show that this is propaganda, not serious analysis.

But more recent analogies are problematic too. All too often, a complex situation of the past is summed up in a kind of "nutshell" description, telling us what lesson *history* supposedly *taught* in that case.<sup>8</sup> Then, on the cavalier assumption that the present situation resembles this past one, the supposed lesson is applied to the present. In the case of Iraq, it is often argued, based on the bombings of Serbia/Kosovo by NATO forces in 1999 and Afghanistan by the United States and Britain in 2001, that bombing from a height can defeat a regime and bring something better, with few or no deaths to "our side." Supposedly, these military campaigns were successful; thus – or so the reasoning goes – the same kind of success may be anticipated in Iraq. These precedents were cited as supporting the claim that bombing Iraq might be a good way to establish a better regime in that country and the even more ambitious claim that such a regime change could begin the building of a more democratic Middle East. The analogies are weak here, and the arguments entirely implausible.

First of all, both in the case of Serbia/Kosovo and in the case of Afghanistan, the nutshell summary of "success" is just plain incorrect. The situation for human rights in Kosovo after the 1999 war has been deplorable. Over fifty

thousand international personnel are involved in running the territory; there are many acrimonious disagreements between Kosovan Albanians and peacekeeping personnel; thousands of revenge attacks have occurred; and Serb and gypsy women require the escort of international peacekeepers to do their grocery shopping in safety. The question of whether Kosovo will gain independence from Serbia and Montenegro is still unresolved. More than four years after the “success” of this campaign, the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade warns that the area is too dangerous to be a suitable destination for Canadian travellers. In Serbia, Milosevic, a nationalist and undemocratic leader who had sponsored ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and Kosovo, was defeated in *election polls* on the basis of a *non-violent* electoral campaign. He was not defeated as a direct result of NATO bombing.<sup>9</sup> As for Afghanistan, some two years after the defeat of the Taliban regime and the much-advertised establishment of law and democracy in that country, there is little rule of law. Warlordism, corruption, and chaos prevail, and in some village areas, families who send their daughters to school are threatened with punishment by death. In the meantime, funds for reconstruction, promised by many countries after the defeat of the Taliban, have not been provided by the international community. Taliban and al-Qaeda forces are regrouping in some areas to stage guerrilla attacks and the Karzi government survives only with considerable protection from international forces. Due to opposition by the United States, there are no peacekeeping personnel outside the Kabul area. As with Kosovo, it’s a gross understatement to say that bombing “succeeded” in bringing a better order to Afghanistan.

The nutshell premises on which analogy arguments from Kosovo and Afghanistan are erected are simply false. Far from being a sensible application of sensitive historical analysis to contemporary problems, such arguments amount to careless

coffee shop analysis at best and manipulative propaganda at worst. And clearly, the similarities between Iraq and these other places is superficial in any event. Even if it were true that bombing had “worked” against Serbia and then Afghanistan under the Taliban regime, those cases wouldn’t support a prediction that it would “work” against the solidly entrenched and resource-rich regime of Saddam Hussein.

### **The Overall “Justification” of Violence**

In their most general form, arguments to justify violence have a common structure, one that is quite simple. First, there is a just or morally defensible goal that we must reach by some means or other. Second, by using physical violence as a means, we can arrive at that goal. Third, no other means will get us there. From these premises, we arrive at the conclusion that physical violence is justified “as a last resort.” Now there is nothing fallacious in principle about arguments of this general type. They need not involve any erroneous *reasoning* in moving from the premises to the conclusion. Rather, the problem with such arguments is that we are far too ready to accept the premises.

*Our side bias* tends to make us indulgent in judging our own goals. Often, motives are mixed and goals are confused. In the case of Iraq, President George W. Bush shifted from a rhetoric of “weapons of mass destruction,” to “regime change,” to “Iraq helped al-Qaeda and other terrorists and has to be stopped,” to “We’re beginning to build a more democratic Middle East.” In the meantime, his critics and even some of his supporters were convinced that access to oil and ensuring his own re-election were major motivations. Prime Minister Tony Blair shifted his public rhetoric from “security against attack by this evil tyrant” to “moral need for protection for human rights in Iraq.” If violence is going to be justified as a *means*

of reaching a morally respectable *goal*, we have to know what that goal is. We also have to know that it is morally defensible. These conditions were simply not met in the case of the Iraq war. That's the first problem with the general argument for attacking Iraq.

The second problem comes with the premise that physical violence will actually “work” in the sense that it will get us to the goal we seek. It often doesn't, and we too often dismiss that fact because we ignore what happens in the aftermath. (This is where John Wayne comes in.)<sup>10</sup>

Now, we arrive at the third premise, to the effect that there is no alternative means towards our goal except that of physical violence. It's rarely true if it ever is: this sort of premise gets much of its superficial plausibility from the false dichotomy of doing something violent or doing nothing at all.

I'm convinced that better logic would make us more cautious about the use of violence in response to political conflict. A little skepticism could save a lot of lives. Fallacies and careless reasoning are not unique to the topic of violence, but in contexts of war, terrorism, and other forms of political violence, professed justifications deserve our most rigorous attention. Because the destruction and suffering they legitimate are so horrendous, they must be scrutinized carefully: lives are at stake.

## Notes

- 1 I have invented this name; though the mistake is common, this is not a fallacy of the textbooks.
- 2 There are, of course, movies that are “western” in the sense of dealing with early western U.S. history and its conflicts but are more subtle and nuanced. What I have in mind here is the standard script.

- 3 The Iraq war of 2003 may turn out to be an exception in this regard. If so, we can only hope that salutary lessons will be learned from the coverage.
- 4 A dichotomy may be false for different reasons. The alternatives presented may not be exclusive; they may not be exhaustive; they may be neither exclusive nor exhaustive. Furthermore, these conditions may exist for different reasons. I suspect that some of the logical distinctions between such cases (ambiguity, failure of a category to apply at all, category applying in some respects but not others, ill-founded category, for instance) may be of interest in conflict situations. However, the matter cannot be pursued here.
- 5 This distinction is explained in Chapter Seven of the fifth edition of my text, *A Practical Study of Argument* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth 2001).
- 6 Gwynne Dyer, lecture, 5 March 2003, University of Calgary. Relying on reports from David Frum, the Canadian speechwriter who was the original author of the “axis of evil” phrase, Dyer claimed that North Korea was included almost arbitrarily. It was assumed that anything that counts as an “axis” needs more than two members and it would be impolitic to have only Muslim countries on the “axis.” According to Dyer, North Korea reacted with shock and horror to being included, and the political struggles between it and the United States were greatly aggravated by the polarized rhetoric of evil.
- 7 As noted (and decried) by many commentators, including some prominent ones within the United States, this unilateralism has nuances, and subtleties and understand that no situation can provide an uncontroversial recipe for handling another. This is not to say that history should be irrelevant to policy, only that the specious analogies that are so often exploited in public debate are highly unreliable guides to policy.
- 9 For a brief discussion of what caused the fall of Milosevic, see Gene Sharp, “Serbia’s Struggle for Freedom,” *Peace Magazine* (October–December 2001): 81–20. I discussed this account in my essay, “Power,” in *A Delicate Balance: What Philosophy Can Tell Us about Terrorism* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2002).
- 10 This essay was first written in February 2003 and revised in the spring and summer of that year. During this period it became increasingly clear, and was admitted even by insiders in the United

States, that planning with regard to “the peace” and the need to reconstruct after the violence of war had been grossly inadequate. It became glaringly obvious that winning a short-term military victory was far easier than rebuilding an ordered working society in the aftermath.



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## **THE HUMANITARIAN DIMENSION OF U.S.-IRAQ RELATIONS**

*Colleen Beaumier, M.P., and Joyce Patel, M.A.*

In prosecuting the war on Iraq, the United States and its allies have failed to garner a significant degree of legitimacy from the international community. Various Western governments, legal scholars, and citizens of the world have opposed the war, challenging the thesis that a military invasion both satisfies standards of international law and serves the interests of the Iraqi people. Debate over justification for the invasion continues. However, this debate will not be explored at great length in this paper. Rather, this paper addresses the humanitarian consequences of U.S.–Iraqi relations. In doing so, the analysis proceeds by placing the humanitarian crisis in Iraq within a historical context, highlighting the cumulative effect of U.S. policies toward Iraq. The paper argues that the U.S. invasion and occupation is but one stage in the overall process that has led to a humanitarian crisis. The humanitarian crisis that has visited Iraq for many years and the subsequent toll the invasion has taken on its population should not be understood as a single policy or imperative but must be seen as a continuation of strategies coloured by a doleful lack of vision and an abiding neglect for the Iraqi people.

It is important to note that the Iraqi situation did not simply result from the actions of a single government. While this may be true, and many governments played a role in shaping

the humanitarian nightmare in Iraq, this paper will focus on U.S. policy. The focus is neither arbitrary nor representative of an overt bias against U.S. foreign policy. Instead, the emphasis on the United States demonstrates that the current crisis in Iraq is not simply the product of an evil dictator. Rather, the current situation is another stage in the development of U.S.–Iraqi relations.

