



The Peace Issue . . .

The Newsletter of *Just Peace Queensland Inc*

Issue No. 46

May 2014

Just Peace Meetings: all members and supporters are welcome at our meetings.
When: 2nd Tuesday of each month
Time: Start @ 07:00pm
Where: 2nd Floor, QCU Building
 Cnr Grey & Peel Streets
 South Brisbane

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Reclaiming the Kellogg-Briand Pact

By **James Page**

Posted Tuesday, 1 April 2014

The Kellogg-Briand Pact, otherwise known as the General Treaty for the Renunciation of War, or simply the Pact of Paris, is one of the most interesting of all modern treaties. This was a treaty signed in 1928 by most of the nations of the world, including Australia, and by which the signatory nations pledged to renounce war as an official instrument of national policy and to use peaceful means to resolve disputes. One of the interesting facts about this Treaty is that it is still current. There are a number of reasons why I would suggest it is now appropriate to reclaim this Treaty in the popular imagination.

The first reason is that the Treaty coincides with other international commitments. For instance, the 1999 United Nations Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, commits the signatories to promoting non-violence and a culture of non-violence. The Preamble to the UN Charter indicates that the basis for the organization is to prevent succeeding generations from experiencing the "scourge of war", and the constitutional mandate for UNESCO commits that organization to encouraging a culture of peace. The value of the Kellogg-Briand Pact is that this commitment to peace is made a little more concrete and a little more explicit.

The second reason is that the Kellogg-Briand Pact is more relevant than ever, given current international politics. It is arguable that we live in a world where there has been a relative absence of inter-state armed conflict in recent years. However the paradox is that the potential for inter-state violence is more apparent than ever, with growing major power rivalries now evident in the Western Pacific and in Eastern Europe. It is instructive to remember that in

1914 the world had experienced a time of relative peace, but that peace soon came to an end. I contend the ideals of the Kellogg-Briand Pact are now more important than ever.

The third reason is that aspirational goals are important. Goethe once wrote that the potential we identify is the potential we will tend to fulfil. It is true that the Kellogg-Briand Pact did not stop fascist aggression in the 1930s, leading to global war. Yet I would suggest that this only underscores the importance of educating and publicizing why such a Pact is important, that is, why it is important for nations to renounce war as an official instrument of policy, and why it is important for nations to commit to pacific and diplomatic means for the resolving of disputes. Ideals are worth working on.

The fourth reason is practical. The Kellogg-Briand Pact is often criticized as being overly idealist, and yet it was on the basis of the Pact that the Nuremberg Tribunal and the Tokyo Trials prosecuted those who had led the world into yet another world war. It is timely to remind ourselves that using war as an instrument of national policy is contrary to international law, and that those who do so are war criminals. Many would argue that there are many such contemporary war criminals yet to be prosecuted, although this in itself is yet another reason why the Kellogg-Briand Pact needs to be publicized.

The final reason is cultural. We live in strange times, with a wide recognition of the destructiveness and futility of war, and yet we witness a popular culture which increasingly celebrates participation in violent conflict as the defining mark of courage and identity. Any statement which explicitly rejects the value of war, and in particular which rejects war as an instrument of national policy, is useful in these

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circumstances. Such statements help undergird a rejection of the culture of violence, which is so pervasive. The Kellogg-Briand Pact is one such public statement.

How do we go about re-claiming the Kellogg-Briand Pact within the popular imagination, or, to put the question another way, how do we obey the law against war? I would suggest what needs to happen is that national and international leaders of opinion ought to be encouraged to speak out on the importance of the Kellogg-Briand Pact and its relevance today. For the United Nations, one practical innovation would be the establishment of an International Day for the Renunciation of War, as a means for raising consciousness. Whatever the means, it is difficult to gainsay the relevance of the Pact, and the need for this to be reclaimed as a pressing one for our times.

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Dr James Page is currently the Australian co-ordinator for an international research project examining social attitudes to peace and war. He is also Adjunct Associate Professor within the School of Humanities at the University of New England, and a member of the Australia Democrats.

“[There is an] erroneous impression that this and other countries are at war with one another. They are not. Their governments, composed of men and responsible only to the men of each country, and backed by the majority of men who have caught the war and glory fever, have declared war on one another. The women of all these countries have not been consulted as to whether they would have war or not...”

Harriette Beanland, English dressmaker, three days after WWI declared, 1914.

EDITORIAL: STRONG CHOICES – STRONG VOICES

TV viewers will no doubt have had the current Queensland Government advertising campaign for the election next year, entitled "Strong Choices" impinge on our nightly entertainment. A "strong and dependable" voice over the advert details the supposed annual debt bill, \$4 billion per year, that the Queensland government faces from its total debt of \$80 billion. We are told \$4 billion will build 25 new schools, re-build a regional hospital, or construct hundreds of km of new roads.

We can only thank the Queensland Government for laying out in front of us the stark choices being decided for us at State and Federal level. The current Federal Government plans to purchase up to 100 of the latest fighter warplanes (F35) at a cost of \$20 to \$30 billion, have not been cut back at all in the Federal Budget released in May. We can now see exactly how many hospitals, or schools we are missing out on. "Defence" was in fact one of the few areas of the budget not cut savagely. Plans continue for \$40 billion for new submarines and \$6 billion on air warfare warships .

All this and more in the context of a world in which Australia has not had any threat from foreign countries for over 70 years. A world in which our armed forces need the very latest in military hardware in order to "integrate seamlessly" with war fighting plans around the globe - Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria - as well as the new "rebalancing" of the United States to Asia and the Pacific.

The purchase of F35 aircraft ties us in more ways than one into US war fighting plans. The deal also ensures that Australian industry benefits from the F35 construction - to the tune of \$1 billion of manufacturing for selected parts for each of the over 1000 F35s expected to be sold worldwide.

The use of such high tech weaponry is a deliberate policy to reduce the casualties of the armed forces using them. the ultimate example of course is the drone - soon to become ubiquitous in all aspects of our lives. An unavoidable extension of this modernised technology for fighting "at a distance" is that it is civilianising warfare. We know now that over 1000 civilians have died directly as a result of drone strikes in Pakistan and the Yemen. Those drones are

guided by young men sitting in air conditioned comfort in US military bases, using targetting and communications passing through bases in Pine Gap and NW Cape in Australia. Bea Campbell made a telling point recently on the Phillip Adams Late Night Live program - that in modern warfare over 80% of casualties are women and children.

In the face of this enormity and seemingly unstoppable military juggernaut, what are we the everyday people to do?

Over 100 people from 40 peace organisations around Australia gathered in Canberra at Easter for the inaugural conference of the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network. (There is more information about IPAN in this and previous newsletters). They were joined by more than 50 young people eager to protest both the militarist preoccupations of both major parties, as well as the close ties between warfare and international trade - currently through talks around the Trans Pacific Partnership to make corporate military industries more powerful than governments. One of the main aims of the discussions was how to build stronger links between the struggles here in Australia, and with people's movements in Japan, South Korea, Guam, and the Philippines.

That gathering and interchange between the enthusiasm of young people and the experience of veteran peace workers was a quite historic event for our struggle in Australia. Movements grow in strength as the objective social conditions change and develop. We have seen over the past few years as the big corporate world lurches from one crisis to another, each time pressuring governments to put the burden for these crises on the back of everyday people.

Already we are seeing the results from the latest effort at burden shifting - as the Federal LNP government stocks fall to record low levels. People are on the move. Former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser calls for an end to the US alliance, to US troops in Darwin and dismantling of Pine Gap spy base. Polls show an increasing number of people dissatisfied with Government policies. IPAN will be a valuable means of building and organising that movement.

Ross Gwyther, May 23 2014)



JUST PEACE ACTIVITIES

IPAN Activities

Over the past 6 months we in Just Peace, as a member organisation of the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN), have organised the inaugural national IPAN meeting and conference in Canberra, during the week between Easter and Anzac Day this year. Bringing peace activists from many organisations across Australia was a huge step forward towards united efforts towards an independent and peaceful future. See separate report on the conference and week of Peace Convergence in this newsletter. We were supported financially for this activity by the Union of Australian Women. UAW has now become a member of Just Peace!



Palestine Subgroup

Just Peace for Palestine subgroup continues grassroots efforts supporting Palestinian human rights. With monthly stalls in the city mall running petitions on the detention of children in Israeli military prisons and settlement occupation of Palestinian lands.

Did you know 2014 is the United Nations declared year of solidarity with the Palestinian people?

<http://unispal.un.org/unispal.nsf/solidarity.htm>

Earlier this year Federal Labour MP Maria Vamvakinou presented a speech on this matter

“Today my fellow co-convenor of the parliamentary friends of Palestine, the member for Reid; the convenor of the UN parliamentary group, the member for Fremantle; and I had the pleasure of hosting the launch of the United Nations Year of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.....”

Maria also presented a petition we ran in 2013 on the UNICEF report on the detention of children in Israeli military prisons. Thank you Maria!

<http://www.mariavamvakinou.com/index.php/latest-news/speeches/732-un-year-of-solidarity-with-the-palestinian-people-adjournalment-debate-chamber>

In March we hosted Vivienne Porsholz from Sydney based *Jews Against The Occupation*. Vivienne spoke at a number of events about her recent time in Palestine. These included a screening of “The Gatekeepers”, The Union of Australian Women International Womens Day Dinner with over 100 people in attendance and at the Believing Women for a Culture of Peace gathering.

Iraq Activities

Just Peace marked the 11th anniversary of the invasion of Iraq and the subsequent and ongoing tragedy of war in Iraq with a talk from Brisbane based barrister James O’Neill who gave a very comprehensive report on the illegality of Australian participation in the war especially as one of the 3 nations who developed the Coalition of the Willing.

Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday this year was held in the rain but with significant success. The speaking line-up included Sam Watson, Rachel Noble Senator Claire Moore and Brisbane Barrister Stephen Keim. Stephen outlined the serious threat to peace and justice under the current state government.

Annette Brownlie

“I believe that peace is not merely an absence of war, but the nurture of human life, and that in time this nurture will do away with war as a natural process....I can see no reason why one should not see what one believes in time of war as in time of peace....Only in freedom is permanent peace possible. To unite women in all countries who are opposed to any kind of war, exploitation and oppression and who work for universal disarmament...and by the establishment of social, political, and economic justice for all without distinction of sex, race, class, or creeds.

Jane Addams (1860-1935) U.S.A.





REPORT: CANBERRA PEACE CONVERGANCE 2014

The week of 19th to 25th April brought together peace activists from across Australia.

At the National Folk Festival IPAN representatives engaged with 700 individuals to sign a petition calling for cancellation of the F35 Joint Strike Fighter Jets. During the week PM Tony Abbott announced his decision to purchase 75 of these aircraft at a present cost of \$25B. The F35's have many functional issues, indeed the jet has been described as a risky project by the overseeing pentagon officer. However the dominant issue to consider is how much more embedded our military will be with the USA as a result.

The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network held its first national meeting with over 40 delegates attending. Just Peace Qld is one of the founding member organisations of IPAN a network now over 40 strong. The meeting discussed strategy, structure and led to a stronger union between the various organisations. All agreed it was a very worthwhile exercise.

On Tuesday 22nd April a national conference organised by IPAN was held with around 100 people in attendance. The speakers addressed a full range of issues relating to our lack of independence as a nation and an abysmal record of following superpower nations to war. On the eve of 100 years since the war to end all wars we heard from:

- Justin Tutty Basewatch in Darwin: the basing of US Marines.
- Dr Alison Broinowski- University of Wollongong – Deep State
- Vince Emanuele from US Veterans against war- US a nation in decline and at war
- Dr Michael McKinley-ANU- Pacific Pivot
- Dr Marty Branagan- UNE
- Kim Sattler Unions ACT
- Dr David Stephens – Honest History Group
- Dr Sue Wareham- Campaign for an Iraq War Inquiry

The conference has energised and provided an opportunity for developing more effective well planned activity

around the aims of IPAN. See the concluding statement below.

Wednesday 23rd April Aboriginal Tent Embassy in front of Old Parliament House under a blue sky with sulphur crested cockatoos joining in the talk a day of discussion and further development of strategy and relationships.

Thursday 24th The WACA group from Melbourne organised a day of protest with an ambition to break the Guinness book of records for the most protests in one day. Success we did it! From the old Parliament to the US Embassy, ADFA, Lockheed Martin ,DFAT and a many of the embassies who have agreed to the Trans Pacific Partnership we had a cavalcade of cars and at each stop a great report on the chosen site's relevance/

On a very cold Thursday evening around 70 people joined in the Anzac eve peace vigil. Winding our way down Mt Ainsley to the front of the War Memorial was a feat indeed with very little light luckily no accidents. We started silently but ended up in song. A wonderful experience.

Friday 25th Anzac Day supporting the Indigenous Frontier War contingent marching up Anzac Avenue with many thousands of people taking in the message of the banners and flags and placards listing some of the battles fought by Aboriginal people as they has their lands occupied.

IPAN: FINAL DECLARATION



INDEPENDENT AND PEACEFUL AUSTRALIA NETWORK

Towards an Independent and Peaceful Australia National Conference Canberra - 21-22 April, 2014

Concluding Conference Statement

This first national conference of Independent and Peaceful Australia

Network affirms our support for an independent Australian foreign policy as the most effective path for our country to build peace in the region.

It is our view that Australia's successive government policies of willingly following the US to wars, the stationing of US bases and troops on sovereign soil and the deeper integration of Australian foreign policies and military into the US war machine is a major threat to peace in the region.

We're concerned that Australia is complicit and actively involved in the US wars of aggression. We're concerned with successive Australian governments' subservience to foreign powers' economic and military interests. We're concerned that the financial costs of militarisation and engagement in foreign wars are a burden on our country that comes at the expense of people's lives, welfare and the environment.

Through recent decades we have witnessed a steady increase in the level of Australia's military involvement with the US. We are concerned that Australian governments' subservience and complicity in the US military Pivot into Asia-Pacific is increasing the threat of war, rather than building peace and security in the region.

We are opposed to foreign military bases and the deployment of foreign troops and military in Australia and the Asia-Pacific. We are opposed to the integration of Australia's foreign policies and military into the US plans.

We want to live in Australia with an independent foreign policy, under which our country is free to choose what is truly in the best interest of peace in the world. We also recognise that a truly independent and peaceful Australia cannot be fully realised without a just treaty with Australia's indigenous people.

22 April 2014.

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www.ipan.org.au, facebook page



RE-MILITARIZATION OF JAPAN

The Martial Nostalgia of Shinzo Abe

by Tom Clifford

April 01, 2014

Most politicians picking a date to announce a major policy shift, overturning a fifty-year ban on the exports of military hardware, would not chose April 1. But the polished corridors of power in Tokyo are not renowned for their sense of humor.

The past is another country, one which Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe consistently harks back to. Abe has even mentioned a timeframe for his goal to be achieved, what he claims is 2020 vision or in this case revision: the lighting of the Olympic flame in Tokyo in six years.

Abe has vowed to push for a wholesale revision of the Japanese constitution to be enacted before the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics. "By 2020, I think Japan will have completely restored its status and been making great contributions to peace and stability in the region and the world," he said.

Overturning the export ban inevitably means that the focus will turn to Article 9 of the constitution. This states that Japan pledges never to wage war, or even maintain land, sea or armed forces capable of waging war. But the article that is key to Abe's ambitions is 96.

This article sets out the procedures required to change the constitution, one that has never been altered; revised, re-interpreted but never actually altered since its enactment in 1947.

It states that any amendment must be backed by two-thirds of both houses of the Japanese parliament and a referendum. Abe wants just a simple majority in both houses, which he has, to allow him to change the constitution.

Reinterpreting has been successful at least in terms of defense. Japanese

military spending will hit \$232 billion over the next five years as it purchases anti-missile destroyers, submarines, 52 amphibious vehicles, surveillance drones, US fighter planes and 17 Boeing Osprey aircraft, capable of vertical take-off. Not bad under a constitution that forbids a standing army.

But if Abe can change 96, then the LDP, who have been in power for all but a handful of the last 60 years, will be able to drive through wholesale changes to the constitution which has been reinterpreted on three key occasions that were at odds with the article's original intention.

In 1965 the US was allowed fly B-52s out of Japan's Kadena Air Base to bomb North Vietnam.

In 1991 Japan provided \$13 billion in financial support to help remove the Iraqi army from Kuwait but no troops. Conservatives in Japan felt that this anomaly, in their opinion, was a golden opportunity to press for major constitutional change.

In 1999 Tokyo said it could provide



logistic support to the US in emergencies in "areas surrounding Japan," which was understood to include the Korean Peninsula.

Tokyo also passed a law in 2001 allowing it to refuel US vessels in the Indian Ocean in support of Operation Enduring Freedom — the war in Afghanistan.

But Abe's plans to further fiddle with the constitution are meeting opposition from within his own ranks. Retired lawmaker and former LDP secretary-general Makoto Koga said at a public

lecture recently: "Changing a constitutional interpretation through a cabinet decision is a patchwork measure... One mistake and we could be involved in a war."

Emperor Akihito and Crown Prince Naruhito have indicated that they were against changing the constitution.

The *Japan Times* stated in an editorial last year that : It cannot be emphasized too much that the LDP is trying to impose a constitution that runs counter to the principle of modern constitutional politics as well as postwar Japan's no-war principle.

In September 2007, Abe wrote in a magazine article that "From now on, I want to sacrifice myself as one lawmaker to make true conservatism take root in Japan."

Abe, from a wealthy political family, was exposed early to the ultra-conservative viewpoint at the knees of his grandfather, Nobusuke Kishi, a former prime minister.

Kishi was imprisoned for his wartime role, including atrocities committed in China, but never tried as a war criminal after World War II. He was premier from 1957 to 1960, but, in an ironic twist had to resign without achieving his goal of revising the constitution. You could say it runs in the family.

Abe has also pushed through a draconian "secrets law" that allows the government to decide what can be classified as secret. Critics say it is a charter against uncovering abuse of power and will strengthen government influence over the media

Sirens of alarm are ringing. How they are heeded will determine whether the 2020 Olympics will see Japan delving into the past or embracing the future.

Tom Clifford can be reached at: cliffordtomsan@hotmail.com

**THE WEAPONS WE LEFT BEHIND***We Don't Want You to Swim in the River*by **Kathy Kelly**, April 14, 2014

In early April, 2014, the U.S. Navy unveiled its Mach 7 Magnetic Mangler, “a railgun straight out of Star Trek that can take out targets at 100 miles with a projectile flying at nearly 7,000 feet per second.” So far, the U.S. military has spent \$240 million developing the railgun over a period of ten years. CBS News reports that the railgun won’t go to sea until 2016, but one article, published in *The Gazette*, suggests that the U.S. military may have decided to show off the Magnetic Mangler in order to send a message to the Russian government.

While the American public gets to see the weapon, so do America’s enemies. The military in recent years has timed the unveiling of new technology to global events.

The last time North Korea got frisky, the Navy showed off an anti-missile laser.

Now, with the crisis continuing in the Ukraine, the Navy is showing off something even scarier.

In advance of the University of Wisconsin’s recent “Resources for Peace” conference, a professor friend asked participants to consider whether the increasing competition for depleted global resources, for goods to meet essential human needs, would tend inevitably to make people less humane. She was thinking particularly about what she termed “the shrinking humanism” seen in dystopian novels and films that portray cruelty and violence among people who fear for their survival.

I posed her question to Buddy Bell, one of my young friends here at Voices, who has traveled to several war zones and has worked steadily among people suffering displacement and poverty in the United States. “Well,” he said, after a long pause, “there are precedents for dramatic and selfless service on behalf of sustaining a community, even in a time of desperation and war.” Then he went to his room and got me a CD. “Listen to the story Utah Phillips tells on Track 3,” he said.

Utah Phillips, a folksinger and storyteller, had been a U.S. soldier in Korea. His son asked if he had ever shot anyone. He said he didn’t know, but that whether or not he shot anyone wasn’t the

story. He told his son about a day when he was longing to take a swim in the Imjin River. His clothes and boots were rotting, and he had mold growing on his body. Chinese soldiers on the other side were having a wonderful time swimming. Why, then, were the local Koreans insisting he must not swim in the river? “A young Korean told me, ‘You know, when we get married here, the young married couple moves in with the elders, they move in with the grandparents, but there’s nothing growing! Everything’s been destroyed, there’s no food. So, the first baby that’s born, the oldest, the old man, goes out with a jug of water and a blanket, sits on the bank of the river and waits to die. Then, when he dies, he’ll roll over the bank and into the Imjin River and his body will be carried out to sea. And we don’t want you to swim in the river because our elders are floating out to sea.’”

Utah Phillips seemed to want his son to understand that leaving people with nothing when you have everything is as serious a crime as shooting them. Utah Phillips, at least, consented not to use a resource he could have decided was free to everyone, out of respect for the cost his use would impose on people already giving up everything so that their young could survive with next to nothing.

The tradition of selfless and benevolent behavior continues in Korea’s Jeju Island. Last week, we said goodbye to Joyakjol, a young South Korean activist who is part of the intergenerational campaign to protest construction of a U.S. military base on the pristine shores of Jeju Island. Every morning, activists commit civil disobedience at the gates, risking arrest to block the trucks, and construction equipment that comes to tear apart their land.

People living in landlocked Afghanistan also struggle to cope with consequences of interventionary struggles. They face mounting costs in lives and resources. Kevin Seiff, reporting for the *Washington Post*, has written several articles about risks to Afghan civilians, especially children, posed by undetonated grenades, rockets and mortar shells the U.S.

military leaves behind as it vacates scores of firing ranges in Afghanistan.

Dozens of children have been killed or wounded as they have stumbled upon the ordnance at the sites, which are often poorly marked. Casualties are likely to increase sharply; the U.S. military has removed the munitions from only 3 percent of the territory covered by its sprawling ranges, officials said.

Clearing the rest of the contaminated land — which in total is twice as big as New York City — could take two to five years. U.S. military officials say they intend to clean up the ranges. But because of a lack of planning, officials say, funding has not yet been approved for the monumental effort, which is expected to cost \$250 million.

According to the *Mine Action Program in Afghanistan*, most of the land requiring clearance would otherwise be used for agriculture, a “significant obstacle in a country where 70% of the labour force earns an income through farming or animal husbandry.”

Among the main casualties of war are those who starve and fall ill when valuable farmland is left as minefields.

Some people pull together in the face of scarcity; some demand everything even when others have nothing. Today’s crop of grim, dystopian novels and films, the concern of my professor friend, may at times ignore the kindness and solidarity that can occur among the dispossessed.

When many impoverished people, worldwide, don’t want “the haves” to invade them, when, as “have-nots,” they say, ‘please, this is ours, it is almost all that we have, we cannot have you storming in and claiming it because you can,’ we are astonishingly ill-equipped to understand their objection and honor their need.

These weapons we tout aren’t futuristic; they announce our lack of a future. But everywhere around us, we can spot people who are volunteering to live simply so that others can simply live. And that choice is, in reality, open to each of us.

Kathy Kelly co-coordinates Voices for Creative Nonviolence.

**WHERE NEXT?***Failure in Iraq and Afghanistan*by **Brian Cloughley**

April 08, 2014

The catastrophic 2003 war on Iraq was led by America and there was no reason for any other nation to become involved in what was obviously going to be a barbaric shambles. Eventually it became obvious there was no justification whatever for the invasion, but Britain had chosen to tag along, just as it did in the ill-planned and appallingly executed war in Afghanistan. Just how the entire might of the hi-tech US and the North Atlantic Treaty countries (plus some others who wanted to curry favour with Washington), can lose a war against a few thousand raggy-baggie militants is beyond comprehension. But they did. And nobody can claim otherwise.

Few remember the words of the perceptive Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Davis, US Army, who wrote about Afghanistan two years ago that:

“The United States, along with over 40 NATO and other allied nations, possesses the most sophisticated, powerful, and technologically advanced military force that has ever hit the field of combat. We have the finest and most well trained soldiers that exist anywhere; we have armored vehicles of every type, to include MIA2 Main Battle Tanks; artillery, mortars, advanced rockets, precision guided missiles, and hand-held rocket launchers; we have a wholly uncontested air force composed of NATO’s most advanced ground attack fighter jets, bombers, AWACS controllers, spy planes, signals-interception aircraft, B 1 bombers, attack helicopters, and massive transport jets to ferry our troops and critical supplies where they are needed; we have thousands of unmanned aerial drones both for intelligence collection and missile-launching; we have a helicopter fleet for personnel transport and attack support; we have an enormous constellation of spy satellites; logistics that are as limitless as the combined weight of the industrial world; we have every technological device known to

the profession of arms; we are able to intercept virtually every form of insurgent communication to include cell phones, walkie-talkies, satellite phones, email, and even some ability to eavesdrop on otherwise private conversations; a remarkably capable cohort of intelligence analysts that are as educated, well trained and equipped to a degree that used to exist only in science fiction; and our various nations have the economic wherewithal to spend tens of billions of dollars each month to fund it all. And for almost 10 years we have pitted this unbelievable and unprecedented capability against: A bunch of dudes in bed sheets and flip-flops.”

The fact that Davis was (and is) honourable, insightful and highly intelligent was enough to consign his analysis to the bin. Honesty is not welcomed by those who created chaos and then have to defend their demonstrable incompetence. And you’ll never be promoted for telling the truth. I saw this when I served in Vietnam, where the slogan was “Stuff Up and Move Up!” And by heaven they did. And there were just as many idiots moved up during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. What a legacy.

And another of Washington’s legacies has been final destruction of British independence.

You may have heard of a man called David Cameron. He is prime minister of Britain and arguably even more inept than his immediate predecessors, Messrs Blair and Brown, the bungling duo who drove the UK into the sink of international mediocrity. It was Blair who followed Bush America so enthusiastically in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and when Britain withdrew from Iraq it was Brown who said in 2009 that “Today Iraq is a success story . . . Britain can be proud of our legacy that we leave there.” But the country was a heaving shambles that has become even more of a catastrophe as the years have passed. In 2013 the United Nations recorded the deaths in Iraq of “at least 7,818 civilians and 1,050 members of the security forces.” Hardly a day passes without slaughter. What a legacy. What a fool.

At the time when Brown claimed that the Iraq war was a success David Cameron was in political opposition and called for an inquiry into the conflict because “There are vital lessons to learn and we need to learn them rapidly and the only justification for delay can, I’m afraid, be a political one.” Quite so. An inquiry ran from 2009 to 2011 and Mr Cameron became prime minister in 2010 and has not permitted release of documents that would throw light on the lunacy and even criminality of the war. The findings of the inquiry have still not been made public. No doubt the justification for delay is a political one. His foreign minister, a little joke person called Hague, had supported the war on Iraq and after withdrawal of foreign troops told the BBC that “We are leaving [Iraq] a better place and it was worth doing what we have done.”

These people live in a fantasy world. Every week there are hundreds of people killed in Iraq. The place is utterly wrecked as a country. Over a million Iraqis died because of the US-led, British-backed war. Iraq under Saddam Hussein was a paradise compared with what the invaders have left behind them. The entire affair was a gigantic war crime.

Cameron has followed the example of his pathetic predecessors when pronouncing on Britain’s part in the war in Afghanistan. British troops are now leaving that devastated country, and Cameron stated that “To me, the absolute driving part of the mission is a basic level of security so it doesn’t become a haven for terror. That is the mission, that was the mission and I think we will have accomplished that mission and so our troops can be very proud of what they have done.”

But Nato declared its main role “is to assist the Afghan Government in exercising and extending its authority and influence across the country, paving the way for reconstruction and effective governance,” while the UK’s Ministry of Defence announced Britain’s mission was “To develop a self-sustaining, stable and democratic Afghanistan.”

Most British troops were stationed in Helmand province, where, as the BBC reported last week, there are “questions about what will be the lasting legacy of British forces after eight years in Helmand (continued on Page 8...)”



(continued from Page 7...)

and 448 British military deaths. It is certainly not peace. As the last containers are loaded onto lorries at Camp Price you can still hear gunfire in the distance.”

Afghanistan is in utter chaos and the “lasting legacy” of Britain in Helmand includes, among other disasters, a vast increase in heroin production.

In answer to a question in parliament the UK’s government had to admit that “The opium-growing area around Britain’s main base in Afghanistan nearly quadrupled between 2011 and 2013.” It was declared that “achieving a permanent reduction in opium cultivation will take decades — it needs a strong Afghan lead supported by effective regional and international action.” In eight long years in the province there has been no “effective international action” to stem the enormous increase in poppy growth and production of heroin, much of which ends up in Britain. (Washington doesn’t care much about Afghan heroin production because so little of it ends up in America.)