Moreover, because the Bush administration represents the central proponent of a military invasion, it is instructive to examine the current policy within a historical context. The purpose is to show that the United States has rarely been driven by a concern for humanitarian issues and does not seem to be deviating significantly – notwithstanding the rhetoric coming from the Bush administration – from this characterization with its current invasion of Iraq.

### **Genocide Sanctioned: U.S.–Iraq Relations before the Gulf War**

In the 1980s, the United States and Iraq were allies in a war against the radical Islamic government in Iran. Saddam Hussein exhibited the same brutal tendencies then but was considered manageable by the United States. In fact, President Reagan sent then special envoy Donald Rumsfeld to Baghdad to solidify the alliance and testify to Saddam Hussein’s “moderation” relative to the Iranian regime.

The U.S. administration knew Saddam Hussein possessed chemical weapons and that he used these weapons against Iran and later against his own Kurdish populations. Despite the fact that Iraq contravened international law and was arguably responsible for genocide in Halabja, it continued to receive support from the United States in the form of “dual-use” equipment such as helicopters and chemicals. Most notably,

the Reagan administration, while publicly denouncing these actions, nevertheless blocked the *Prevention of Genocide Act* and failed to punish Iraq substantively for its violations of the *Geneva Protocol on Chemical Weapons*, to which Iraq was a signatory.

In calling for regime change, the Bush administration used the accusation of Saddam Hussein having gassed his own people. This is true. Hussein's regime did attack the Kurdish villages in northern Iraq in 1987–88. However, what is unclear is the responsibility that the United States bears by virtue of its continued support for the Iraqi regime (part of the U.S. support for Iraq in the Iran-Iraq War). The fact that the United States provided Iraq with billions in loans and agricultural and export credits during the 1980s is a matter of public record. What is striking is its continued support even after the Kurdish massacre. The public condemnation of Iraq by the United States, following Halabja, was followed, paradoxically, with an increase of U.S. economic support that continued to bolster Iraq's weapons program. Humanitarian issues, clearly, did not occupy a central concern for the Reagan administration.

The pertinent question remains: why did the United States support Saddam after he committed these atrocities? It seems clear that during the 1980s Saddam Hussein's regime served salient U.S. economic and military interests in the region. Iraq was engaged in a war against the radical Islamic government of Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran. The United States feared an Iranian victory that could lead to the spread of radical Islam jeopardizing the strategically important and oil-rich Gulf states. In addition, severing economic ties with Iraq was seen as economically detrimental to American business interests and ultimately not a politically prudent objective for the Reagan administration. Rather than overtly indicting the Reagan administration as directly responsible for the genocide against

the Kurds, a more circumspect analysis argues that the United States played a tacit role in sanctioning the actions of Hussein's regime by not explicitly punishing his use of chemical weapons. This tacit support of Hussein's actions amounted to a real and present humanitarian crisis in the form of genocide.

Several lessons can be drawn from these incidents that have a direct bearing on humanitarian concerns. First, despite a tangible humanitarian crisis in the form of genocide, the United States did not intervene because this would undermined its own self-interests, and, secondly, since it allowed Iraq to commit massive atrocities, Hussein possibly calculated that any incursion into Kuwait would be met with similar inaction on the part of the United States. What Saddam Hussein did not realize is that an invasion of Kuwait would not be countenanced because it directly affected U.S. interests in the region.

## **The Gulf War and the Era of Sanctions**

Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was met with a UN-countenanced military campaign in January 1991. The immediate impact of the Gulf War was some fifty to one hundred and twenty thousand military deaths and four to fifteen thousand civilian deaths. In addition to deaths, injuries, and displacements, Iraq's economy, infrastructure, health system, and environment were adversely impacted. The Gulf War was a humanitarian disaster for the Iraqi people, who endured intense bombing and then had to survive in a depleted economy. Further, the war caused the collapse of Iraq's once-independent civilian economy. The imports-dependent industrial base was severely affected as imports rapidly became unavailable. The destruction of Iraq's oil industry resulted in a fall in GDP, and this in turn led to a decrease in investment and reconstruction. After ten years

of sanctions, over 70 per cent of civilian industrial enterprise became obsolete or operated at a much-reduced level. A once-large and well-trained technical and professional class was reduced to dependence on the state. With 60 to 75 per cent of the workforce unemployed and inflation rates rampant, the Iraqi population became dependent on handouts for survival.

The social effects of this devastation included the development of an underground economy, increases in smuggling and the sex trade, as well as child labour and begging. Like children, women suffer in a unique way as a result of military conflict. Before the 1990s, Iraq was a leader in the Arab world in promoting education and employment for women. The Gulf war resulted in widowhood, rising unemployment, and a widening educational gap that adversely affected the status of Iraqi women, in particular rural women. An important indicator of socio-economic health is a country's infant mortality rate. Immediately before the Gulf War, infant mortality in Iraq fell to 65 per thousand live births, better than the average in the developing world at 76. By 1998 that number rose to 103, with an under-five mortality rate similar to Haiti, Uganda, Senegal, and Yemen. By 2000, the UN Human Development Index ranked Iraq's development level 126th out of 174. A study conducted by Harvard University estimates child and infant mortality increased more than threefold in 1991. These indicators are striking, given that Iraq had been a fairly urbanized and technologically developed country.

Before 1991, Iraq was a modern, urbanized society with a developed infrastructure, a steady economy, and good levels of health and education. The Ahtisaari UN report suggests that, after the Gulf War, Iraq was relegated to a pre-industrial era. Iraqi infrastructure (already significantly damaged as a result of an eight-year conflict with Iran) was further decimated after 1991. Although the civilian infrastructure was left intact after the Iran-Iraq War (with the exception of the Basra region), the

economy was severely weakened. The Gulf War resulted in the destruction of civilian infrastructure and the Iraqi economy. Prior to the Gulf War, one Iraqi dinar was still worth US\$3.30. In 2002 one Iraqi dinar was worth one-thousandth of that amount. The devastating toll on infrastructure included the destruction of roads, bridges, and railroads. In addition, water purification systems, sewage treatments, electricity grids, and the oil industry were also destroyed or significantly depleted. Iraq's water and sanitation system was dependent on electricity, which purified and pumped water. As a result of the Gulf War, Iraq's electrical capacity was destroyed. Water treatment plants in large cities such as Baghdad and Basra were destroyed resulting in "a public health crisis" caused by raw sewage dumped in the river system.

The World Health Organization described Iraq's medical facilities and capabilities prior to the Gulf War as first-class. As a result of the war, the Ministry of Health was destroyed and communications and transportation were disabled. Damaged civilian infrastructure (electricity, water, and sanitation systems) led to the re-emergence of infectious diseases such as cholera; typhoid, measles, and diarrhoea. This was exacerbated by a real decline in family income, which contributed to an increase in levels of malnutrition. The devastating impacts on a highly mechanized, electricity-dependent Iraqi society are examined by Eric Hoskins in the book *War and Public Health* (1997). According to Hoskins, the destruction of telecommunications and transport coupled with shortages of medical supplies and equipment led to devastating health consequences for Iraqis. The delivery of essential medicines and primary and preventable health care were interrupted. As health care professionals fled, the effectiveness of the health care system was further diminished.

In addition to the social, economic, and health effects of conventional warfare, the use of chemical and biological weap-

ons during the Gulf War had a lasting environmental impact on Iraq. The massive aerial bombing destroyed chemical and biological factories that dispersed toxins into the environment. This had both respiratory and carcinogenic health effects. Further, landmines and burning oil wells destroyed the environment, killed animals, and contaminated water and soil. The use of depleted uranium and its effects on people and the environment are a matter of some controversy. However, the fact remains that Iraq is facing high levels of cancers and birth defects previously unseen in the region.

### **Sanctions: The Foundation for an Enduring Humanitarian Crisis**

The Gulf War set the groundwork for a sustained sanctions regime that would have a long-term impact on the people of Iraq. In response to its invasion of Kuwait, the United Nations Security Council imposed punitive measures, in the form of comprehensive sanctions, on Iraq. Under these sanctions, all imports into Iraq (except medical supplies) and all exports from Iraq were prohibited. The rationale informing the sanctions regime was premised on the assumption that a sustained policy of restrictive sanctions would ultimately cripple the Iraqi regime. This argument, however, conflicted with the reality of the Iraqi situation. Sanctions did not cripple the regime but in fact enabled Hussein to consolidate his power. The former UN Assistant Secretary-General and humanitarian co-ordinator for Iraq argued that sanctions contributed to the consolidation of the state and reduced the chances for the emergence of an opposition. In political terms, the Iraqi people were not “liberated” by a sanctions regime but instead were hampered from effectively revolting against an oppressive government. Those in favour of the current



invasion of Iraq openly recognized that the sanctions regime did not curtail Saddam Hussein's power and have used this fact to launch a more coercive approach in the form of military action. The only empirical consequence of the sanctions that cannot be denied is that the Iraqi people, not the regime, were weakened.

Since 1990, there has been a severe deterioration in the standards of living and degradation of the Iraqi economy with grave consequences for Iraqi society. Chronic malnutrition has affected every fourth child in Iraq under five years of age. The infant mortality rates are among the highest in the world. Only 41 per cent of the population have regular access to clean water and 83 per cent of all schools need substantial repairs. In essence, sanctions must be viewed within this historical context. The sanctions regime was imposed on an already crippled nation. Twelve years of sanctions have contributed to a humanitarian crisis reflected in the death of one million Iraqis, nearly 60 per cent children. It is estimated that some five to six thousand children died every month in Iraq as a result of sanctions.<sup>1</sup>

In 1998, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator and Director of the UN Oil-for-Food Program, Denis Halliday, resigned in protest over the sanctions program. In 2000, Hans von Sponeck, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator who replaced Mr. Halliday also resigned in protest. That same year the head of the UN World Food Program in Iraq, Jutta Burgahrtdt, also resigned. Previously, Scott Ritter resigned from the UN weapons inspecting team (UNSCOM) because he argued the United States was utilizing the weapons inspections in order to maintain the sanctions regime and not as a way of disarming Saddam Hussein.

If the sanctions were not effectively limiting Hussein's power, why were they not lifted? There is clearly no easy answer. Even asking the question implies that Western

governments refused to recognize the devastation sanctions were causing on the Iraqi people. Simply decrying that the troubles of the Iraqi people are wholly the responsibility of the Hussein regime avoids the role Western governments played in failing to search for alternatives to sanctions. No such objective was pursued, and when the harmful consequences of sanctions became evident, those in favour, like Madeleine Albright, the U.S. ambassador to the UN, callously argued that it was worth it.

### **The Oil-for-Food Program**

After the Gulf War, the international community responded to the humanitarian crisis with Security Council Resolution 986 (1995). The resolution was “a temporary measure to provide for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people” through the Oil-for-Food program. The Oil-for-Food program permitted Iraq to sell oil in exchange for “medicine, health supplies, food-stuffs and materials and supplies for essential civilian needs.” The amount of oil Iraq was able to extract was subsequently raised, and this translated into resources for humanitarian purposes.

On the surface, it appeared that the negative effects of sanctions were mitigated by the Oil-for-Food program. Food production increased, childhood mortality, which increased after the war and under sanctions, declined, and malnutrition among children under age five, which rose during 1991 to 1996, stabilized. However, the decline in childhood mortality was in the north and was not reflected in figures for south/central Iraq. Further, although malnutrition rates declined, they remained high at 14.6 per cent of children under five. In other words, the Oil-for-Food program was not adequate.

According to a March 1999 report by the UN Office of the Oil-for-Food program, since the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq dropped from “relative affluence to massive poverty.” The Oil-for-Food program was initially intended to provide humanitarian relief in the form of food and medicine. The World Health Organization, the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization, UNICEF, and the Secretary-General of the UN agreed on the central problem of the Oil-for-Food program – its inability to generate sufficient funds to address the rehabilitation of Iraq’s once-modern social and economic infrastructure. The office of the Iraq Oil-for-Food program recognized that the program was “never intended to be a substitute for normal economic activity” but suggested that, as long as Iraq was subjected to comprehensive sanctions, “there is no alternative to the program for addressing the humanitarian situation in Iraq.”

### **Humanitarian Impact of a Military Invasion**

The new war in Iraq has resulted in devastating humanitarian consequences for the civilian population as evidenced by the news reports during the war and by the almost daily reports since the war officially ended. Estimates of the dead are in the 3,000–4,000 range with many more wounded and permanently disabled. The post-war lack of security for civilians, the severely damaged infrastructure, the extensive looting, the regular attacks by insurgents on the occupying forces, their supporters and Western agencies like the Red Cross and the UN are all signs of a society in crisis. The ability of Iraqis to cope is not the same as it was in 1991. Prior to the Gulf War, the Iraqi economy was viable, unemployment and poverty levels were lower, and citizens had access to health and education as well as cash and material assets. In short,

Iraqis were in a better socio-economic state to deal with the consequences of the first Gulf War.

## **Impact on Children**

A Canadian medical team was in Baghdad conducting research at the same time that I was visiting Iraq (21–26 January 2003). In a report entitled *Our Common Responsibility: The Impact of a New War on Iraq's Children*, the team, which included ten experts from the Harvard-based International Study Team, predicted a “grave humanitarian disaster” in the case of a new war in Iraq. The report examined the physical and mental state of Iraqi children. Based on data collected in Baghdad, Karbala, and Basra, the findings suggest that Iraqi children have “a great fear” of a new war and that children as young as four and five had clear concepts of the horrors of war.

The study found that half a million Iraqi children suffer from malnourishment: “Iraq’s 13 million children are at grave risk of starvation, disease, death and psychological trauma,” according to Dr. Samantha Nutt, the team’s health expert. In February, the Centre for Economic and Social Rights (CESR) examined the human cost of a new war in Iraq. CESR’s prediction that the U.S.-led military operation would trigger the collapse of Iraq’s public health, electrical power, and food distribution transportation systems has been confirmed by the reality of the U.S.-British occupation. CESR food security, public health, infrastructure, and medical emergency experts were in Baghdad January 17–30, 2003, conducting research. The CESR report concluded that the Iraqi population is highly vulnerable and will require much greater humanitarian aid in the event of war.

## **International Humanitarian Law**

The laws of war – International Humanitarian Law (IHL) – stipulate that an occupying power or military force that takes control and authority of a region is responsible for the humanitarian needs of the population. According to the Fourth Geneva Convention, an occupying power has an obligation to ensure the supply of food, medicine, hygiene, and public health. All parties to the conflict have a responsibility to “take all necessary precautions to avoid loss of civilian life.” The principles of IHL establish the rules of war and have several implications for all parties to a conflict.

First, indiscriminate attacks are prohibited. This includes the use of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons as well as cluster bombs and landmines, which are by their nature indiscriminate.<sup>2</sup> IHL prohibits military attacks that have a disproportionate effect on civilians. Therefore, the destruction of water, electrical, or transport infrastructure, which Iraqis depend on for survival, is prohibited. Finally, all parties to the conflict are under an obligation to provide for the free flow of impartial humanitarian assistance. Grave breaches of these laws are considered war crimes.

### **The Humanitarian and Security Conditions of Refugees**

In addition to the socio-economic and environmental costs of a second Gulf War, there are humanitarian consequences for refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced Iraqis. A February 2003 report conducted by Human Rights Watch concluded that the war would likely bring “new hardship” to the civilian population and displaced persons creating new refugee outflows. The report has been proven right.

IHL stipulates that civilians are protected from forced displacement.<sup>3</sup> The occupying power must ensure the security of the civilian population and allow civilians to voluntarily move to escape war, both within and outside the state's borders. In the event of conflict, neighbouring states may close their borders for fear of instability within their own countries and the cost of providing for refugees. Under international law, any country in control of "safe havens" must ensure that such camps are secure and that adequate humanitarian assistance is provided to refugees. Under IHL, the occupying power is also responsible for internally displaced persons (IDPs). IDPs are particularly vulnerable. Prior to the invasion there were between 700,000 and one million IDPs in Iraq, the majority of whom were women and children.

## **Conclusions**

This paper identifies three stages of U.S.–Iraqi relations (the period prior to the first Gulf War, the post-Gulf War era, and the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq) and offers positive alternatives to U.S. foreign policy within each historical stage. The occupation of Iraq or what the United States has referred to as post-war planning, including the role of the Iraqi opposition, the UN, and U.S. corporations are not examined. The focus is on the humanitarian dimension of the Iraqi crisis and its historical context. The alternatives presented (adherence and implementation of international law) are guided by a single imperative – the humanitarian consequences of U.S. policy for the Iraqi people.

It seems clear that an Iraqi population battered by decades of war, severely deprived under sanctions and highly dependent on government rations and a fragile public health system is at greater risk of a humanitarian disaster than ever before. It is

with these considerations in mind that we must be critical of a policy that seeks regime change and the military invasion needed to achieve this goal.