Last June the UN recorded that there were 574,327 Afghans internally displaced by war. The figure is now 630,000. And a major fact ignored by the West is that there are still 1.6 million Afghan refugees being looked after in Pakistan. If Cameron’s vaunted “basic level of security” had been achieved, then these people would return to their homeland, but they don’t want to risk their lives. The UN High Commission for Refugees, that saintly agency, records that Pakistan is hosting the largest number of refugees of any country in the world ; yet Pakistan never receives a word of international thanks, praise or even acknowledgement for bearing with three decades of societal disruption and economic burden caused first by the Soviet occupation, then by the US-British-Nato war.

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan states that almost 3,000 civilians were killed and more than 5,600 injured in 2013. It was the worst year for deaths of women and children since 2009. And the Afghan Local Police did their bit in contributing to despair and chaos when they “carried out

serious human rights violations with impunity which were often enabled by provincial or national level power-brokers.”

So, while the US and Nato limp out of Afghanistan, leaving happy drug producers, a thriving corruption industry, unsafe roads, a police force out of control, and an astonishing annual number of civilian deaths, where will the western warmongers want to go next?

What legacy are they going to inflict on the next unfortunate country that they consider deserves their military attention? When you think of the amount of good that could have been done throughout the world — the improvements to health, education, agriculture, energy production; the list is endless — with the billions of dollars that have been squandered on causing misery in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan it makes you doubt the sanity of western political leaders. But they’ll soon find some other country to destroy. Fail, fail and fail again.

Brian Cloughley lives in France.

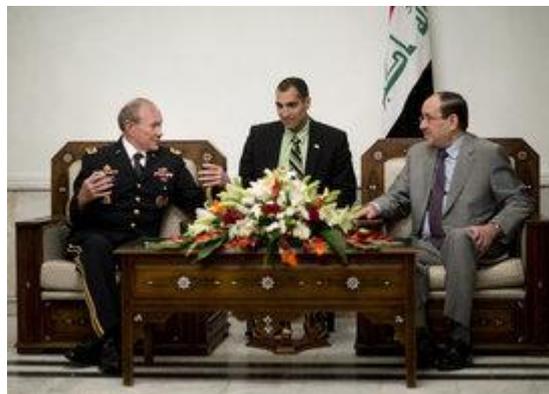
IRAQ: LEGACY OF OCCUPATION

Mounting deaths of Iraqis offer somber reminder of what US intervention has brought

- Andrea Germanos, staff writer

Published on Monday, March 3, 2014 by [Common Dreams](#)

Iraq, a country “wrecked” by U.S. invasion and occupation, continues to experience yet another month with hundreds of civilian casualties.



Joint Chiefs Chairman Gen. Martin Dempsey talks with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in 2012. (Photo: DOD/D. Myles Cullen.

According to a statement issued Saturday by the United Nations mission to Iraq, 703 Iraqis were killed in February, and 564 of those were civilians. There were also 1,381 Iraqis injured last month. Those figures follow a month in which 733 Iraqis were killed, including 618 civilians. The figures for both months leave off deaths in Anbar province, because the UN stated it could not validate those numbers.

2013 also marked a somber record for Iraq—the highest number of civilian casualties since 2008.

The U.S. has recently poured Hellfire missiles and surveillance drones into the country, purportedly to help Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki fight al Qaeda.

“The political, social and religious leaders of Iraq have an urgent responsibility to come together in the face of the terrorist threat that the country is facing,” Nickolay Mladenov, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Iraq, stated Monday.

Yet Raed Jarrar, an Arab-American blogger and political analyst, explained to *Common Dreams* that “what is causing violence and casualties in Iraq today has little to do with terrorism. It’s caused by corruption, sectarian politics, and other legacies of the U.S. occupation in Iraq.”

“What started last year as a legitimate nonviolent movement was crushed by Iraqi government tanks in late December,” Jarrar continued. “It has since turned into an armed uprising against the Iraqi government. The U.S. continues to interfere in Iraq by sending weapons and providing political support to its allies in the country.”

Other critics of military intervention have also charged that the ongoing violence gripping Iraq has “everything to do with the aftermath of the U.S. invasion and occupation.”

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**HOW TO KEEP THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE ALIVE**

By Alan Hart

April 10, 2014

The headline over a presentation (<http://jffp.com/?p=57943>) by Jews for Justice for Palestinians of the text of a talk given by Norman Finkelstein to a number of British universities in mid-March was *The End of Palestine? It's time to sound an alarm*. The purpose of this article is to do just that.

In his talk which analysed U.S. Secretary of State Kerry's peace initiative ("a sham"), Finkelstein explained at length that the Palestinians are on their own because the powers that be in the Western and Arab worlds want them to accept crumbs from Zionism's table and effectively surrender to Zionism's will. (I've been saying that for ages).

He also notes, and I agree, that the Palestinian cause is not as alive and well as it once was in the hearts and minds of the Arab masses, not least because they have troubles of their own.

Finkelstein's summing up included this:

QUOTE The PA fantasizes that it can liberate Palestine via international diplomacy, while BDS fantasizes that it can liberate Palestine via international sanctions. But the only ones who can liberate Palestine are the Palestinian people themselves, principally those living under occupation. Only mass nonviolent civil resistance can catapult Palestine back on the international stage.

If a popular revolt, like the first intifada, erupts under the simple slogan Enforce the Law, and if the international solidarity movement does its part, it might be possible to mobilize public opinion – including sectors of liberal American Jewish opinion – and exert sufficient pressure on the international community such that Israel will be compelled to meet its legal obligations. UNQUOTE

My purpose is to put some flesh on the bone of the statement that the Palestinians themselves must take the lead if their cause is not to become a lost one.

In my analysis a Palestinian strategy for taking the lead has begun with the DISSOLUTION OF THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY (PA), which in Gideon

Levy's words is more or less a "sub-contractor for Israel", and HANDING BACK TO ISRAEL THE FULL RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR OCCUPATION.

This would impose significant burdens on Israel.

Without the PA's American trained security forces to keep the Palestinians of the occupied West Bank under control for Israel, having to take complete responsibility for occupation would be costly in terms of the additional call on Israel's own security forces and financially.

More to the point, dissolving the PA could be the beginning of a process to make calling and holding the Zionist (not Jewish) state to account for its defiance of international law and crimes something less than what it is at present – a mission impossible.

Such a process could and would be assisted by the occupied and oppressed Palestinians resorting to a campaign of non-violent protest. It could take the form of silent gatherings of Palestinians in each and all of their locations, with each and every one of them holding above their heads a placard bearing the words END THE OCCUPATION. The placard would not need to be anything fancy. The words, large enough for the cameras to capture, could be written on cardboard. In my view the combination of the silence of the gatherings and the message of the placards would help to focus the attention of the outside world.

As I write I find myself wondering how the government of Israel would respond to such demonstrations on, say, a weekly basis. Quite possibly it would pass a law declaring that any gathering of Palestinians anywhere on the West Bank for a political purpose would be illegal without a permit. They, permits, would not be granted and, in theory, that would free up the IDF to take whatever action it deemed to be necessary – tear gas, rubber bullets and even live ammunition – to disperse the silent protest gatherings. I say "in theory" because IDF violence to disperse silent and peaceful protest gatherings of Palestinians on their own

land (what's left of it) would help to swell the rising global tide of anti-Israelism and add substance to the perception of Israel as a pariah state. Surely no government of Israel would be that stupid.....?

As I have stated in previous articles, the occupied and oppressed Palestinians would themselves be stupid if they resorted to violent protest because that would play into Israel's hands and save its leaders from creating a pretext for a final ethnic cleansing. (It really is the case, as noted recently by Bassem Khoury, a former PA minister, that "Israel hasn't changed." He added, "It is the same old colonial entity pursuing the same ethnic cleansing policies it did for decades." But unlike what happened in 1948, I add, today's ethnic cleansing is happening slowly and by stealth).

As I indicated above, the dissolution of the PA would be only the beginning of a strategy for preventing the Palestinian cause from becoming a lost one. The other essential element of it has to be the Palestinian diaspora becoming engaged and putting its act together to bring the Palestine National Council (PNC) back to life.

Once upon a time the PNC, a parliament-in-exile with its members elected or at least nominated by diaspora communities throughout the world, was the highest decision-making body on the Palestinian side. (The Arab regimes loathed it because more often than not it was a manifestation of democracy in action). Bringing the PNC back to life would require fresh elections to it throughout the Palestinian diaspora and, Israel permitting, the occupied West Bank and the blockaded Gaza Strip...

The number of Palestinians resident in each country would determine how many representatives in each country were to be elected to the PNC.

The role of the PNC brought back to life would be to debate and determine Palestinian policy and then to represent it by speaking to power, on behalf of all Palestinians everywhere, with one credible voice.

If the Palestinian diaspora is unwilling to play its necessary part in

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**ISRAEL: YOUTH RESISTANCE**

Israeli Youth: 'We Refuse to Serve in the Occupation Army'

Sixty young people sign open letter to Netanyahu announcing their resistance to the draft in biggest wave of refusal since 2008

- Sarah Lazare, staff writer

Published on Monday, March 10, 2014

"If necessary, I will go to jail."

Those are the words of 17-year-old Dafna Rothstein Landman, one of 60 and counting Israeli youth who signed an open letter sent to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu over the weekend declaring their refusal of compulsory service in the Israeli military — the biggest wave of conscientious objection the country has seen since 2008.

Under the banner of *Shministim* — Hebrew for 12th graders — the group of conscientious objectors condemns the dehumanization of Palestinians living under occupation. In the Palestinian territories, "human rights are violated, and acts defined under international law as war-crimes are perpetuated on a daily basis," their letter states. "These include assassinations (extrajudicial killings), the construction of settlements on occupied lands, administrative detentions, torture, collective punishment and the unequal allocation of resources such as electricity and water."

Entitled *We Refuse to Serve in the Occupation Army*, the letter charges that this dehumanization hurts Israelis as well. "The problem with the army does not begin or end with the damage it inflicts on Palestinian society. It infiltrates everyday life in Israeli society too: it shapes the educational system, our workforce opportunities, while fostering racism, violence and ethnic, national and gender-based discrimination."

"We refuse to forsake our principles as a condition to being accepted in our society," reads the joint letter, penned by people aged 16 to 20 who are eligible for compulsory service in the Army. "We have thought about our refusal deeply and we stand by our decisions."

Dafna, who helped write the letter, told *Common Dreams* she was only 15 years old when she began questioning her military service — a process she says was catalyzed when she reflected on the imprint of Israeli militarism on her own schooling experience. "I realized to what extent the education system is geared towards the Army and not towards further education, the job market, personal interests, etcetera," she said.

Soon after, she began traveling from her home in Tel Aviv to the West Bank, where she participated in Palestinian demonstrations against Israeli occupation. Here, she witnessed the "violence of the Army" first-hand. "I met people from those Palestinian villages," she said. "That meant that instead of names in a newspaper they became people, with faces and personalities."

She added that she became aware of the way "the Army perpetuates an ideal of male violence," within Israeli society.

When she and her friends began receiving letters about their Army draft around last summer, they became "worried" and began taking steps towards their joint refusal.

This year's crop of public resisters follows a history of joint draft refusal in Israel, which has been waged since 1970, when a group of students declared their refusal of the draft in an open letter to then-Prime Minister Golda Meir. The term *Shministim* caught on in 2008 when 100 young people signed an open letter refusing the draft, and the years since have seen waves of conscientious objection.

This includes resisters from the Druze religious community — a conscientious objection movement that is reportedly growing, as well as ultra-orthodox draft refusers. According to the Committee for the Druze Initiative, a Druze organization that supports conscientious objectors, since compulsory service was imposed on Druze men in 1956, approximately 5,000 have been imprisoned for refusing to serve in the Army.

"We stand in solidarity with the ultra-orthodox youth and the Arab youth — Christian and Druze, some of whom are currently in an army prison," said Roni Lax, a 20 year old signatory from Bnei Brak, in a statement about the letter emailed to *Common Dreams*.

The Israeli military makes it near-impossible to declare conscientious objector status, and refusers are often jailed for multiple consecutive terms for refusing an order. Meanwhile, many Druze resisters face horrific conditions in prison, including religious and ethnic discrimination. Several Palestinian citizens of Israel from the Druze community are currently incarcerated for refusing the draft.

"The Army serves the people in power and not the civilians, who are only a tool," said Shaked Harari, a 17-year-old signatory from Bat Yam. "My friends and I refuse to be cannon fodder."

"My refusal is a way of expressing my opposition to the wrongs done daily in our name and through us," said Mandy Cartner, a 16-year-old signatory from Tel Aviv.

Says Dafna, "In a society where Army service is taken for granted, we wanted to shake this concept and make people think about the implications of serving in the Army."

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keeping the cause alive, the judgement of history one day will most likely be that it was complicit by default in Zionism's final ethnic cleansing and the closing, never for re-opening, of the Palestine file.

My question for the Palestinian diaspora is this. Can you not hear the alarm?

Footnote

In an article for today's *Ha'aretz*, Henry Siegman, formerly the national director of the American Jewish Congress, argues that America is "irrelevant" to Middle East peacemaking because it won't use its leverage over Israel and, therefore, that the Palestinians should resort to "a non-violent, anti-apartheid struggle."

Alan Hart has been engaged with events in the Middle East and their global consequences and terrifying implications — the possibility of a Clash of Civilisations, Judeo-Christian v Islamic, and, along the way, another great turning against the Jews — for nearly 40 years...

<http://www.alanhart.net>

**NATO'S ACTION PLAN***Nato's Action Plan in Ukraine is Right Out of Dr Strangelove*

From China to Ukraine, the US is pursuing its longstanding ambition to dominate the Eurasian landmass

By John Pilger

April 17, 2014

I watched *Dr Strangelove* the other day. I have seen it perhaps a dozen times; it makes sense of senseless news. When Major TJ "King" Kong goes "toe to toe with the Rooskies" and flies his rogue B52 nuclear bomber to a target in Russia, it's left to General "Buck" Turgidson to reassure the president. Strike first, says the general, and "you got no more than 10-20 million killed, tops". President Merkin Muffley: "I will not go down in history as the greatest mass murderer since Adolf Hitler." General Turgidson: "Perhaps it might be better, Mr President, if you were more concerned with the American people than with your image in the history books."

The genius of Stanley Kubrick's film is that it accurately represents the cold war's lunacy and dangers. Most of the characters are based on real people and real maniacs. There is no equivalent to *Strangelove* today because popular culture is directed almost entirely at our interior lives, as if identity is the moral zeitgeist and true satire is redundant, yet the dangers are the same. The nuclear clock has remained at five minutes to midnight; the same false flags are hoisted above the same targets by the same "invisible government", as Edward Bernays, the inventor of public relations, described modern propaganda.