## Notes

- 1 In 1998, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported that each month, between 5,000 and 6,000 Iraqi children died because of sanctions. A 1993 UNICEF report states that there has been a resurgence of vaccine-preventable diseases in Iraq, including polio, diphtheria, and measles. In 1997, UNICEF reported that more than 1.2 million people, including 750,000 children below the age of five, have died because of the scarcity of food and medicine.
- 2 Relevant sections of International Humanitarian Law, including: The International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, International Convention of Economic and Social Rights, The Geneva Conventions and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.
- 3 Relevant international standards that apply to refugees and displaced persons include: The 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (the Refugee Convention), and the Conclusions adopted by the Executive Committee (ExCom) of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

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## **THE WAR ON IRAQ, THE BUSH DOCTRINE AND CANADA'S FUTURE**

*Jim Harding*

### **Background to the War on Iraq**

*"We have seen the enemy, and the enemy is us." – Pogo*

The Anglo-American "coalition" which pre-emptively attacked Iraq has been involved in Iraq's affairs from its beginnings. The Kingdom of Iraq was created under the control of the United Kingdom in 1921, after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Iraq became a separate country in 1932; however the Iraq Petroleum Co. (IPC), and the Euro-Americans who benefited from cheap oil industrialization, continued to dominate the country.

The Republic of Iraq came into existence in 1958, after the "constitutional" monarchy was overthrown by a nationalist coalition. The new Iraqi leader, General Kassem, immediately faced strong pressure from the United States. Kassem wanted Iraq to become neutral in the Cold War. However, wanting a compliant, not neutral, state, the United States created an invasion plan with its ally Turkey on the pretence of an ensuing "communist take-over."<sup>1</sup> Soviet influence in the region apparently tempered this initiative. The United States then

funded Iraqi Kurds and backed a failed assassination attempt on Kassem in 1960.<sup>2</sup>

Saddam Hussein was involved in this botched assassination and went into exile in Cairo. Due to his anti-communism, and his desire to oust the Kassem regime, he and the CIA began to co-operate.<sup>3</sup> When Iraq formed its own oil company in 1962, U.S. opposition deepened. When Kassem began to talk of Iraq's legitimate historical claim to oil-rich Kuwait, "regime change" came quickly. In 1963 the CIA, and British intelligence, backed a coup that overthrew and murdered Kassem and saw thousands of "leftists" and trade unionists killed. The new regime gave assurances it would not nationalize the IPC, which had major U.S. ownership, nor make claims on Kuwait.

After a series of unstable coalitions and coups, the Baath Party took power in 1968. Saddam Hussein became vice-president in charge of oil and quickly emerged as the strong man.<sup>4</sup> The IPC was nationalized in 1972, and Iraq began to modernize in hope of becoming the uncontested leader of the Arab world.

The U.S.-backed, Shah of Iran, was deposed in 1979. The Iranian revolution was a call for Muslims everywhere to create Islamic states, which was a clear threat to the oil-monarchies which were U.S. "allies." After the Iranian "revolution," Hussein staged a successful "palace coup" and moved to establish absolute power in Iraq.

Though Iraq was an emerging secular nation, it was still dominated by Sunni Muslims in a country, like Iran, with a Shi'i majority.<sup>5</sup> The Iranian regime was therefore seen as doubly threatening to Hussein's hold over Iraq.<sup>6</sup> Thinking that Iran's internal chaos might enable Iraq to win back land lost in a 1975 agreement, Iraq invaded Iran in 1980.

The United States, which wanted to defeat Khomeini's theocracy at any human cost, backed Iraq. There were eight

years of vicious warfare, reminiscent of the brutality of World War I trenches. Oil revenues went to profit the merchants of death, rather than to meet desperate humans needs.<sup>7</sup> It was “oil for weapons,” not “oil for food.” With nearly a million young, conscripted soldiers dead, and still no victor, a cease-fire was finally brokered by the UN in 1988.

Saddam Hussein earned his reputation for cruelty after his regime’s use of chemical, and perhaps biological, weapons during this war. What is ignored in the U.S.’s demonization of Hussein, is that from 1985, and perhaps earlier, until 1989, U.S. companies legally exported the materials required for Iraq to develop these weapons. This included anthrax, as well as other biological toxins. U.S. exports also included “precursors” for chemical weapons, like nerve gas, and equipment for chemical warheads. Later, in 1994, a U.S. Senate Committee found that the biological materials “were identical to those the U.N. inspectors found and removed.”<sup>8</sup>

After the chemical slaughter of five thousand Iraqi Kurds in 1988, the U.S. Congress passed legislation to stop U.S. exports of these materials to Iraq. However, the Reagan-controlled White House, which had built up the military resources of Hussein’s regime, vetoed it. The analogy with the origins of al-Qaeda, which the Reagan administration had armed to fight the Soviet army in Afghanistan, is astonishing.<sup>9</sup>

In the build-up to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, there was much rhetoric about the extreme violence of Hussein’s regime. However, if ending violence were the core motivation to invade Iraq, these Western rulers would have had to have had a major conversion from their past embracing of violence in the service of national and corporate interest. Through its support of coups and assassinations to protect Cold War and oil interests, the United States and Britain contributed to the political culture of violence within which Saddam rose to power.

*"Don't try to put out a fire by throwing on more fire. Don't wash a wound with blood." – Rumi*

If, in the aftermath of this war, we are to gain a deeper commitment to international peace and security through international law, rather than head further down the path of pre-emptive warfare, we must cast a wide net of understanding over recent events. Though sanctioned by the UN, it is naive to look for simple, righteous motives in the 1991 Gulf War. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and breach of the UN Charter, was rooted in pan-Arab nationalism, a desire to expand into this oil-rich area, and the vulnerability of Iraq as nearly completely land-locked.

But the invasion was triggered by a specific crisis. After the ravages of the Iran–Iraq war, Iraq became dependent on the financial backing of both Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. In 1990 these countries sold Iraq's debts to international banks. When Kuwait later flooded the oil market, further cutting demand for cash-strapped Iraq, a summit was called to try to negotiate a settlement. When this failed, Iraq invaded Kuwait.<sup>10</sup>

After the Gulf War, the United States strengthened its military presence in Kuwait, which became the launching pad for its later attack on Iraq. It will remain one of the great examples of "big power" double standards in the Middle East that war was declared on Iraq by a U.S.-UN coalition, for illegally crossing the Kuwait border in 1991, while the United States and Britain, without UN backing, and breaching the UN Charter, crossed the same border, in the other direction, to start the 2003 war on Iraq.

In the Vietnam War, and the Gulf War, and now the war on Iraq, the United States perpetrated falsehoods to create an image of it intervening to right a wrong and to protect a victim of aggression.<sup>11</sup> This "good versus evil" story, evolving from Protestant frontierism into Cold War, superpower ideology is so imbedded in the American mythology that it is very difficult for most Americans to see any larger truth.<sup>12</sup> It is revealing that

the Afro-American population, evolving from U.S. slavery, is the major exception.

After forty-three days of smart-bombing, and “collateral” and ecological carnage in 1991, Iraq became subject to UN arms inspection and sanctions.<sup>13</sup> This persisted until 1997, when Iraq barred inspectors. Though Russia brokered a compromise for renewed inspections, Iraq again stopped inspections in early 1998, accusing the U.S.-led team of spying. In February 1998, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan re-negotiated inspections, but in October Iraq stopped working with UNSCOM. In November, Iraq reconsidered, and UNSCOM returned. Then, in December UNSCOM’s new head, American Richard Butler, reported that Iraq was refusing to co-operate. Soon after, the UN ordered all inspectors to leave, and U.S. air strikes on Iraq immediately began.

In its 2002–2003 propaganda, the Bush (Jr.) administration seriously distorted this chronology to make it look like Iraq stopped inspections, outright, and this was done to hide weapons of mass destruction (WMD), which might get into the hands of hostile terrorists.<sup>14</sup> Actually, there was a lengthy to-and-fro of negotiations before inspections ended. The larger context for the inspection process included the devastating effects of the UN sanctions, mostly on children; a CIA-backed attempt to assassinate Hussein, the escalation of unsanctioned U.S. bombing in the “no fly” zones, and the growing fear that U.N.-enforced disarmament was a prelude to a U.S. invasion.<sup>15</sup> It has been recently revealed in the media that the Iraqi government’s last-minute efforts to appease the U.S. just prior to the invasion were rebuffed, obviously because the U.S. countdown to war had begun. It was invasion and occupation that the U.S. was interested in and not compliance.

Americans woke up to the conflict, in 1998, when U.N. inspectors left Iraq. Except for a few American “moralists,” who complained of the dying of more than 1.5 million Iraqis

due to the sanctions, the U.S. population had no interest in Iraq until after Bush took power and the catastrophe of 9/11.<sup>16</sup> In the aftermath, and Bush's "war on terrorism," the U.S. public was feeling particularly patriotic and vulnerable. In this context, past UNSCOM Chief Richard Butler told a U.S. Senate Committee that Iraq was still producing chemical and biological weapons and might be developing nuclear weapons.<sup>17</sup> The unlikelihood of these charges, which was already documented, was immaterial. The rhetoric of fear and aggression was ratcheted up. The "war on terrorism" and war on Iraq were collapsed into one policy. At one point, over 50 per cent of Americans mistakenly believed Hussein was behind 9/11 and had nuclear weapons.<sup>18</sup>

In late September 2002, the United States proposed a UN resolution with strict new inspection rules, which Iraq rejected. However, a month later Hans Blix, the chief UN weapons inspector, and Iraq agreed on new inspection arrangements, but U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell rejected these. In retrospect, with what we now know, by then the United States was after UN support to legitimize its decision to go to war. However, Bush was already saying the United States didn't really need UN authorization, and could take pre-emptive action in self-defence. This, however, would contravene the UN Charter, go against international law, and would not likely be acceptable to European allies. British Prime Minister Blair, already in deep trouble with rising anti-war sentiment, desperately wanted this UN legitimacy. The UN and the United States were on a collision course.

After failing to convince the world that Iraq was linked to 9/11 terrorism, the United States refocused its attack on Iraq having WMD. On 8 November 2002, the UN Security Council unanimously approved a compromise resolution (Resolution 1441) calling for Iraq to completely disarm or face "serious consequences." Several knowledgeable sources had

already questioned whether Iraq indeed still had any WMD. This included past UN inspector Scott Ritter – an ex-Marine Republican, whose dissent against Bush’s propaganda machine laid much of the groundwork for the pre-war, anti-war movement.<sup>19</sup> It also included political refugee Hussein Kamel, who had previously headed Iraq’s WMD program and was assassinated by the Hussein regime when he returned to Iraq.<sup>20</sup> Thinking people worldwide were having trouble swallowing the shifting mix of justifications for war.

UN inspection reports initially were fairly ambiguous and provided “ammunition” for both poles forming in the Security Council. But, by the time of the 14 March 2003 Security Council meeting, a pattern that didn’t satisfy the United States was taking shape. The U.S. and British case was already greatly weakened when it was found that an earlier British intelligence report, submitted to the February Security Council meeting, arguing Iraq had WMD, was largely plagiarized. Then, at the Summit of 116 Non-Aligned countries, held 25 February, there was unanimous opposition to war without Security Council authorization. Later, both the Arab Summit and the Islamic Summit opposed any pre-emptive war. All the time, anti-war demonstrations continued to grow worldwide.<sup>21</sup>

Then, on March 7th, Hans Blix reported to the Security Council that he “welcomed the acceleration of initiative” on the part of Iraq since January. He reported that Iraq was starting to be “proactive,” even if it wasn’t “immediately co-operative.” There were clearly more tasks left to verify that all chemical and biological weapons materials and capacities were accounted for, and destroyed, and disarmament complete. But he stressed, with only three months of inspections to date, that “disarmament and verification can’t be instant.” At that meeting IAEA head Mohamed El Baradei also reported that a document that Iraq had imported uranium to enrich for nuclear weapons was forged. That President Bush Jr. had



referred to this falsehood as fact in his January 2003 State of the Union address came back to haunt and discredit the U.S. administration.<sup>22</sup>

Rather than agreeing to intensify inspections and establish a schedule for key remaining items, as was suggested by other Security Council members, the United States and Britain pressed ahead to try to get UN support for war. Colin Powell argued in vain that “serious consequences” had always meant war. Then the Anglo-American coalition floated an amendment placing a March 17th deadline on Iraqi compliance to Resolution 1441. France, and later Russia, however, said they would veto this. More significant, the six undecided, small countries on the Security Council, did not budge. The resistance of Latin American countries, with an intimate history of U.S. foreign policies encouraging political violence, was particularly significant.<sup>23</sup>

The United States rejected a six-country proposal to extend the deadline for Iraq to March 31st, which was being supported behind the scenes by Canada as a compromise motion.<sup>24</sup> Then, under growing British pressure for a second resolution, Tony Blair floated six demands that Iraq had to meet or face war. One British cabinet minister referred to Blair as “reckless,” and on March 17th, Robin Cook resigned as Blair’s House Leader because of the illegality of the coming war. The same day, the United States and Britain withdrew their second resolution, rather than have it go down to defeat. Bush stated “the time for diplomacy is over,” and the war machine went into full gear. There was little doubt left that the decision to go to war had been made before all the diplomatic jostling. A credible explanation of continued U.S. involvement in UN diplomacy until 17 March is that war preparations were not fully ready.<sup>25</sup>

## **The Bush Doctrine's Threat to International Peace and Security**

*"There is no way to peace. Peace is the way." – Gandhi*

After 9/11 Bush became the ideologue of Pax Americana. He polarized political discourse, in a fashion similar to anti-communism and McCarthyism. He talked threateningly of how "either you are with us or you are with the terrorists," and how those who "harboured" anyone the United States considered terrorists were now also enemies of the United States<sup>26</sup> Speaking of a "crusade" against terrorism, and invoking his revengeful, Protestant, fundamentalist "god" into the language of war, he became the "cowboy evangelist." All this fear mongering and manufacturing of consent, of course, was in the name of American-style "freedom." Bush's phrase, "the axis of evil," for which Canada's *National Post* columnist David Frum takes some credit, instantly put international politics back a half-century. Bush's simplistic, retributive approach to justice has no room for the intricacies of international law or peacemaking. If anything, it stimulates conflict that can lead to warfare.<sup>27</sup> The transparency of Bush's mixing of religion and nationalism into belligerent superpower rhetoric is likely what catalyzed the pre-war anti-war movement throughout the world.

A major influence on the creation of the Bush doctrine was the writings of *Atlantic Monthly* journalist and author Robert Kaplan.<sup>28</sup> His book, *The Coming Anarchy*, in particular, spoke to the fears and aspirations of these men.<sup>29</sup> Kaplan's most recent book, coming out with the neo-Reaganites already controlling the Pentagon, is appropriately named *Warrior Politics*. The sub-title, "Why Leadership Demands a Pagan Ethos," implicitly advances the violence of raw power associated with many forms of paganism. The attraction to this image shows you

how far astray the fundamentalist “Christianity” associated with the Republican right is from the original Christians, who preached love and peace, and equality under a common God. The underlying perspective is more like that attributed to the Roman Empire, which repressed the early Christians, and the Holy Roman Empire, which turned Christianity into a repressive and colonial ideology.

It is not surprising that Kaplan’s writings are so appealing to many Americans, in their present circumstance. Thinking they had won the Cold War but, after 9/11, being psychologically shell-shocked and forced out of their “consumption and celebrity-worshipping bubble,” they have had to quickly “grow up” to face the realization that history hadn’t really ended with the “Corporate American Dream.”

But, there are many risks in Kaplan constructing such an eclectic worldview out of bits and pieces of political philosophy, with complete disregard for historical context. Perhaps this is what happens when the American far right, so traditionally hostile to serious intellectual endeavour, ran out of simplistic, dualistic direction and purpose in the aftermath of the Cold War.<sup>30</sup> It is now grasping around for “new ideas” to justify asserting global American hegemony. Of course, these aren’t really new ideas. They are the ideas of authoritarian elitism, which are linked to the rise of fascism in Europe.<sup>31</sup> The similarity is one main reason that people from “old Europe” have – almost instinctively – been repelled by the Bush doctrine.

Kaplan makes a lot out of NATO’s intervention in Bosnia, as an example of a “global constabulary force to intervene in human tragedies.” He argued that “as Bosnia showed, such a force is more likely to emerge from NATO than from the UN.”<sup>32</sup> Not quite. In the aftermath of the War on Iraq, not only is the UN being sidelined by the United States, but

NATO is now deeply divided and unlikely to again throw its lot in with the United States so readily.

But, even though Kaplan cannot see the implications of the practices he is advocating, he provides a “good” rationale for them. As if intended as a memo to Bush, he writes:

*Because international goals are best realized through national self-interest, the President of the U.S. should project power through the UN to the benefit of both. The U.S. should in essence, without declaring it, take over the UN in order to make it a transparent multiplier of American and western power.*<sup>33</sup>

Well, there it is. The outcomes were not quite what was predicted. The UN has not rolled over to the United States, though it will be relegated to a secondary role in post-war Iraq. The UN, and international peace and security, certainly hasn’t “benefited” from the U.S.’s arbitrary use of power. And the United States, with Britain at its side, has had to “multiply” its power pretty much all by itself.

## **Canada and a New World Order**

*“No blood for oil” – anti-war slogan*

This slogan has been used in anti-war marches throughout the world. Even before the war started, half of polled Canadians thought oil was a factor in the U.S. plan to attack Iraq. Not only is Bush, and many of his cohorts, schooled in the oil industry; the U.S. economy will increasingly become dependent on oil imports. Achieving geopolitical, superpower supremacy, and controlling security of supply of oil are inextricably linked,

though a move toward renewable energies and self-sufficiency could alter this.