In 1964, the year *Dr Strangelove* was made, "the missile gap" was the false flag. To build more and bigger nuclear weapons and pursue an undeclared policy of domination, President John F Kennedy approved the CIA's propaganda that the Soviet Union was well ahead of the US in the production of intercontinental ballistic missiles. This filled front pages as the "Russian threat". In fact, the Americans were so far ahead in production of the missiles, the Russians never approached them. The cold war was based largely on this lie.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US has ringed Russia with military bases, nuclear warplanes and missiles as part of its Nato enlargement project. Reneging on the Reagan administration's promise to the Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev in 1990 that Nato would not expand "one inch to the east", Nato has all but taken over eastern Europe. In the former Soviet Caucasus, Nato's military build-up is the most extensive since the second world war.

In February, the US mounted one of its proxy "colour" coups against the elected government of Ukraine; the shock troops were fascists. For the first time since 1945, a pro-Nazi, openly antisemitic party controls key areas of state power in a European capital. No western European leader has condemned this revival of fascism on the border of Russia. Some 30 million Russians died in the invasion of their country by Hitler's Nazis, who were supported by the infamous Ukrainian Insurgent Army (the UPA) which was responsible for numerous Jewish and Polish massacres. The Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists, of which the UPA was the military wing, inspires today's Svoboda party.

Since Washington's putsch in Kiev – and Moscow's inevitable response in Russian Crimea to protect its Black Sea fleet – the provocation and isolation of Russia have been inverted in the news to the "Russian threat". This is fossilised propaganda. The US air force general who runs Nato forces in Europe – General Philip Breedlove, no less – claimed more than two weeks ago to have pictures showing 40,000 Russian troops "massing" on the border with Ukraine. So did Colin Powell claim to have pictures proving there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. What is certain is that Barack Obama's rapacious, reckless coup in Ukraine has ignited a civil war and Vladimir Putin is being lured into a trap.

Following a 13-year rampage that began in stricken Afghanistan well after Osama bin Laden had fled, then destroyed Iraq beneath a false flag, invented a "nuclear rogue" in Iran, dispatched Libya to a Hobbesian anarchy and backed jihadists in Syria, the US finally has a new cold war to

supplement its worldwide campaign of murder and terror by drone.

A Nato membership action plan – straight from the war room of Dr Strangelove – is General Breedlove's gift to the new dictatorship in Ukraine. "Rapid Trident" will put US troops on Ukraine's Russian border and "Sea Breeze" will put US warships within sight of Russian ports. At the same time, Nato war games in eastern Europe are designed to intimidate Russia. Imagine the response if this madness was reversed and happened on the US's borders. Cue General Turgidson.

And there is China. On 23 April, Obama will begin a tour of Asia to promote his "pivot" to China. The aim is to convince his "allies" in the region, principally Japan, to rearm and prepare for the possibility of war with China. By 2020, almost two-thirds of all US naval forces in the world will be transferred to the Asia-Pacific area. This is the greatest military concentration in that vast region since the second world war.

In an arc extending from Australia to Japan, China will face US missiles and nuclear-armed bombers. A strategic naval base is being built on the Korean island of Jeju, less than 400 miles from Shanghai and the industrial heartland of the only country whose economic power is likely to surpass that of the US. Obama's "pivot" is designed to undermine China's influence in its region. It is as if a world war has begun by other means.

This is not a Dr Strangelove fantasy. Obama's defence secretary, Charles "Chuck" Hagel, was in Beijing last week to deliver a warning that China, like Russia, could face isolation and war if it did not bow to US demands. He compared the annexation of Crimea to China's complex territorial dispute with Japan over uninhabited islands in the East China Sea. "You cannot go around the world," said Hagel with a straight face, "and violate the sovereignty of nations by force, coercion or intimidation." As for America's massive movement of naval forces and nuclear weapons to Asia, that is "a sign of the humanitarian assistance the US military can provide".

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**UKRAINE: THE DRIVE TO WAR***Washington Drives The World To War*

By Paul Craig Roberts

April 15, 2014

The CIA director was sent to Kiev to launch a military suppression of the Russian separatists in the eastern and southern portions of Ukraine, former Russian territories for the most part that were foolishly attached to the Ukraine in the early years of Soviet rule.

Washington's plan to grab Ukraine overlooked that the Russian and Russian-speaking parts of Ukraine were not likely to go along with their insertion into the EU and NATO while submitting to the persecution of Russian speaking peoples. Washington has lost Crimea, from which Washington intended to eject Russia from its Black Sea naval base. Instead of admitting that its plan for grabbing Ukraine has gone amiss, Washington is unable to admit a mistake and, therefore, is pushing the crisis to more dangerous levels.

If Ukraine dissolves into secession with the former Russian territories reverting to Russia, Washington will be embarrassed that the result of its coup in Kiev was to restore the Russian provinces of Ukraine to Russia. To avoid this embarrassment, Washington is pushing the crisis toward war.

The CIA director instructed Washington's hand-picked stooge government in Kiev to apply to the United Nations for help in repelling "terrorists" who with alleged Russian help are allegedly attacking Ukraine. In Washington's vocabulary, self-determination is a sign of Russian interference. As the UN is essentially a Washington-financed organization, Washington will get what it wants.

The Russian government has already made it completely clear some weeks ago that the use of violence against protesters in eastern and southern Ukraine would compel the Russian government to send in the Russian army to protect Russians, just as Russia had to do in South Ossetia when Washington instructed its Georgian puppet ruler to attack Russian

peacekeeping troops and Russian residents of South Ossetia.

Washington knows that the Russian government cannot stand aside while one of Washington's puppet states attacks Russians. Yet, Washington is pushing the crisis to war.

The danger for Russia is that the Russian government will rely on diplomacy, international organizations, international cooperation, and on the common sense and self-interest of German politicians and politicians in other of Washington's European puppet states.

For Russia this could be a fatal mistake. There is no good will in Washington, only mendacity. Russian delay provides Washington with time to build up forces on Russia's borders and in the Black Sea and to demonize Russia with propaganda and whip up the US population into a war frenzy. The latter is already occurring.

Kerry has made it clear to Lavrov that Washington is not listening to Russia. As Washington pays well, Washington's European puppets are also not listening to Russia. Money is more important to European politicians than humanity's survival.

In my opinion, Washington does not want the Ukraine matters settled in a diplomatic and reasonable way. It might be the case that Russia's best move is immediately to occupy the Russian territories of Ukraine and re-absorb the territories into Russia from whence they came. This should be done before the US and its NATO puppets are prepared for war. It is more difficult for Washington to start a war when the objects of the war have already been lost. Russia will be demonized with endless propaganda from Washington whether or not Russia re-absorbs its traditional territories. If Russia allows these territories to be suppressed by Washington, the prestige and authority of the Russian government will collapse. Perhaps that is what Washington is counting on.

If Putin's government stands aside while Russian Ukraine is suppressed, Putin's prestige will plummet, and Washington will finish off the Russian government by putting into action its many hundreds of Washington-financed NGOs that the Russian government has so

foolishly tolerated. Russia is riven with Washington's Fifth columns.

In my opinion, the Russian and Chinese governments have made serious strategic mistakes by remaining within the US dollar-based international payments system. The BRICS and any others with a brain should instantly desert the dollar system, which is a mechanism for US imperialism. The countries of the BRICS should immediately create their own separate payments system and their own exclusive communications/Internet system.

Russia and China have stupidly made these strategic mistakes, because reeling from communist failures and oppressions, they naively assumed that Washington was pure, that Washington was committed to its propagandistic self-description as the upholder of law, justice, mercy, and human rights.

In fact, Washington, the "exceptional, indispensable country," is committed to its hegemony over the world. Russia, China, and Iran are in the way of Washington's hegemony and are targeted for attack.

The attack on Russia is mounting.

Paul Craig Roberts was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy and associate editor of the Wall Street Journal. He was columnist for Business Week, Scripps Howard News Service, and Creators Syndicate. He has had many university appointments. His internet columns have attracted a worldwide following. His latest books are, *The Failure of Laissez Faire Capitalism* and *How America Was Lost*.

<http://www.paulcraigroberts.org/>

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Obama is seeking a bigger budget for nuclear weapons than the historical peak during the cold war, the era of Dr Strangelove. The US is pursuing its longstanding ambition to dominate the Eurasian landmass, stretching from China to Europe: a "manifest destiny" made right by might.

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**THE END OF TRANQUILITY***Are Western Policies Evil or Desperate?*by **Anthony F. Shaker**

Weekend Edition April 18-20, 2014

The United States, France and England—today's bald-faced fiction of an "international community"—believe they can use their twin battle horses, "human rights" and "democracy," indefinitely in their effort to destabilize international relations and world order, as flawed as these have been.

They have already ripped through the social, political and economic fabric of numerous countries: Syria, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chile, Myanmar, Venezuela, and having failed in Russia proper, now Ukraine. Sanction-hemmed Iran will forever be in their sights, regardless of the outcome of the nuclear negotiations.

There are many ways to wage war. The easiest, most cost-effective is propaganda. Only, propaganda is as fleeting as a Hollywood flick. Still, Western leaders figure that here they are immune, because they imagine this to be a one-way street. With the West's frozen perch on the "moral high ground," other nations' interests appear peripheral, at best, to the main design of the Anglo-American axis, which is now caught in the death grip of an increasingly useless Israel.

New marriage of left and right

Western politics today embodies a historic alliance forged as far back as early last century between both "conservative" and "liberal" demagogues. Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, both of which blazed this trail for everyone, proved how easily the "West"—another reigning fiction—can be the graveyard of "liberal democracy." Not by repression, but through ideological assimilation. Lyndon B. Johnson is a perfect example of a war-mongering "progressive liberal." He married the War on Communism with the War on Poverty, a policy that arguably triggered the start of the US's torturous but sure decline. His epigones are former Trotskyites turned Zionist commentators, and antiwar liberals like current Secretary of State John Kerry

standing at the forefront of elaborate foreign campaigns of destabilization.

Working in unison with our politicians are ideologically driven outfits like Human Rights Watch, not to mention the thousands of professional "activists" milling around the world. HRW has pretty deep pockets for an NGO, even in times of severe fiscal compression. It associates and is supported by ubiquitous American Zionist groups, which are directly coordinated by Israel regardless of their political affiliation. It has the backing of shadowy American foundations and the US Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), a virtual "Who's Who" of the US foreign policy elite. Well-subsidized, it engages in elaborate media stunts involving photo exhibitions, musical concerts, and brain-addled pronouncement by entertainment stars.

HRW is now beating the drum of war at a frenetic pace, much as we remember Amnesty International doing at the height of the Cold War. As the West churns out its propaganda on an industrial scale, however, this is precisely the moment when the "Western march" eastward seems to be coming to a screeching halt on the Eurasian landmass.

Stars are not forever

All the propaganda, serial lying and self-flattery in the world will not save the day if the very source of "power" has been extinguished. Today, the West is like a dead star. It may shine on still, but its short 150-year moment of glory has already passed. And, as a result, Chancellor Angela Merkel, or whoever succeeds her as de facto head of the European Union, may find her still-occupied Germany in a dangerous political vortex.

The point is that Western inanities are contributing handsomely to its collapsing narrative; and the Ukraine is looking increasingly like the dark room that just got lit, catching the West head and limb in the cookie jar! Western governments have had a field day presenting arguments to the public based, almost invariably, on wild assumptions and claims that have no basis in reality except in the minds of armchair strategists, secret plotters and lunatics.

One recent example is an article in *Foreign Affairs*, a major establishment policy journal ("The Good and Bad of Ahrar al-Sham. An al-Qaeda-Linked Group Worth Befriending," by Michael Doran et al.). Its authors casually argue for American rapprochement with Saudi-sponsored Wahhabi jihadists around the world, as if this has not already happened.

The mock ignorance behind such moral acrobatics, in this case indistinguishable from US attempts to legitimize violent criminal elements innocuously grouped under the umbrella of a "Syrian Opposition," reveals a fundamental weakness. "Fundamental" because, as it manifests itself now in the Ukraine, American and Western impotence is obvious to everyone in the "international community." Establishment newspapers like *Die Zeit* in Germany have seen right through President Obama's grim antics.

Therefore, Western largesse to the dregs of Ukrainian society—ultra-nationalists with known links to Nazi proxy forces back in WWII—is not a sign of strength, but of something that is not "quite right" with the West. It bespeaks a strategy of the weak, revealing a far more sinister design than even the expanding rivalry into which the US is now locking itself with the Russian Federation entails in the short term.

The very first question that comes to mind, even if the authors of the article are correct in distinguishing good from bad Wahhabi terrorists is, to what end? What do the authors hope Obama would achieve with such an alliance? More successes like Iraq and Libya? The West has had a uniform record of failure starting with the Korean War. Perhaps it's all about liberty, or some antiquated American version of "democracy."

The United States is operating, more than ever, under the cloak of "revolutionism," one based on the notion that human rights must be practiced according to US dictates and whenever the US pleases—not before or after!

Naturally, this new tribal redefinition of
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liberty requires the demolition of “regimes” refusing to embrace America’s “self-evident truths” and rejecting its antique sense of exceptionalism. But because nobody has the patience to listen anymore, Obama the “permanent revolutionary” regularly has to issue military threats, impose sanctions, etc., just to be heard over the growing din of misery around the world.

With its elaborate sanctions regime against Iran falling apart, even before new rounds of negotiation, the United States has returned to its old tactic of deploying armed terrorist militias, just as it did against Central America, Southern Africa, Southeast Asia, of course Afghanistan under the Soviets, and other countries. Bloodthirsty terrorists—and literally, FSA cannibals who film themselves eating human flesh—apparently pose no obstacle today. We simply nickname them “moderates” or “fighters against Tyranny”—more offensively, “activists.”

Is this how human rights and democracy are to be established in countries we claim to care about? Or, is this a useful instrument with which to demolish states that the governments of both the US and Israel feel are blocking their view of the glorious future awaiting us all under Israel-American “guidance.”

Bibi Bombs

What currently drives the United States is a cartoonish vision of the world at the intellectual level of Bibi the Bomber during his comical address at the UN. I say this because it has become amply clear the US is on a fast-track to the “dustbin of history” on this march, with lots of help from Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu, and is in no position to dictate.

American losses are piling up. The purpose of using Saudi-sponsored and Israeli advised armies of Wahhabi terrorists, most devastatingly in Syria, is not to build anything, but to pave the way for direct foreign control in an increasingly desperate situation for the Anglo-American alliance with Israel on nearly every front (geopolitical, diplomatic and economic).

We get glimpses of the US’s survival strategy and its reach deep inside other countries thanks to tapped conversations

(like that of the US envoy Nuland, caught mouthing off with expletives about the EU’s irrelevance on the phone) and, of course, the boundless NSA revelations.

Unfortunately, in its desperation, the Atlantic Alliance is grasping at straws, particularly the dry straw of borderless Israel, whose future as the only racially constituted state in the world, is now in serious doubt (judging from a wide range of political opinion inside the US itself).

True, the EU is increasingly irrelevant. To put it bluntly, though, it is not the EU that’s in question now. Western world hegemony as a whole is collapsing. The US envoy wouldn’t have uttered those words otherwise, and this is not merely a passing phase in the history of the world.

The US’s pseudo-revolutionary strategy and rhetoric are not even meant to reestablish American domination anymore, a forlorn hope. Rather, they are shaping up into some sort of “orderly” retreat, as far as humanly possible.

But this is not going very well either. The destructive and unabashedly tribal nature of American policies has cut into its retreat. And it has become inextricably linked to the blood-curdling rhetoric of the all but moribund Congress and European Union. The US has reduced itself to demolishing as many independent states as possible (partly at Israel’s behest)—any state that refuses to tow the line—before possible collapse.

It need not be so

Human rights have been an instrument of manipulation since the Cold War. But we should ask ourselves, who really disagrees with the idea of human dignity and rights? It’s not as if it was invented by the West. No, this instrument is being used as a Trojan horse or battering ram to destroy entire societies. It allows foreign puppeteers to move quickly from small street demonstrations to the dismantlement of economic infrastructure and the destruction of vital military installations.

After all, the West invented sabotage tactics for use against the wartime Nazi occupation of Europe. Today, one has to be pretty desperate to embrace them

with a straight face. And the Atlantic Alliance is desperate.

The United States has taken on the phony mantle of “revolutionism,” as if to emulate the Soviet Union in bygone days. Since President Ronald Reagan, the Neocons have been at the forefront of this new, “revolutionary” conservatism—an idea invented by pre-Nazi German ideologues and philosophers of the extreme right.

How Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, former Carter advisor, laments the lost historical opportunity offered to us with the collapse of the Soviet Union! Indeed, we had a chance to build new relations with the East... maybe even a new, more tranquil world, God forbid!

Brzezinski uttered those words when the longevity of the so-called Postwar was being seriously debated. The Postwar Era did see a lasting relative peace (no world wars) and economic growth. Not because of American leadership, wisdom or that irreverent, down-to-earth pragmatism which Old Worlders used to find so charming about “America.”

Rather, it was because the world had been bled dry—nearly 85 million dead from two world wars. This is the context against which the current preaching about “human rights” should be read today.

Western interference in the Ukraine may very well mark the official end of this “tranquil” period. Today, the US is a dangerous, destabilizing force, though one quickly running itself ragged. Who knows, it may have run aground already.

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**SHOWDOWN IN UKRAINE***Putin vs. Comrade Wolf*

By Mike Whitney

“Comrade Wolf knows who to eat, and he eats without listening to anyone.”

- Russian President Vladimir Putin referring to the United States

22 May 2014

The Ukraine crisis has its roots in a policy that dates back nearly 20 years. The origins of the policy can be traced to a 1997 article in Foreign Policy magazine by Zbigniew Brzezinski, titled “A Geostrategy for Eurasia.” The article makes the case that the United States needs to forcefully establish itself in Central Asia in order to maintain its position as the world’s only superpower. While many readers may be familiar with Brzezinski’s thinking on these matters, they might not know what he has to say about Russia, which is particularly illuminating given that the recent uptick in violence has less to do with Ukraine than it does with Washington’s proxy-war on Russia. Here’s what Brzezinski says:

“Russia’s longer-term role in Eurasia will depend largely on its self-definition... Russia’s first priority should be to modernize itself rather than to engage in a futile effort to regain its status as a global power. Given the country’s size and diversity, a decentralized political system and free-market economics would be most likely to unleash the creative potential of the Russian people and Russia’s vast natural resources. A loosely confederated Russia — composed of a European Russia, a Siberian Republic, and a Far Eastern Republic — would also find it easier to cultivate closer economic relations with its neighbors. Each of the confederated entities would be able to tap its local creative potential, stifled for centuries by Moscow’s heavy bureaucratic hand. In turn, a decentralized Russia would be less susceptible to imperial mobilization.” Zbigniew Brzezinski, *A Geostrategy for Eurasia*, Foreign Affairs, 76:5, September/October 1997.

So is this the goal of US policy, to create “A loosely confederated Russia” whose economy can be subsumed into America’s market-based system?

Notice how easily Brzezinski chops Russia into smaller, bite-size statelets that pose no threat to US imperial expansion. Brzezinski undoubtedly envisions a Russia that will sell its vast resources in petrodollars and recycle them into US Treasuries further enriching the corrupt rent-skimmers in Washington and Wall Street. He foresees a Russia that will abdicate its historic role in the world and have no say-so in shaping global policy. He imagines a compliant Russia that will help facilitate US imperial ambitions in Asia, even to the point where it will pay to police its own people on behalf of US oligarchs, weapons manufacturers, oil magnates, and 1 percenters. Here’s the paragraph in Brzezinski’s piece that sums up Washington’s objectives in Ukraine, Russia and beyond. It is fittingly headlined with the following words in bold print:

“TRANSCONTINENTAL SECURITY

“Defining the substance and institutionalizing the form of a trans-Eurasian security system could become the major architectural initiative of the next century. The core of the new transcontinental security framework could be a standing committee composed of the major Eurasian powers, with America, Europe, China, Japan, a confederated Russia, and India collectively addressing critical issues for Eurasia’s stability. The emergence of such a transcontinental system could gradually relieve America of some of its burdens, while perpetuating beyond a generation its decisive role as Eurasia’s arbitrator. Geostrategic success in that venture would be a fitting legacy to America’s role as the first and only global superpower.” Zbigniew Brzezinski, “A Geostrategy for Eurasia,” Foreign Affairs

Translation: The United States will police the world, dispatch troublemakers, and eliminate potential threats wherever it finds them. It will impose its neoliberal dogma (Austerity, privatization, structural adjustment, anti labor reforms, etc) across-the-board and on all participants. Also, minor partners—“Europe, China, Japan, a confederated Russia, and India”—will be expected to provide security for their own people at their own expense in order to “relieve America of some of its burdens.”

Nice, eh? So you even have to pay for your own jailers.

And what is “Transcontinental Security” anyway? Isn’t it just a fancy way of saying “one world government”?

Indeed, it is. It’s the very same thing. Here’s more from Brzezinski:

“Failure to widen NATO... would shatter the concept of an expanding Europe... Worse, it could reignite dormant Russian political aspirations in Central Europe.”

This is an oddly convoluted statement. In the first sentence, Brzezinski supports the idea of an “expanding Europe”, and then in the next breath, he worries that Russia might want to do the same thing. It’s another case of the pot calling the kettle black.

What’s clear, is that—in Brzezinski’s mind—EU and NATO expansion will help Washington achieve its hegemonic aspirations. That’s all that matters. Here’s what he says:

“Europe is America’s essential geopolitical bridgehead in Eurasia... A wider Europe and an enlarged NATO will serve the short-term and longer-term interests of U.S. policy... A politically defined Europe is also essential to Russia’s assimilation into a system of global cooperation.”

“Bridgehead”? In other words, Europe is just a means to an end. But what would that “end” be?

Global domination. Isn’t that what he’s talking about?

Of course, it is.

What makes the Ukrainian crisis so hard to understand, is that the media conceals the policy behind the impenetrable fog of daily events. Once the fog lifts though, it’s easy to see who’s causing all the trouble. It’s the party that’s calling the shots from abroad, the good old US of A.

Putin doesn’t want this war and neither do most Ukrainians. The whole thing was conjured up by Uncle Sam and his minions to stop the flow of Russian gas to Europe, to push NATO further eastward, and to break the Russian Federation into

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little pieces. That's what it's really all about. And these madmen are willing to raze Ukraine to the ground and kill every living organism within a 3,000 mile radius of Kiev to get their way. After all, isn't that what they did in Iraq? They sure did. And did I mention that, according to this week's Wall Street Journal, "Iraq's Oil Output Surged to Highest Level in Over 30 Years" with all the usual suspects raking in hefty profits.

The point is, if they'd did it in Iraq, they'll do it in Ukraine too. Because what Washington cares about is constituents not carnage. Carnage they can handle.

Brzezinski is not the only one supporting the current policy either. There's also fellow traveler, Hillary Clinton. In fact, it was Secretary of State Clinton who first used the term "pivot" in a 2011 article in Foreign Policy Magazine titled "America's Pacific Century". Clinton's op-ed described a "rebalancing" plan that would open up new markets to US corporations and Wall Street, control the flow of vital resources, and "forge a broad-based military presence" across the continent. Here's an excerpt from the text of Clinton's seminal speech:

"The future of politics will be decided in Asia, not Afghanistan or Iraq, and the United States will be right at the center of the action.

As the war in Iraq winds down and America begins to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan, the United States stands at a pivot point. Over the last 10 years, we have allocated immense resources to those two theaters. In the next 10 years, we need to be smart and systematic about where we invest time and energy, so that we put ourselves in the best position to sustain our leadership, secure our interests, and advance our values. One of the most important tasks of American statecraft over the next decade will therefore be to lock in a substantially increased investment — diplomatic, economic, strategic, and otherwise — in the Asia-Pacific region...

Harnessing Asia's growth and dynamism is central to American economic and strategic interests and a key priority for President Obama. Open

markets in Asia provide the United States with unprecedented opportunities for investment, trade, and access to cutting-edge technology.....American firms (need) to tap into the vast and growing consumer base of Asia... The region already generates more than half of global output and nearly half of global trade. As we strive to meet President Obama's goal of doubling exports by 2015, we are looking for opportunities to do even more business in Asia...

...as I talk with business leaders across our own nation, I hear how important it is for the United States to expand our exports and our investment opportunities in Asia's dynamic markets." ("America's Pacific Century", Secretary of State Hillary Clinton", Foreign Policy Magazine, 2011)

"Harnessing Asia's growth and dynamism is central to American economic and strategic interests and a key priority for President Obama?"

Does that sound like someone who wants to cultivate a mutually-beneficial relationship with their trading partners or someone who wants to move in, take over and run the show?

Washington's plan to shift its attention from the Middle East to Asia is all about money. Clinton even says so herself. She says, "The region generates more than half of global output and nearly half of global trade... Asia's markets ... provide the United States with unprecedented opportunities for investment, trade, and... a vast and growing consumer base."

Money, money, money. The upside-profit potential is limitless which is why Madame Clinton wants to plant Old Glory right in "the center of the action", so US corporations can rake in the dough without fear of reprisal.

Brzezinski says the same thing in his magnum opus "The Grand Chessboard" Here's an excerpt:

"A power that dominates Eurasia would control two of the world's three most advanced and economically productive regions. A mere glance at the map also suggests that control over Eurasia would almost automatically entail Africa's subordination, rendering the Western Hemisphere and Oceania (Australia) geopolitically peripheral to the world's central continent. About 75 per cent of the world's people live in Eurasia, and most

of the world's physical wealth is there as well, both in its enterprises and underneath its soil. Eurasia accounts for about three-fourths of the world's known energy resources." (Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy And It's Geostrategic Imperatives", page 31)

Get the picture? It's a gold rush! Having successfully looted every last farthing from the battered US middle class and left the economy in a ghastly shambles, Brzezinski, Clinton and Co. are headed for greener pastures in Central Asia, home of the world's largest oil producing nation, boundless reserves in the Caspian Basin, and zillions of voracious consumers who'll need everything from I Pads to leisure wear, all graciously provided by US-owned corporations. Cha-ching!

So don't get tripped up on the daily events in Ukraine. This isn't a clash between pro-government forces and anti-government activists. This is the next big phase of Washington's plan to conquer the world, a plan that will inevitably pit Moscow against the amassed military power of the United States of America. This is David vs. Goliath, Mother Russia vs. the Great Satan, Vladie Putin vs. Comrade Wolf.

Ukraine is just Round 1.

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"The darkest secret of this country, I am afraid, is that too many of its citizens imagine that they belong to a much higher civilization somewhere else. That higher civilization doesn't have to be another country. It can be the past instead—the United States as it was before it was spoiled by immigrants and the enfranchisement of the blacks.

This state of mind allows too many of us to lie and cheat and steal from the rest of us, to sell us junk and addictive poisons and corrupting entertainments. What are the rest of us, after all, but sub-human aborigines?"

— **Kurt Vonnegut, Bluebeard**

**A CACOPHONY OF PALTRY FROGS***It's all over but the shooting...*by **Daniel Patrick Welch**

April 14th, 2014

It has been a long, meandering migration — and, of course, many, many have died and much has been destroyed along the way. But when chickens finally come home to roost, they don't do so one at a time. Rather, it is a massive, simultaneous event, like swallows to Capistrano or Monarchs to Mexico. A cataclysm has erupted over Ukraine, a thundering eclat of global import, and there is no stopping it now. Sure, the dust has yet to settle, and it is still difficult to see the forest for the trees. But my eyes need a break from following the minute-by-minute updates from Donetsk and Lugansk and Slavyansk and Mariupol and Venakievo and Odessa and Gorlovka and Kharkov and Makeyevka and Nikolayev... whew. It's a bit dizzying, like I'm caught in a Tolstoi novel or a Tom Lehrer song — so let me take a slightly loftier view just for a moment.

When the US CIA and their fascist friends concocted the scheme that was Maidan — a classic old-school CIA coup from the very beginning — they doubtless didn't envision things going quite this badly. But there are few thinkers among the lot; so blinded are they by ideological zealotry that they are rendered truly stupid, and the decisions that issue forth from their lair, offices staffed by men and women with small minds and huge egos, are increasingly irrational and bizarre.

It is precisely such offices that now occupy an entire floor of State Security in Kiev, and an equally insidious occupied floor of the hotel by Maidan from which snipers shot and killed both protesters and police. It must have seemed simple to them, simple minded as they are. A replay of the one script they have been playing out since ousting Mossadegh in 1953, and which they have successfully repeated many dozens of times since: Hire a few disaffected locals to protest and stir up trouble. Get snipers to provoke the moral outrage necessary to inflame public opinion by blaming it on the target government — a fact now admitted by the less shrill exponents of the Western media puppet show. Always try to attract plenty of well-meaning but gullible fellow travelers.. it has to look legit, after all.