A decade ago, when the neo-Reaganites were forming their policies, the trend-line was clear. The bulk of global oil production and oil reserves were in areas of actual or potential political destabilization, often due to resistance to Western globalization. In 1993, countries at high risk for political instability had 25 per cent of known oil reserves. And, very telling, Iraq had the most of any of these countries, with 10 per cent of the world's total. Next was Iran, with 9 per cent. When you added in moderate-risk countries, it included 90 per cent of the world's known reserves. Saudi Arabia had the largest percentage of world oil reserves in this group, at 26 per cent.<sup>34</sup>

The United States, as the most oil-consuming country on the planet, is interested in maintaining or gaining a direct say in the politics and economics of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Iran because they have nearly 50 per cent of the world's oil reserves. Iraq is the most strategic base for this, bordering both Saudi Arabia and Iran. It may sound crude, but "democracy" is becoming an American superpower code word for stable, accessible oil. The continued priority of oil over democracy is shown clearly in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War; which too was promoted as a war of liberation. After the "liberation of Kuwait" there was no demand by the United States to create democracy in that country. And the war to "democratize" Iraq was primarily launched from this non-democratic, U.S. client state. After Iraq is within U.S. control, based on the neo-Reaganites own pronouncements, it is likely it will house a new military base, to enhance its influence on the whole region, and perhaps to launch a Pax Americana offensive on Iran.<sup>35</sup>

"War for oil" politics continues to unfold. Since 1993, huge oil reserves, larger than those in Saudi Arabia, have been located by Russia in the Black and Caspian seas. This oil was becoming an alternative source for both Germany and France,

and until the war over Kosovo, it could be piped directly through Europe. After 1999, it was piped through the Caucasus Mountains, through Iraq to the Persian Gulf port of Basra. What may be helping to consolidate the Anglo-American military alliance in Iraq, is the British Petroleum–Standard Oil merger in 1998.<sup>36</sup> The oil interests of what is now the largest global oil multinational, along with a fear of Saddam starting oil fires, may help explain why controlling Basra, and the northern pipeline facilities at Kirkuk and Mosul, was such a military priority. The United States will watch the Kurds and Turks closely to see that they don't use the war on Iraq as an excuse to assert their own control in this oil-rich area.

This opens up a complex can of worms about oil, colonialism, and war. U.S. oil companies directly benefited from France's defeat in Vietnam in 1954 and in Algeria in 1962. And the United States not only didn't support France in either case but helped arm the Vietnamese at the end of World War II. You can see why France may be thinking there is a pattern. Chevron is now the oil partner to Vietnam, and Texaco-Mobile-Chevron is the oil partner to Algeria. It now looks like France (and Germany and Russia) may be about to lose out to BP in Iraq.<sup>37</sup>

The Iraqi people, like all people plundered for the resources of colonialism and industrialism, know full well that oil is a mixed blessing. One Iraqi saying refers to oil as "the excrement of the devil." Not only did the struggle for oil keep Iraqis under external colonial rule for nearly half a century, but under internal authoritarian repression. For a short period in the 1970s, it looked like the nationalization of oil might fund a modern, secular, and possibly democratic society in Iraq. However, the Iran–Iraq war nullified that. It was Hussein's near absolute power over oil and the country's distorted development based on militarization and dependence

on oil that enabled him to consolidate power and posture as a megalomaniac.

After Iraq's defeat in the Gulf War, UN sanctions on oil exports placed Iraqi people in a new and, for some, deadly vulnerability. Now they are being promised a new era of oil-based wealth, by their U.S. and British liberator-conquerors. But we know this will mean another highly stratified, class-based society, of a few haves and mostly have-nots. Before the war was even over, U.S. corporations were taking over managing some of Iraqi's infrastructure. U.S. corporations will be the primary benefactors of the profitable, post-war reconstruction. There is a serious threat that the UN's role may be reduced to creating legitimacy. The lack of UN authority in post-war Iraq will surely exacerbate the humanitarian and political crisis.

Military and economic power go hand in hand with the United States, and they both depend on oil.<sup>38</sup> The oil-guzzling U.S. economy dwarfs all others in the world, with a GDP in 2000 of \$9.8 trillion.<sup>39</sup> Not even the integration of all European economies in the EC, with a total GDP of \$7.9 trillion, comes close to the United States. Only Japan, as another single country economy, with a GDP of \$4.7 trillion, stands out in comparison with the United States. The Canadian economy, with a GDP of \$717 billion, is only the size of the state of Texas, the political homeland of George Bush Jr.

The annual U.S. military budget of \$400 billion is now greater than the total Russian GDP of \$259 billion. To get some perspective on the magnitude of the U.S. war machine that invaded Iraq, this figure is about three hundred times Iraq's annual military budget in the post 1991 period. In the three weeks it took for the United States to get to and enter Baghdad, there were over thirty thousand aerial bombs or missiles dropped on Iraq. Many thousands more were delivered by low-flying helicopters and tanks. Were these kinds of

resources available to meet human needs, some fundamental international peace and security would be forthcoming.<sup>40</sup> But the Bush regime considers that “utopian internationalism.” Under the Bush Doctrine, brute force is the means to gain and keep respect and honour. And, of course, to control oil and oil profits.

The obscene magnitude of the killing power of the United States and the willingness to use this for global domination of resources should worry all people in the world. As the geographic neighbour of this gigantic, and increasingly aggressive military-industrial power, Canada and Canadians are now particularly challenged. We are seeing a warfare, not a welfare, state re-emerging south of our border. Warfare policies are deeply interlocked with the dynamics of American economic growth. This affects the nature of technological innovation, of the social structure and stratification, as well as the perpetuation of social and domestic violence.<sup>41</sup>

If we are interested in strengthening international law and peace and security, we have to confront this underlying link between the economy, warfare, and violence. The *Report on Business* “Shock and Awe” edition referred to a study of the relationship between U.S. economic booms and profit-taking and major military and geopolitical crises since World War II.<sup>42</sup> In all but one case (i.e., the Berlin Blockade of 1948), there was substantial growth in, and profits from, stocks in the aftermath of these crises. Taking the average gains of the Dow Jones, if investors bought during the “gloom” of such a crisis, one year later they had earned substantial amounts. The increases were 29 per cent from the Korean War, 34 per cent after the Cuban missile crisis, and 24 per cent after the 1991 Gulf War.

This is what the Bush administration is hoping for in the aftermath of this war. In fall 2002, with Bush’s ratings starting to decline, after peaking in the wake of 9/11, and concerns about the U.S. economy not rebounding from the recession,



launching and quickly winning the war against Iraq was becoming both a political and economic necessity. The uncertainty around the build-up to war, the projections of a massive \$1.8 trillion government deficit, greatly due to a further \$700 billion projected tax cuts, and increasing military spending, were not creating a climate conducive to investment.<sup>43</sup> One reason the Bush administration wasn't willing to let multilateral processes go on any longer was because of the need to get this war "over" and hope for an economic recovery, prior to the fall 2004 presidential election.

*"Oh Canada, [do] we stand on guard for thee?"*

Opponents of Mulroney's Free Trade Agreement (FTA) warned that, with even greater dependency on the U.S. market, it would become much more difficult to maintain an independent Canadian foreign policy. They also warned that continental "free trade" may threaten domestic policies, such as Medicare. In the aftermath of the Chrétien Liberals' not supporting the United States and Britain in their war on Iraq, we heard a barrage of rhetoric from the Alliance Party, oil baron Premier Klein, and other business interests concerned about U.S. economic retribution. In other words, Canada should have supported the United States in its superpower adventures, regardless of international law because we are a branch-plant. They would have us reduced to the status and stature of a Kuwait.<sup>44</sup>

There is no disputing we're increasingly a branch-plant. The percentage of GDP which Canada exports has grown since the FTA and is now at 45 per cent. This is the greatest amount of any industrial nation. And, more telling, the vast amount of this (88%) goes to the United States. This means that the United States buys 38 per cent of everything Canada produces. Contrast this with the U.S. relationship to us. With the largest domestic consumer market in the world, the United

States only exports 13 per cent of its GDP. And only 22 per cent of this goes to Canada. This means that only 3 per cent of what the United States produces is bought by Canada.<sup>45</sup>

You can see who needs whom. In the name of post-9/11 homeland security, and/or as punishment for Canada not being a superpower cheerleader, the U.S.-Canada border could be steadily tightened. And, whereas Canada's economy has become more vulnerable to such trade interruptions, the U.S. economy doesn't desperately require our market. While it does require our natural resources, these could be secured through a combination of foreign ownership, and even relocating companies south of the border, for easy access to the large U.S. market.

This is big bargaining power. The United States might not even need troops in Canada to secure superpower supremacy here. Its huge economic weapon might coerce us to spend even more on the military, as part of an integrated coalition for future wars. These integrated forces might, in a future scenario, even repress "rebellious" Canadian citizens. The United States might also coerce us to create a continental policing and security system and to harmonize our refugee and immigration policies.

The anti-free trade scenario of the decline of Canada was, however, too economically deterministic.<sup>46</sup> It often failed to see the military and imperial side of Corporate America. But, in the aftermath of the war on Iraq, we can more easily imagine the depth of the threat to our future. One thing of which we can be sure is that, as long as the Alliance Party and its successor the Conservative Party has significant parliamentary power, it will be the Trojan Horse pushing for these Pax Americana policies.