When the whole thing comes crashing down, install your chosen fascist or willing executioner replacement whom you have groomed and waiting in the wings. Rinse, repeat, move on.

The trouble is this is not the 1950s. It's not even the 1990s, and the hated empire is being more and more exposed as the classic Old Dog who can't seem to learn New Tricks. By sheer mistake, they seem to have awakened a genuine uprising of millions of people who hate the fascists, and whose grandparents died fighting them. Tone deaf to a degree that faileth human understanding, the US and its puppets will be slow to realize — let alone come to terms with — the forces they have unleashed. It is the most significant push back — and the critical tipping point — since the whole rigamarole began, as it were.

To be more precise, it hasn't quite happened overnight, though it seems it at the moment. US empire jumped the shark in Libya, when a groggy Russia and China were slow to shake off their stupor and realize just how great an existential threat the US war machine really was. They marched through country after country like the Black and Tans through Ireland, burning and pillaging as they “shot down wives and children in their own heroic way..” In Syria, Russia — and to a lesser extent, China — had steeled their resolve not to let it happen again, disappointing the blood-drenched hopes of the rabid dogs of DC along with their apologist cheerleaders across virtually the entire political ‘spectrum’ in the west. In Ukraine, they again managed to get a foot in the door. But blowback — that dreaded side effect and hangover of decades of US meddling — was swift and sure, catching by surprise even those most predisposed to expect it.

But no matter how long it has taken to get here, the plain fact is that this change is snowballing at a rate we have not yet seen, along the lines of punctuated equilibrium. Nothing organic is gradual, and when things start to change, they do so awful fast. We cannot even know, now that the fuse has been lit, how it will end up.

Let me go out on a bit of a limb and make a bold prediction, though my colleagues and comrades may think it reckless or insanely premature of me: in less than five years, we will see a world far different than the one we are living in right now. This isn't the age of Aquarius, nor is it the imagined communist revolution. But the power of unipolar control has been broken.

There will be more deaths and more destruction, to be sure. It may even be worse than I imagine, and take a bit more time. But the unraveling will be swifter than anyone expects: the end of the petrodollar, the increasing unity of the BRICS coalition and the peoples of the Global South, the rise of new structures to replace the corrupt and decrepit IMF and NATO — the once-modern Bible and Sword of old colonial Europe. China and Russia, particularly, along with the rest of the BRICS, will be forced both to ally increasingly with each other and take the side of the peoples of the Global South against the criminal regimes of the west, led by the people's own demands that their long-ignored needs be addressed. The mask is coming off, and it is more apparent than ever that the west has little to offer but austerity and death. Thanks but no thanks: love the jeans and the movies, hate the governments and the policies. No colony for you... NEXT!

There is no going back. Led by the inspiration of the fed up people of Southeast Ukraine, the people, backs against the wall, are growing more confident and less afraid. And once a people loses their fear, they are a dangerous, awakened giant indeed. Of course, people can be killed — many will be. But who has taken on the Russians and won? Not to put too fine a point on it, but who do these western adventurers think they're kidding? This is a people who have survived unimaginable privation, and more than once. In the west — especially in the US — a decent sized snowstorm strips shelves bare and sends people into a panic. To be more blunt, quoting the infamous General Buck Turgeson: “I'm not saying your average Russkie hasn't got guts. I mean look how many them Nazis killed off and they still wouldn't quit!”

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Or to be more poetic, I can quote a Russian friend:

For the first time in several decades, the Ukrainians and the Russians are in a position and willing to do something right: to take their country back and restore their dignity. And, we see, millions being awoken just to this simple and powerful idea. The 4th Reich is inadvertently awakening a giant—the people’s will and their new sacred cause. No one should underestimate the Russian soul. In comparison with it, the ego of the mightiest superman (Uberman) or Faustian in the West is just a cacophony of paltry frogs.

Don’t touch that dial, folks. Another world is possible, and it is taking embryonic shape right now, before our very eyes...

Daniel Patrick Welch, writer, singer, linguist and activist, lives and writes in Salem, Massachusetts, with his wife, Julia Nambalirwa-Lugudde. Together they run The Greenhouse School.

FURY PUNCHES OUT EARLY

Striking a Blow for Disarmament in Maine Shipyard

by **Dave Lindorff**, April 07, 2014

Let us pause to honor Charles Fury. Hundreds of thousands of Americans have protested America’s bloated, out-of-control military, and millions more are outraged that the US spends upwards of \$1 trillion a year on war and preparing for war. The protests and the opposition to military spending have had little effect, as the military continues to grow in size and cost, backed by a Congress whose members are bought by the arms industry, and a ruling elite that wants its global investments protected—at taxpayer expense.

Fury, 25, while perhaps not an opponent of the US military, with one little action, managed to do more to damage the US war machine than all those protesters and war opponents put together.

Reportedly suffering an anxiety attack in the cramped torpedo room of the USS Miami, a 361-foot-long nuclear attack submarine that he and a group of fellow maintenance workers were renovating at

the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, and wanting to get sent home early, Fury, a civilian painter and sandblaster, lit a small pile of rags on fire. His plan was to create a small conflagration that would force an early end to work that day. Instead, the fire he set spread and raged out of control for 12 hours, destroying the whole forward section of the massive vessel. Only one man, who fell through an opening on the deck breaking a couple of ribs, was injured by the 2012 fire.

The sub was destroyed as effectively as if it had taken an enemy torpedo. There was talk of repairing all the damage, but in the end, Congress has decided it is not worth the estimated \$750 million needed to fix everything, and so the Miami is being scrapped.

A federal court, rejecting a prosecutor’s call for life in prison, sentenced Fury to 17 years for arson, but also ordered him to pay \$400 million in restitution, a ridiculous sum that will leave him indentured to the federal government for the rest of his life.

But the real question is, why was the government in the first place spending hundreds of millions of dollars refurbishing the Miami, one of 41 Los Angeles-class attack subs that patrol the world’s seas and that, during America’s endless wars like Afghanistan and Iraq, actually launched cruise missile attacks? Why, more broadly, does the US have to maintain, at staggering expense, a fleet of 72 submarines — part of a navy that is larger by itself than the next largest 13 of the world’s navies combined?

The answer is that there is no justification for such a huge naval war machine, except to support a global empire. All those ships, including huge country-destroying Trident missile subs, 12 aircraft carrier battle groups, 22 cruisers and 62 destroyers and over 320,000 sailors in uniform, don’t make the US safer, and were unable, fighting along with the US Army, Marines and Air Force, to defeat rifle-toting insurgencies in Iraq or Afghanistan, or to stop terror attacks at home or abroad.

Dave Lindorff is a founding member of *ThisCantBeHappening!*, an online newspaper collective, and is a contributor to *Hopeless: Barack Obama and the Politics of Illusion* (AK Press).

REIGN OF THE PEOPLES

You say democracy
and we know it is Bolivia’s tin
Chile’s copper
Venezuela’s oil
Cuba’s sugar
raw materials and profits

You say democracy
and it’s the annexation of Texas
the hold up of the Panama Canal
the occupation of Haiti
the colonization of Puerto-Rico
the bombing of Guatemala

You say democracy
and it’s America to the Yankee
it’s the rape of nations
it’s Sandino’s blood
and Peralte’s crucifixion

You say democracy
and it’s the plunder of our wealth
from Hiroshima to Indochina
you spread the slaughter everywhere
and everywhere ruin

You say democracy
and it’s the Ku Klux Klan
o hidden people
inside your own cities
an ogre is devouring your children

Ubu from the empire of robots
you let your ravens fly
from Harlem to Jerusalem
from Wounded Knee to Haiti
from Santo Domingo to Soweto
the people will be waving
the torch of revolution

Night is a tunnel opening on the dawn
Viet-Nam stands like a tree in the storm
the frontier which marks the place of
your defeat
history’s lessons have no recourse
a footbridge stretches from Asia to
Africa
the reign of the white race is ending on
earth
and the reign of the peoples in the
universe is beginning.

Paul Laraque
(Translation from French by Rosemary Manno)

Paul Laraque is Haiti’s foremost revolutionary poet who died in 2007.

From 425 Elephants
<http://425elephants.wordpress.com/2009/03/31/anti-imperialist-poem-no-1/>

**THE LONG-DISTANCE
EXECUTIONERS***Camus in the Time of Drones*

by Jeffrey St. Clair

Weekend Edition March 21-23, 2014

Lucien rises from bed in the early morning. He dresses quietly, careful not to awaken his wife and infant son. He walks briskly across the city of Algiers in the pre-dawn light to a square that is already thick with people, their gaze fixed on a wooden platform and rising from it the stark outline of a guillotine.

The man has come to watch the execution of a notorious killer of an Algerian farm family. The man is curious and wants to see justice done. The prisoner is brought to the scaffold, blindfolded, then trussed to a plank and slid beneath the grim killing machine. The blade drops, severing the head and unleashing a surge of blood from the quivering torso.

The man rushes back across town. He runs all the way to his house, brushes past his wife to the bathroom. He locks the door and vomits, again and again. He will not go to work this day or the next. Instead he lies in bed, tormented by what he has witnessed. He tells his wife what he has seen and refuses to speak of it again for the remainder of his short life.

The man is Lucien Camus, father of Albert. The story was told to Albert by his mother years later and it haunted the writer all his life. The gruesome scene appears in his novels *The Stranger* and *The First Man* and became the centerpiece of his masterful essay "Reflections on the Guillotine," perhaps the most forceful denunciation of the death penalty ever written.

Camus' essay on the barbarity of the death penalty was written in 1956, against the backdrop of the executions of hundreds of dissidents during the Soviet crackdown in Hungary, as well as the execution of Algerian revolutionaries condemned to death by French tribunals. He notes that by 1940 all executions in France and England were shielded from the public. If capital punishment was meant to deter crime, why hold the killings in secret? Why not make them a public spectacle?

Because, Camus argues, deterrence isn't the purpose of state murder. The real objective is vengeance through the exercise of extreme state power. "Let us recognize it for what it is essentially: a revenge. A punishment that penalizes without forestalling is indeed called revenge. It is a quasi-arithmetical replay made by society to whoever breaks its primordial law."

Public executions became a threat to the state, because the dreadful act tends to provoke revulsion in ordinary citizens, like Camus' father, who see it clearly for what it is: a new form of murder "no less repulsive than the crime." A form of murder that is performed, in theory, in the name of the citizens and for which they are complicit.

This kind of state-sanctioned killing, Camus reasoned, leads only to more murder, a vast panorama of murder. "Without the death penalty," Camus writes, "Europe would not be infected by the corpses accumulated for the last twenty years on its soil."

So what would Albert Camus, the great moralist of the 20th century, think about the latest innovation in administrative murder, Obama's drone program, a kind of remote-control gallows, where the killers never see their victims, never hear their screams, smell their burning bodies, touch their mutilated flesh?

The conscience of the killer has been sterilized, the drone operator, fully alienated from the act he is committing, can walk out the door after his shift is over and calmly order an IPA at the local microbrew or play a round of golf under the desert sky. He is left with no blood on his hands, no savagery weighing on his conscience, no degrading images to stalk his dreams.

Drone strikes, Camus would argue, are not just meant to kill. They are programmed to terrorize. In this regard, whether the missile strikes its intended target or incinerates a goat-herder and his flock is incidental. In fact, the occasional killing of civilians may well be a desired outcome since collateral deaths intensify the fear. This is punishment by example, not for any particular crime or impending threat, but merely because of who you are, where you live, what you might believe. These new circuitries of death are

meant to humiliate, subdue and dehumanize.

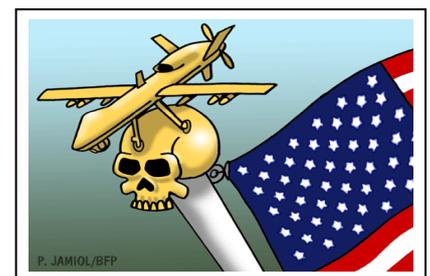
As more and more evidence of Obama's secret killing operations in Pakistan and Yemen began to leak out, public squeamishness over the deaths, especially of civilians and targeted American citizens, began to mount. Uncomfortable questions were raised, even on the political right. To salvage his program, Obama announced that new guidelines would soon be imposed on his high-tech assassinations.

But Camus would be the first to warn us that such regulations should be viewed with grave suspicion, since they will likely only serve to legitimize and normalize state murder, by making lawless killing legal.

Camus stresses that in the long run such killing regimes can only sustain themselves if they are indulged by a nation's elites: its press, its intellectuals, its political movements. And here we must confront the torpid moral character of the American left, which has been flaccid in the face of the drone killings, insensate to the mangled bodies, suffering and fragmented lives on the far side of the world.

Our task is to shatter this indifference, to condemn and resist the killing done in our names, to reassert the primacy of individual life over state authority. Otherwise, we become accomplices of the long-distance executioners.

Jeffrey St. Clair is the editor of *CounterPunch*. He is the author of *Been Brown So Long It Looked Like Green to Me: the Politics of Nature*, *Grand Theft Pentagon* and *Born Under a Bad Sky*. His latest book is *Hopeless: Barack Obama and the Politics of Illusion*. He can be reached at: sitka@comcast.net.



**BREATHLESS IN NORTH KOREA**

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For 60 years, Koreans on both sides of the DMZ have awaited a peace treaty. Instead they've gotten an arms race and political repression.

by **Christine Ahn**

“Please don’t take her,” my sister pleaded with me. “You’ll end up in a prison camp.” She, along with the rest of my family, lobbied forcefully against my bringing my two-year old daughter on a recent peace-building mission to North Korea.

Granted, it wasn’t a great time to go to Pyongyang. It was during the dead of winter, freezing cold, with gray skies and barren trees. Even worse, our trip was bookended by two major events: the release of a 400-page report by the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in North Korea and the start of joint U.S.-South Korea military exercises simulating the invasion of Pyongyang. Furthermore, this year’s exercises featured a new policy of launching pre-emptive strikes against any suspected North Korean missile activity. Given the exchange of fire that nearly erupted during last year’s war games (and that did erupt shortly after our visit), it wasn’t an auspicious time.

What proved to be the greatest threat to my daughter, however, was neither of the above. It was the debilitating air pollution in China. To get to Pyongyang, we had to transit through Beijing, where we happened to be on a day the government advised children stay indoors to avoid breathing the pollution. But staying indoors didn’t stop the pollution from penetrating the airport walls and into my daughter’s lungs. She developed an unrelenting cough that worsened the day we arrived in Pyongyang. By nightfall, she struggled to breathe.

It was enough to make any mother panic. But it was worse. Here we were, far from home, in the most closed off country in the world.

At 2 am I woke up our hosts, and in an instant, we were in a minivan speeding through the dark streets of Pyongyang. The only lights on the road were the

cars’ headlights. We pulled up to a dimly lit hospital, and in a flash, a doctor and two nurses greeted us and quickly led us down a cold and dark hallway into a warmed and well-lit examination room.

As the doctor placed his stethoscope on my daughter’s back, the lights went out in the entire hospital, as it often does throughout North Korea due to energy shortages. In that moment of darkness, tears streamed down my face. I cried, not just for my daughter whose condition was precarious, but also for the North Korean people who continue to suffer so heavily under the weight of an ongoing Korean War that has shaped every aspect of their lives.

Human Rights and War

While the UN human rights report and war games appear to be two disparate issues, they are linked by the Korean War, which came to an unresolved end on July 27, 1953 with the signing of the temporary armistice agreement. The signatories—the United States, North Korea, and China—committed to finalize a permanent peace treaty within three months. Sixty years later, we’re still waiting.

What has ensued instead for the past six decades is an endless arms race between South and North Korea. According to SIPRI, in 2013, South Korea was the world’s 12th highest military spender, with its expenditures reaching \$31.7 billion for the year—though experts say this figure would be far higher if it included the salaries of soldiers. World Bank data shows that in 2012, 13.6 percent of the central government’s expenditures in South Korea went towards defense spending. And according to Suh Bohyuk, North Korea expert at Seoul National University, South Korea became the world’s number-two weapons importer in 2011.

North Korea invests approximately \$8.7 billion—significantly higher than the \$570 million Pyongyang claims—or one-third of its GDP in the military, according to the government-run Korea Institute of Defense Analyses in South Korea. To great surprise, Pyongyang acknowledged last year how the unended war has forced it “to divert large human and material resources to

bolstering up the armed forces though they should have been directed to the economic development and improvement of people’s living standard.”

Unfortunately, North Korea’s heavy military spending isn’t just to defend against South Korea, but against the world’s most powerful military in the world: the United States. In 2012, by the most conservative estimates, Washington spent \$682 billion on its military, or 39 percent of the world’s total spending. While the Pentagon uses China’s military spending, which has grown annually in the double digits, to justify Washington’s Asia-Pacific Pivot and unsustainable defense spending, the Korean War also plays a central role. At a March 25 Senate Defense Committee hearing on the 2015 budget, the commander of the U.S. Forces in Korea (USFK), General Curtis Scaparrotti, argued that while the 28,500 U.S. troops based in South Korea were “fully resourced,” he was concerned about the readiness of “follow-on” forces needed if fighting erupted.

The ongoing Korean War not only diverts investment away from the Korean people; it justifies repression in the name of national security on both sides of the DMZ. One week following the UN report on North Korean human rights, Amnesty International issued a public letter to South Korean President Park Geun-hye, daughter of the former dictator Park Chung-hee, concerning her administration’s use of the country’s National Security Law (NSL) “as a form of censorship to intimidate and imprison people exercising their rights.”

In response to the repression South Koreans are feeling, students launched a poster movement asking, “Are you doing all right?” which went viral through social media. The somber responses ranging from fear about rising poverty and unemployment to government corruption has galvanized millions of South Koreans to protest the Park administration’s policies, including her questionable tactics during the last presidential election. In the run-up to the vote, prosecutors found that the National Intelligence Service had ordered its psychological
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warfare division to launch a campaign to discredit liberal and left candidates by posting more than 1 million online messages vilifying them as “followers of North Korea.” According to Sukjong Hong, “Park denied that these activities had any effect on her winning margin of 1 million votes, but amid calls for her to step down or appoint an independent prosecutor, the administration filed to disband a leftist opposition party and accused lawmakers and citizens of espionage.”

Right here in the United States, we must see clearly how the militarization of our country is gravely impacting our own human rights. And while repression in North Korea is widely recognized, less understood is why North Korea is such a militarized nation. “We cannot think of human rights without considering the sovereignty of a nation,” declared the late North Korean leader Kim Jong-il. North Korea has long declared the right to defend its national sovereignty, justifying its pursuit of nuclear weapons as a precaution against a U.S. invasion and occupation as recently experienced by Iraq and Afghanistan. While it might be easy to brush this off as mere paranoia, North Koreans only have to look back at their own history of surviving indiscriminate and unrestrained U.S. air raids during the war. According to University of Chicago historian Bruce Cumings, during the Korean War, U.S. airstrikes led to the destruction of 18 of 22 major North Korean cities. Cumings cites Hungarian journalist Tibor Meray, who recalled, “I saw destruction and horrible things committed by American forces. . . . Everything which moved in North Korea is a military target, peasants in the field often were machine gunned by pilots, who, this was my impression, amused themselves to shoot targets which moved.”

North Koreans must not only face down this tragic and traumatic past; their everyday lives are shaped by another form of war: U.S. sanctions. In a special edition on North Korea human rights in the journal *Critical Asian Studies*, Haeyoung Kim of the Korea Policy Institute documents how U.S. sanctions have not only failed to achieve their policy aims, but have direct bearing on

the well-being of the North Korean people: “It is the North Korean people, moreover, not the governing elite, who bear the ultimate costs and suffer under these sanctions, creating an undeniable tension when considering the causal relationship between economic sanctions and human rights.”

While it’s important to see how the unended Korean War impacts the human rights of Koreans on both sides of the DMZ, we must also see the way in which the cause of human rights is being dangerously used to justify “regime change”—code for military intervention. In another *Critical Asian Studies* piece, North Korea scholar Hazel Smith outlines how “the securitized version of the debate insists that human rights abuses are so egregious that governments should automatically intervene militarily, especially given the international doctrine of the ‘Right to Protect,’ which permits foreign intervention on the grounds of genocide and other heinous crimes.”

And finally, right here in the United States, we must see clearly how the militarization of our country is gravely impacting our own human rights. Our government spends more than half of the federal discretionary budget on the military, diverting funds from investments that improve human health and security. Furthermore, it is perpetuating a culture of war that allows gross transgressions by the government on our basic human rights. In an assessment of how the United States was complying with the International Convention of Civil and Political Rights, the UN human rights committee delivered a heavy blow to the U.S. human rights record, citing torture, failure to close Guantanamo, drone strikes, NSA mass surveillance, the death penalty, fatal shootings by police, and the high proportion of black Americans in U.S. prisons.

At a Crossroads

The people of North Korea live extremely difficult lives. You can see it as you drive along the wide and sparse avenues of Pyongyang alongside overcrowded buses and in the weathered faces of the men and women walking those cold streets. And even during joyful moments, like at a musical

performance at a daycare center, my heart ached as I watched four-year old toddlers perform perfectly in a musical ensemble while bundled up in three to four layers of clothes. And yet everyone—from the teachers to the nurses to the toddlers—carried on with immense pride and dignity.

The country is not without achievement. Despite famine, a nearly collapsed economy, and debilitating sanctions, North Korea still provides free and universal healthcare to its citizens and to visitors like my daughter, who under the care of the doctors and nurses in Pyongyang was brought back to health. North Korea’s physician-to-patient ratio is on par with high-income countries. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), North Korea has 33 physicians per 10,000 persons, whereas South Korea and the United States have only 19 and 27 physicians, respectively (though North Korea has a lower rate for nurses). Three decades of on-the-ground work by the WHO has shown that North Korea has amazingly low rates of measles, polio, and whooping cough due to far-reaching immunization programs for preventable diseases. And as Hazel Smith astutely points out, in 2013 when the UN special inquiry was established, “North Korean children were better off than children living in many other Asian countries, including many that were much wealthier than North Korea, such as India and Indonesia.” And unlike the United States—where this mother spends nearly 25 percent of her family income on childcare—North Korea provides universal childcare to all working moms.

I can see why, despite the hardships, North Korean people are proud of the society they are trying to create. But they will never be able to achieve their full potential unless the United States and the American people recognize how much the unresolved Korean War—and its consequent policies, from war games to sanctions—limits them. North Korea has forever requested a settlement of the Korean War with a permanent peace treaty, the lifting of sanctions and economic development,

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and normalized relations with the United States.

The prospect of constant war not only threatens human security on the Korean peninsula; it diverts urgently needed attention to the ecological crises facing humanity. My daughter's experience in North Korea is a stark reminder of the real and urgent threats we are all facing. Air pollution is the single largest environmental health risk in the world, according to the World Health Organization. In 2012, it killed an estimated 7 million people.

"We are at the crossroads to either survival or self-destruction," Pak Chol of the DPRK UN Mission wrote me in an email. "We have no time for hating and killing each other. We should put an end as soon as possible to all those cold war legacies for good and pull together to tackle our common task." President Obama should put to rest his failed policy of "strategic patience" and re-start talks with North Korea. As former U.S. ambassadors to Korea urged in *The New York Times* last fall, "the current impasse, which only buys time for North Korea to develop its nuclear program, is unstable and that matters will only get worse if not addressed directly. It's time for the Obama administration to reopen dialogue with Pyongyang."

Next year—2015—will be the 70th anniversary of the division of Korea. In 1945, two American colonels drew a line across the 38th parallel so that Washington could have control over Seoul and Moscow everything north. By drawing that line, the United States divided a country that had been unified for thousands of years and paved the way for the Korean War. As the world's unparalleled military power that was responsible for the division of Korea—whose unbridled air bombings killed millions during the war, and whose current policies of war games and sanctions keep the North Korean people on their knees—Washington must do the right thing and end this senseless and wasteful war. A peace treaty would go a long way towards defusing rapidly escalating tensions in Northeast Asia and freeing our leaders to urgently address the crises we collectively face so my daughter and future generations have a chance for survival.

US TROOPS OUT NOW

Philippine Protesters Push Against Base Expansion

- Sarah Lazare, staff writer

Published on Wednesday, February 26, 2014 by [Common Dreams](#)



Riot police prepare to prevent protesters from marching closer to the U.S. Embassy Tuesday, Feb. 25, 2014 in Manila, Philippines, against the forthcoming visit of U.S. President Barack Obama. (Photo: AP/Bullit Marquez)

Hundreds of protesters took to the streets of the Philippine capital on Tuesday to demand U.S. troops leave their country, just days after Philippine President Noyonoy Aquino announced he is "close" to a deal that would open the Philippines to an expanded U.S. military presence.

"Aquino is desperately trying to outdo previous Philippine presidents when it comes to puppetry to the US," said Elmer "Bong" Labog, spokesperson for labor organization Kilusang Mayo Uno (May First Movement), which organized the demonstration.

Riot police clashed with approximately 300 demonstrators, who carried signs and banners that read "Obama Not Welcome" and "US Troops Out Now," near the U.S. embassy in Manila. At one point police attacked the crowd with truncheons, but no one was seriously injured, the *Associated Press* reports.

The protest comes ahead of a planned visit by U.S. President Barack Obama in April, which will be aimed at making progress towards an agreement over sustained U.S. military presence in the Philippines, including in the Subic Bay, which overlooks the South China Sea.

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Christine Ahn is a founding board member of the [Korea Policy Institute](#) and the [National Campaign to End the Korean War](#).

Social movements in the Philippines have long opposed U.S. power over their country, which includes more than five decades of direct colonial rule and the backing of brutal dictator Ferdinand Marcos — who was president from 1965 to 1986 until he was overthrown by a popular movement. Even after Philippine independence, the U.S. maintained a heavy presence of bases and troops, despite widespread opposition to the environmental and social harm they spread, including numerous incidents of sexual assaults and rape of the local population.

While the last U.S. base in the country was shut down in 1992, the U.S. currently sends 500 troops to the southern Philippines annually for so-called counter-terrorism purposes, while 6,500 come each year for training, according to the Philippine military.

With the cooperation of Aquino, Obama is aggressively pushing to expand this military presence as part of the U.S. military's pivot to Asia to hedge against China. The U.S. and Philippine governments have levied U.S. humanitarian response to Typhoon Haiyan to build support for a deal.

According to Labong, Aquino "tries to make it appear that the return of US military bases to the Philippines is part of efforts to help the country when it is part of the U.S. geopolitical strategy."

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**OBITUARIES: JONATHAN SCHELL**

Published on Monday, March 31, 2014
by TomDispatch.com

by **Tom Engelhardt** and **Christian Appy**



Jonathan Schell, 1943-2014

The Widening Lens: Jonathan Schell and the Fate of the Earth

By **Tom Engelhardt**

“Up to a few months ago, Ben Suc was a prosperous village of some thirty-five hundred people.” That is the initial line of *The Village of Ben Suc*, his first book, a copy of which I recently reread on a plane trip, knowing that he was soon to die. That book, that specific copy, had a history of its own. It was a Knopf first edition, published in 1967 in the midst of the Vietnam War, after the then-shocking text had appeared in the *New Yorker* magazine. An on-the-spot account of an American operation, the largest of the Vietnam War to that moment, it followed American troops as they helicoptered into a village controlled by the enemy about 30 miles from the capital, Saigon. All its inhabitants, other than those killed in the process, were removed from their homes and sent to a makeshift refugee camp elsewhere. The U.S. military then set Ben Suc afire, brought in bulldozers to reduce it to rubble, and finally called in the U.S. Air Force to bomb that rubble to smithereens -- as though, as the final line of his book put it, “having once decided to destroy it, we were now bent on annihilating every possible indication that the village of Ben Suc had ever existed.”

I had read the piece in the *New Yorker* when that magazine devoted a single issue to it, something it had not done since it published John Hersey’s *Hiroshima* in a similar fashion in 1946. I never forgot it. I was then 23 years old and just launched on a life as an anti-Vietnam War activist. I would not meet

the author, 24-year-old neophyte reporter Jonathan Schell, for years.

To look at that first edition some 47 years later is to be reminded of just how young he was then, so young that Knopf thought it appropriate in his nearly nonexistent bio to mention where he went to high school (“the Putney School in Vermont”). The book was tiny. Only 132 pages with an all-print orange cover that, in addition to the author and title, said: “The story of the American destruction of a Vietnamese village -- this is the complete text of the brilliant report to which the *New Yorker* devoted almost an entire issue.” That was bold advertising in those publishing days. I know. As an editor at a publishing house as the 1980s began, I can still remember having a fierce argument about whether or not it was “tasteless” to put a blurb from a prominent person on a book’s cover.