But Canada did not buckle under the immense pressure exerted on it to support the war on Iraq. From the beginning of the UN crisis, through the huge anti-war marches, right up

to the start of the war, Canadian public opinion held at about two-thirds opposed to unilateral, unsanctioned action. A drop in anti-war sentiment after the war began wasn't unexpected. The federal Liberals were trying to straddle the "war on terrorism," which they still supported in the Gulf, and the war on Iraq, which they weren't supporting. The term "allies" has powerful, emotional connotations in our military and Cold War history and identity. The phrase "turning our backs on our American friends," touches deep visceral feelings about loyalty and even self-worth. Some Canadians may sing "God Bless America" at a Toronto Blue Jays game, or sing the American national anthem at an Ottawa or Alberta pro-war rally, thinking it is a sign of respect for our American neighbours. If you try to imagine Americans singing "Oh Canada," you will, however, realize that deep continentalist and imperial forces are at play. When criticizing Canada for not joining the "coalition," America's current ambassador described Canada as "part of our family," saying that the United States would be there for Canada if Canada were threatened. Does this mean he sees Canadians as gullible junior partners, i.e., adopted children, in the American Empire? Of course, we aren't one big American family. And it can be very manipulative to collapse the distinction between countries, and, more vital, between state and family. This latter distinction is as crucial to democratic theory and practice as the separation of church and state. The irrational passion that can come from connecting the identity of family and state is shown in all authoritarian regimes; including Nazi Germany, when Hitler, the Führer, became the "father" of the nation and "race."<sup>47</sup>

The neo-Reaganites, like their neo-conservative allies in the Alliance Party, have consistently manipulated the language of family into a return to patriarchal values in a new American collectivism. The gated suburb, under threat from crime, is now becoming the gated nation, under threat from terrorists.

Under Pax Americana, being part of Ambassador Cellucci's one big American family, we would come to live within an umbrella of fear, and ultimately aggression.

However, the drop in support for the no-war position in Canada is as much about the economic impact as outright identification with the U.S. position. Cellucci has also used his position to fan these fears. He has implied their will be repercussions, and at the same time, he used the occasion of this foreign policy split, and Canada's economic dependence to further advance the Bush administration's goal of a continental energy market.

Only Britain significantly supported the U.S. war effort. The flimsy nature of the larger "coalition of the willing" shows how little global support there is for Pax Americana. The fact that much of Europe put resisting American expansionism over and above preserving unity in the EC and in NATO shows that this is likely a watershed in world affairs. Geo-political reconfiguration, a new world order not under American hegemony in this post-Cold War era, may be underway. It is not far-fetched that even corporate-backed "globalization" may be being put at risk by Bush's "warrior politics."

Mexico is even more vulnerable to U.S. economic retribution than Canada, and even though they were on the Security Council, they didn't crack. And if we look at other countries with huge economic ties to the United States (with the exception of Britain, with its own historical interest in Iraq), they stayed clear of the Bush doctrine. Canada was not alone as a major U.S. trading partner in not supporting this war. Not only was worldwide public opinion solidly against this war; so too were most of the U.S. trading partners and its traditional allies.

Just why Canada ended up in this position of opposition to the war on Iraq is perhaps our most crucial question. Certainly our fragile heritage as a welfare and not a warfare state is part

of the answer. So, too, is our important role in the history of international law, the UN, and peacekeeping, and a heritage of independent foreign policy in Suez, Vietnam, and now. Although we are “caught” between the two Anglo-American empires, our multi-national character interconnects us with Europe, and even with France. The juxtaposition of a more internationalist Quebec, with the more continentalist West, is a vital moderator on the pressures to give in to Pax Americana. Oil wealth, as in Alberta, apparently plays a role in the flow of ideology, here, as well as in Iraq.

The potential of a constitutional and cultural reconciliation with First Nations and Metis also affects the flow of ideas that shape who we are, and who we can become. Communitarian Aboriginal traditions are helping to stimulate the broader Canadian society to consider “restorative” perspectives on seeking justice, which could help us break out of the cycle of punishment, revenge, and further violence, which is so evident to the south.

But we could continue to slide towards continental economic and military integration. The refusal to join the war on Iraq is therefore an opportunity and challenge to shore up our vulnerabilities, to deepen our commitments and resolve, and to build new bridges between diverse peoples and persons here and abroad. There is no hope or new direction in the destruction and threats resulting from the Bush Doctrine. We need Canadian alternatives, which respect the interconnections between ecology, justice, and peace, which put means squarely in the service of ends.

## **Postscript: The Future in Iraq and the United States**

*“We’re flying blind on this.” – U.S. intelligence officer*

Though the U.S. troops initially avoided the feared urban warfare, and the Hussein regime fell quickly, the celebration of victory was short-lived. Within days, the “liberated” were expressing opposition to the U.S. occupation. First through demonstrations and later through guerrilla attacks, Iraqi opposition to occupation accelerated to the point that during the first six months of occupation, more American military were killed in attacks than during the war.

The military might of the United States just couldn’t make the transition to creating public order. Things went from bad to worse. Looting and arson were rampant. And through the chaos, U.S. priorities became more transparent. Only the ministries of oil and information, and not even the world-renowned Baghdad Museum of Antiquities, received any protection.

The credibility of the U.S. regime continued to slip. Soon General Garner had to be replaced by Paul Bremer, a loyal neo-Reaganite. Though he moved to quickly establish a Council of co-operative Iraqis, the steady killing of U.S. soldiers continued. Water, electricity, and hospital services were still not restored months into the occupation.

Ironically, the United States and Britain had to go back to the UN to get the oil embargo lifted. Security Council members who opposed the war bargained hard for three weeks to get some accountability for the use of oil revenues for reconstruction. (USAID is providing \$1 billion of lucrative contracts, mostly to U.S. corporations.) However, the occupiers were left fully responsible for ensuing conditions, which was probably

the best the UN could salvage from the fiasco. The UN may yet come out stronger, not weaker, from this crisis.

The debate about the new “American Empire” went more mainstream in the homeland. Some called for the United States to act like an empire and create a more imperial-like military and civil service. Others speculated that the quagmire the United States seemed to be moving into was symptomatic of imperial “overreach,” and perhaps even a sign that the empire was actually waning.

That there were no WMD, which was the biggest pretence for the invasion, continued to chip away at public opinion in the United States and Britain. The Blair government has faced the greatest crisis in the short-run, especially after the suicide of David Kelly, a government advisor on Iraq, who apparently gave the BBC a secret interview on the tampering of intelligence documents to exaggerate the threat of Iraq to justify the war. If the Blair government should ultimately fall, it will be a strong sign to other governments that backing U.S. unilateralism is politically risky. And that would put the Bush Doctrine more on the defensive at home.

Bush has already looked like a hunted man. Though he tried to recast his presidency, with his “roadmap to peace” in the Middle East, he was journalistically hounded after revelations that CIA intelligence information, used in his pre-war State of the Union address about Iraq importing uranium from Niger, was knowingly erroneous.

But the litany of official untruths about the war still grows. Private Jessica Lynch was manufactured into a national war hero, after it was alleged she was injured and captured in battle and freed by U.S. marine's in a heroic night raid. It turned out she was injured in a vehicle accident, given medical care by an Iraqi doctor, and rescued without resistance. That, however, didn't stop the U.S. military granting her the Purple Heart and Bronze Star as well as prisoner-of-war medal.<sup>48</sup> As U.S.

casualties continue to mount, there are signs of low morale and public discontent among the fighting forces in Iraq. As recruits and reservists begin to fear for their lives, and are no longer mesmerized by the heroic self-image of “freedom-fighters,” deserting might return as a political force, as it was during Vietnam.

Suggesting some desperation, there is now talk of “internationalizing” the occupying force. To do this the United States would have to go back to the UN, and possibly the EC, which it shirked in the first place, and give up more of its control. This would be tantamount to the war opponents rescuing the Empire. For the present, the United States is creating an army of Iraqis to try to buffer itself from the deep opposition to its presence. The United States had hoped that the killing of Hussein’s two sons in July 2003 would be a turning point in the war of resistance. Even after the capture of Saddam Hussein, resistance continues. This war may yet humiliate the neo-Reaganites in search of Pax America, and encourage intimidated domestic voices, who would prefer the United States to be more of a multilateral partner in world affairs.

Most compelling to those in search of a stable, just peace in the region, the innocent casualties of the U.S.-led “war on terrorism,” used to justify the war on Iraq in the aftermath of 9/11 have already outstripped those of “terrorism” itself. That this is not a viable or acceptable foreign policy will continue to sink in, in both Iraq and America.

## Notes

- 1 William Blum, *Rogue State: A Guide to the World’s Only Superpower* (Monro, Maine: Common Courage Press, 2000), 134.
- 2 Some sources say 1959. See Richard Sale, “Saddam Key in Early CIA Plot,” *Straight Goods* (12 April 2003).



- 3 Hussein's anti-communism and identification with Stalin were not contradictory, as the Bolsheviks found out. This political background was discussed in the documentary "The Long Road to War," *The Passionate Eye*, CBC television, 18 March 2003.
- 4 Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 417.
- 5 Colonial powers often left minority ethnic groups, to which they had given preferred status and advantage, in neo-colonial authority. We saw what legacy this can leave in the slaughtering in Rwanda. Creating truly multi-national states, without this neo-colonial legacy, remains one of the major challenges to international peace and security. Canada has not yet reached this goal with its constitutional negotiations with First Nations and Metis.
- 6 Hourani, *A History of Arab Peoples*, 432.
- 7 By 1984, Iraq's per capita military spending was the ninth largest in the world. Meanwhile its economic and social standing was only 73rd. The U.S. at the time was eighth in per capita military spending and was already relying on the military might of its "allies" in the region. At the time, oil-rich Saudi Arabia was No. 1, worldwide, in per capita military spending. See Ruth Leger Sivard, *World Military and Social Expenditures – 1987–88* (Washington: World Priorities, 1987), 46–48.
- 8 Blum, *Rogue State*, 122. Also see reports of U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs with Respect to Export Administration (25 May and 7 October 1994).
- 9 For a discussion of Reagan's training and arming of the Afghan Mujahideen, which included al-Qaeda, see Eqbal Ahmad, *Terrorism: Theirs and Ours* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2001), 11–26.
- 10 See the documentary, "Oil in Iraq: Blessing or Curse?," *The Passionate Eye*, CBC television, 26 March 2003.
- 11 In 1964, an erroneous report was made of a North Vietnamese attack on a U.S. gunship in the Bay of Tonkin, which whipped up aggressive, patriotic sentiment at home. In the case of the Gulf War, there was an erroneous report of an Iraqi attack on a health institution with babies in incubators. In this war in Iraq, the United States has made many false claims, including that Iraq was behind al-Qaeda.

- 12 Political psychology can be helpful. With his background in oil and Texas subculture (remember the Alamo); his “born again” Protestantism, and even what some claim is his “dry drunk” personality, George Bush Jr. was the “perfect” ideologue for this war. However, it is his absolutist moralism, which flows from the above influences, that has made him so vulnerable to critical journalism.
- 13 Both Iraq and the U.S.-UN forces share responsibility for this. Hussein’s notorious oil-well fires, and the U.S.’s use of depleted uranium (DU) weaponry, both did immense ecological damage.
- 14 It is most interesting to compare the way CNN and BBC have backgrounded their audiences on this conflict. There are details about the chronology, provided by the BBC, which were never mentioned by CNN. A good reference on the chronology prior to UN resolution 1441, is “Timeline: Iraq Weapons Inspection,” BBC.com (18 November 2002).
- 15 “The Long Road to War,” 18 March 2003.
- 16 This is more than one in twenty of the Iraqi population.
- 17 BBC.com, Timeline, 2.
- 18 Ian Brown, “Over a bloody rainbow,” *The Globe and Mail* (29 March 2003). In a BBC interview, *Newsweek* journalist, Eleanor Clift, suggested it was two-thirds of Americans at one point.
- 19 See Scott Ritter, *Endgame* (Simon and Schuster, 1999, 2002), and *War on Iraq* (Profile Books, 2002). Ritter was the head of the U.S.-led UN inspections when they ended in 1998. He couldn’t accept Bush Jr’s manipulation of the facts and was on talk shows and doing speeches non-stop prior to the war. His debate with Blair at a pre-war Labour Convention further strengthened the anti-war resolve in Britain.
- 20 This was reported in Norman Solomon “Falling on Deaf Ears,” *Prairie Dog* (6 March 2003): 11. Also see John Barry, “The Defector’s Secrets,” *Newsweek* (3 March 2003).
- 21 Millions were in the streets worldwide prior to the war even starting. This unprecedented global protest may be a sign of the potential of establishing international law, linked to democratization, and ultimately banning war as a means of national-imperial policy.
- 22 In July 2003, CIA Director George Tenet admitted the intelligence information used in the president’s address that Iraq was trying to import uranium from Niger was erroneous. While this may have been meant to deflect “heat” from Bush, it coincided with his trip to

- Africa, and the story became front-page news internationally. There is a growing litany of official U.S. “lies” about the war, which are receiving international attention. See Christopher Scheer, “Lies the White House Told Us,” *Prairie Dog* (10 July 2003): 5.
- 23 Only Columbia ended up giving tacit support to the United States for its war on Iraq.
  - 24 This wasn’t much of a compromise, as it might only have postponed war by a week. But that week was vital, as it put Canada on the side of international law.
  - 25 There is growing evidence for this. A week into the war, U.S. military head Tommy Franks admitted the United States had been preparing for this war for a year.
  - 26 This would, literally, put the United States at war with some of its allies, such as Saudi Arabia, the homeland of bin Laden and most of the 9/11 “bombers.”
  - 27 Gwynne Dyer, *Ignorant Armies: Sliding into War in Iraq* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2003).
  - 28 The evolution of this ideology within the Project for the New American Century (PNAC) is discussed in Jim Harding, “Pax Americana,” *Briarpatch* (May 2003): 23–24.
  - 29 Robert D. Kaplan, *The Coming Anarchy: Shattering the Dreams of the Post Cold War* (New York: Random House, 2000).
  - 30 The American “right” has typically been hostile to the country’s intellectual heritage, preferring to label critically thinking people as “eggheads” rather than to engage in serious inquiry and dialogue. Most neo-conservative think tanks, as with the PNAC, function as ideological training stations.
  - 31 It is noteworthy that, in discussing “the dangers of peace,” Kaplan is enamoured with Gaetano Mosca, who helped lay the theoretical foundations for Italian fascism with *The Ruling Class* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939).
  - 32 Kaplan, *Coming Anarchy*, 181.
  - 33 Ibid.
  - 34 Benjamin R. Barber, *Jihad vs McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism are Reshaping the World* (New York: Ballantine, 1996), 44–47.
  - 35 It is too early to tell just how the U.S. occupation of Iraq will unfold. The United States may actually find itself less able to use the Middle East as a military location because of the war and

- occupation. Soon after the war, the United States announced it would begin to use its “new European” allies, Bulgaria and Hungary, in Iraq.
- 36 It still goes under BP.
  - 37 Marshall Smith, “Oil on your French Toast,” *Brojan Gazette*/brojan.com (27 March 2003).
  - 38 The military dependence on oil is catastrophic. Sivard estimates that one year of Pentagon oil consumption would fuel the complete public transportation system in the United States over twenty years. Sivard, *World Expenditures*, 1987, 5. One of the U.S. tanks used in the war on Iraq only got one-half mile per gallon. It seems the U.S. needs oil to control oil.
  - 39 “The United States of the World,” *The Globe and Mail* (8 March 2003), F1.
  - 40 The \$75 billion military supplement is about \$3,500 per Iraqi person. Imagine what this kind of expenditure could do to create the conditions for peace.
  - 41 Michael Moore’s Academy Award-winning documentary, “Bowling for Columbine,” brilliantly explores violence in the United States in these terms.
  - 42 Gordon Pitts, “Investors Spurred by War News,” *The Globe and Mail* (22 March 2003), B4. There had already been a lot of profit-taking, even before the war, from fluctuating oil prices.
  - 43 See Irwin Stelzer, “Bush Searches for Weapons of Mass Persuasion,” *The Sunday Times* (16 February 2003). Under pressure for a Republican-controlled Congress, Bush Jr. finally had to agree to reduce his tax cut to \$350 billion.
  - 44 The Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce spoke out against Premier Calvert’s endorsing the no-war policy of the federal Liberals. But this was not to rally behind the American flag, but because this policy might hurt the chance of Saskatchewan firms getting post-war contracts in Iraq. You wonder if the American flag hasn’t become a corporate logo.
  - 45 These data are from Drew Fagan, “Working for the Yankee Dollar – not,” *The Globe and Mail* (8 March 2003): F2.
  - 46 For example, see Muray Dobbin, “Zip Locking North America: Can Canada Survive Continental Integration?” The Council of Canadians, no date. While this outlines the continued dangers of continentalism, the section on “foreign policy,” clearly written

before the war on Iraq, paints a deterministic picture of Canada's subservience to the United States. In one place it states: "Canada will support U.S. positions no matter what..." (p. 31). Not quite. Clearly there is something fundamental missing in this analysis about Canada and emerging global politics in the face of Pax Americana.

- 47 See Wilhelm Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1946).
- 48 Elaine Monaghan, "US Fetes Its Mythical Heroine," *Herald Sun* (24 July 2003). It is daunting and frightening the extent to which militaristic and jingoistic propaganda is being created in the U.S. since the invasion of Iraq. By mid-summer, 2003, Canadians as well as Americans saw, displayed on their grocery-till newsstand, "How America Changed the world," (American Media Inc., 2003).

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