The year after *Ben Suc* was published, he wrote *The Military Half*, his second great book on that horrific American war, in which he widened his lens from a single devastated village to two provinces where almost every hamlet had been destroyed, largely by American air power. To report it, he rode in tiny forward observation planes that were calling down destruction on the Vietnamese countryside. He then went to work as a staff writer for the *New Yorker* and in 1975 widened his lens further in his book *The Time of Illusion*, taking in the history and fate of a single administration in Washington as it waged “limited war” abroad in a nuclear age and created constitutional mayhem at home, bringing yet more violence to Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians, as well as to the American political system.

In 1982, with his globally bestselling book *The Fate of the Earth*, whose first chapter, looking directly into a future of annihilation, was memorably entitled “A Republic of Insects and Grass,” he trained his lens on the threat of violence against all humanity. He memorably explored what was then known as “the nuclear predicament,” the way we had fully taken over a role previously occupied by God and, in the midst of the Cold War, were threatening the extinction not of a village, a couple of

provinces in a distant land, or a political system, but the planet itself.

I was by then working at Pantheon Books, where in 1988 I re-read his two Vietnam reports and republished them in a single volume as *The Real War*. Its cover copy read: “The classic reporting on the Vietnam War,” which couldn’t have been more accurate. And then, some years later, I evidently stumbled across that first edition in New York’s great used bookstore, the Strand. My copy is dated 8/93 on a little yellow tag inside the front cover and cost me \$4. I doubt I read it a third time when I bought it. I can only imagine that I wanted to have that memorable first book by someone I already considered one of the greats of our age.

As it happened, at another publishing house in 2003, in an even grimmer century, I put out his book *The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People*. His lens by then couldn’t have been wider. In it, he appropriated a hollowed-out term from the war in Vietnam, the hopeless American effort to “win hearts and minds,” celebrating instead the untamed “rebellious hearts and minds” across the planet that might find new sources of people power and alter a world headed for destruction. It was a book so far ahead of its time that, in the invasion-of-Iraq moment, almost no one noticed.

He was then perhaps the only person who imagined that, in our future, lay an Arab Spring, an Occupy Movement, and whatever-is-still-to-come. He may have been the first to see that this planet, careening toward disaster, might no longer be controllable in any of the usual ways. (“Fifty-eight years after Hiroshima, the world has to decide whether to continue on the path of cataclysmic violence charted in the twentieth century and now resumed in the twenty-first or whether to embark on a new, cooperative political path... In our age of sustained democratic revolution, the power that governments inspire through fear remains under constant challenge by the power that flows from people’s freedom to act in behalf of their interests and beliefs.”)

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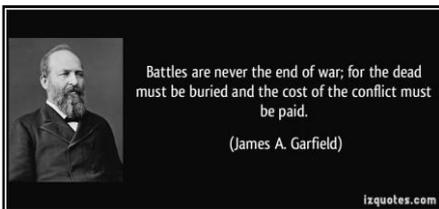
His final great work on climate change, on which he spent years of research, provisionally titled *The Human Shadow*, will sadly never be written. In the end, the lens simply grew too wide for a single lifetime -- and we will all be the poorer for it.

He died on the night of March 25th of a cancer spurred on by an underlying blood condition that just might have been caused by Agent Orange, the poisonous defoliant chemical so widely used by U.S. forces in Vietnam. There is, of course, no way of knowing, but the Veteran's Administration website does list his condition as one that might have been Agent Orange-induced. In life as in death, Vietnam may have defined, but never confined, him. He was a figure in my life and at TomDispatch -- as a friend, a writer, an interviewee, and for me a source of constant inspiration. I mourn him.

Given the role Vietnam played in his life, in mine, and in this country's, I thought it might be appropriate to look not to his last words, but -- in a sense -- to his first words. So, today, I'm returning us to the young Jonathan Schell, the boy who, knowing so little but so terribly open, landed in Vietnam in 1966 and during that nightmarish war that seemed never to end, later at the *New Yorker*, and finally at the *Nation* magazine, as well as in his many books, helped shape our thinking and our world. Here, then, is an interview that historian Chris Appy did with him for his remarkable 2003 oral history of the Vietnam War from all sides, *Patriots*. It catches the sensibility both of the youthful Jonathan Schell and of the man I later came to know. I thank Appy and his publisher, Viking Penguin, for letting me remember and honor him in this way.

Tom Engelhardt, co-founder of the [American Empire Project](http://AmericanEmpireProject.org), runs the Nation Institute's TomDispatch.com.

[Editor's note: to read the interview, go to the link shown at the bottom of Page 23]



THE OBSCENITY OF WAR

The Obscenity of War in a World of Need and Suffering

by **Adnan Al-Daini**

April 19th, 2014

A study by professor Linda J. Blimes of Harvard University concludes that the cost to the US of the Iraq and Afghan wars, taken together, will be between \$4 and \$6 trillion. *This includes long-term medical care and disability compensation for service members, veterans and families, military replenishment and social and economic costs.* The cost so far is \$2 trillion.

In order to get our head round the colossal figure of \$6 trillion, this is equivalent to \$75,000 for every household in the US. Deaths of Iraqis and Afghans taken together are estimated from 600,000 to a million, coalition troop deaths around 8,000, over 7,000 of whom are Americans. The suffering and the sheer misery of widows, orphans and families behind these statistics are unimaginable.

Our propensity to dehumanize the 'other' makes it all too easy for the demagogue, the charlatan and the power hungry to exploit. We are too readily manipulated and outraged into diverting our resources into wars that cause death, injury and destruction. The suffering to millions of fellow human beings is kept from us by mainstream media too ready to play its role. In any case, the dehumanization of our 'enemies' dulls our compassion to the point of not seeing their pain and suffering as real.

Leaders and those who would profit from these wars would package their language in distortions and omissions to hide the truth. George Orwell summed it up: "Political language... is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind."

Let us for a moment put aside the human cost of these wars and concentrate on the economic cost. This obscene spending on death and destruction is done by a country, the US, where 15% of its citizens, 46 million, live below the poverty threshold of \$23,492 and 1.5 million of its children become homeless every year.

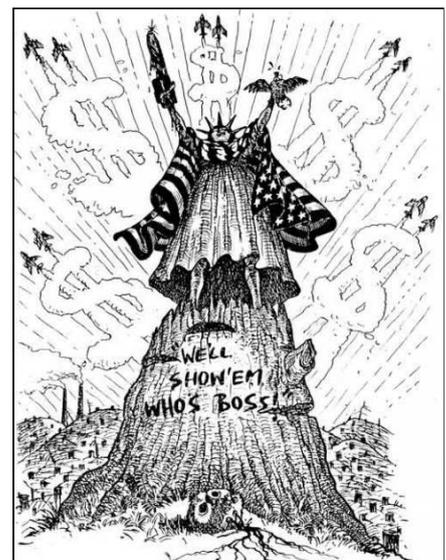
Worldwide, 3 billion people live on less than \$2.50 a day, 360 million of whom live on less than \$1 a day. Grinding poverty, hunger and lack of clean water and effective sanitation blight their lives and their future. 22,000 children die every day due to poverty.

Families are trapped in a cycle of misery and deprivation that cascades through generations with no escape route. Yet in this world of need and suffering, the world military spending stood at over \$1.7 trillion in 2012.

The vast majority of us individually can see that there is something seriously wrong with the way our priorities are perceived. It is beyond comprehension that with so much poverty and need worldwide, that so much wealth is spent on wars and weapons of death and destruction. However, this rationality and our sense of fairness could so easily be overcome when called upon to dehumanize our perceived 'enemies'.

As a species we have tremendous talents. Our scientific achievements are incredible; our advances in medicine and technology are stunning. Our social development however is still almost at Stone Age level.

Adnan Al-Daini (PhD, Birmingham University, UK) is a retired University Engineering lecturer. He is a British citizen born in Iraq. He writes regularly on issues of social justice and the Middle East.



"You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake."
— **Jeannette Renkin**

**OBITUARY: TONY BENN**

A Kuffiya for Tony Benn – The British Warrior Who ‘Matured with Age’

by **Ramzy Baroud**, March 19, 2014

Long before the Boycott, Sanctions and Divestment campaign inched slowly from the fringes of global solidarity with Palestinians to take center stage, Tony Benn had been advocating a boycott of Israel with unrestricted conviction, for years.

“Britain should offer its support for this strategy by stopping all arms sales to Israel, introducing trade sanctions and a ban on all investment there together with a boycott of Israeli goods here and make it a condition for the lifting of these measures that Israel complies with these demands at once,” Benn wrote in his blog on April 19, 2002, under the title “A STATE OF PALESTINE NOW”. The ‘strategy’ of which Ben spoke was for Arafat to declare a state, and for ‘friendly nations’ to recognize it.

Yes, the title was all in caps. It was as if Benn, a principled British left wing politician, had wanted to loudly accentuate his insistence that the Palestinian people deserved their rights, freedom and sovereignty. He was as bold and courageous as any man or woman of true values and principles should always be. He remained uncompromising in matters of human rights and justice. This international warrior left a challenging space to fill when he passed away at the age of 88, on Thursday, March 13.

Following the news of his death, British media was awash of reports about Benn and his long legacy of being a stubborn politician and uncompromising advocate for human rights. Frankly, there was less emphasis on the latter and much more on the former, despite the fact that Benn understood politics was a platform to quarrel with moral dilemmas. The parliament was a platform to serve the people, not to conspire with other politicians for the sake of one’s party. For some politicians, it is all about winning elections, not using office to carry out a morally-grounded mandate to serve the people. Benn was different, thus

there was the love-hate relationship Britain had with him.

True to form, British media immediately conjured up a few buzzwords by which it attempted to define Benn’s legacy. He had ‘immatured with age,’ was one of them. It was a remark made by Benn’s fiercest rival in the Labor Party, Harold Wilson in reference to Benn’s becoming more of a radical left-winger as he grew older. Some in the media simply love axioms and catch phrases, for it spares journalists the pain of exhaustive research. Wilson and his camp invested heavily in assigning Benn the responsibility of the successive defeats experienced by the Labor Party at the hands of the Conservatives. Indeed, Margaret Thatcher and then John Major had won four elections in a row, and between them changed the face of British economy and quashed major labor unions. But blaming Benn for splitting the party is unfair to say the least.

Compare Tony Benn’s legacy with that of Tony Blair. The first was principled to the core, boldly challenged US hegemony in the world, and fought hard for Britain’s poor, working class and against unhindered globalization that made states vulnerable to the inherent disparity of the global economic system.

Blair stood for the exact opposite: a self-serving politician, devoid of any morality, and was rightly dubbed Bush’s poodle for heeding to the US military adventurism, mainly in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Benn, even from the point of view of those who disagreed with him, was always seen, and shall always be remembered as a man of high values. Blair had been districted by his own peers even before he was forced to concede office. One can imagine that Israeli media is the one likely to remember Blair with much fondness.

Although Benn seemed guided by the same high moral values that accompanied him throughout the over 50 years in which he served as an MP in the British parliament, when he retired in 2001, he seemed ready to take on even bigger challenges. His task morphed from that of a fierce politician at home, fighting for the very definition of the Labor Party, to an internationalist, taking on the most difficult of subjects, and never bowing down.

Following the US-British so-called ‘war on terror’ – designed around economic and strategic interests – Benn rose to greater prominence, not as another TV celebrity ‘expert’, but as a fierce opponent to the US and his own government’s wholesale slaughter of hundreds of thousands of innocent people. Since then, the man never stayed away from the streets. He spoke with passion and mesmerized audiences in his beautiful, immaculate English. Most important about the timing of Benn’s courageous stances was the fact that back then, all public discourses related to the wars were saturated with fear. But, whenever Benn spoke, he pushed the narrative up to higher degrees of audacity.

I listened to him once speak at Trafalgar Square in London. He wore a Kuffiya, the traditional Palestinian headscarf. He spoke of Iraq, Lebanon and Palestine, as if their peoples were his own. Thousands of us applauded with so much enthusiasm. It was as if his words alone were the salvation that would free Arab nations from the bondage of military occupation and war. But at times, words live in a sphere of their own where they multiply, and when repeated often enough, can change the world.

“The main responsibility for the appalling crimes being perpetrated against the Palestinians must be equally shared between Jerusalem and Washington for successive American governments have funded Israel, armed Israel and used their veto at the Security Council to protect Israel from being forced to comply with what world opinion wanted,” he said in 2003, in an interview with Egypt-based Al Ahram.

True, Benn was not the only British politician who spoke with such candor about the shared responsibility of crimes committed against Palestinians, but few went as far as he did.

The next time there is a rally for Palestine, there ought to be an empty chair with a Palestinian Kuffiya, and the name of Tony Benn. It is a Palestinian tradition to honor its heroes, even those with a splendidly beautiful British accent.

Ramzy Baroud is an internationally-syndicated columnist, a media consultant and the editor of PalestineChronicle.com.

**BOOK REVIEW: A 15 YEAR MURDER SPREE***Abolish the Institution*

by David Swanson

Weekend Edition April 4-6, 2014

“The notion of a ‘humanitarian war’ would have rang in the ears of the drafters of the UN Charter as nothing short of Hitlerian, because it was precisely the justification used by Hitler himself for the invasion of Poland just six years earlier.” —Michael Mandel

Fifteen years ago, NATO was bombing Yugoslavia. This may be difficult for people to grasp who believe the *Noah* movie is historical fiction, but: What your government told you about the bombing of Kosovo was false. And it matters.

While Rwanda is the war that many misinformed people wish they could have had (or rather, wish others could have had for them), Yugoslavia is the war they’re glad happened — at least whenever World War II really fails as a model for the new war they’re after — in Syria for instance, or in Ukraine — the latter being, like Yugoslavia, another borderland between east and west that is being taken to pieces.

The peace movement I gathering in Sarajevo this summer. The moment seems fitting to recall how NATO’s breakout war of aggression, its first post-Cold-War war to assert its power, threaten Russia, impose a corporate economy, and demonstrate that a major war can keep all the casualties on one side (apart from self-inflicted helicopter crashes) — how this was put over on us as an act of philanthropy.

The killing hasn’t stopped. NATO keeps expanding its membership and its mission, notably into places like Afghanistan and Libya. It matters how this got started, because it’s going to be up to us to stop it.

Some of us had not yet been born or were too young or too busy or too Democratic partisan or too caught up still in the notion that mainstream opinion isn’t radically insane. We didn’t pay attention or we fell for the lies. Or we didn’t fall for the lies, but we haven’t yet figured out a way to get most people to look at them.

Here’s my recommendation. There are two books that everyone should read. They are about the lies we were told about Yugoslavia in the 1990s but are also two of the best books about war, period, regardless of the subtopic. They are: *How America Gets Away With Murder: Illegal Wars, Collateral Damage, and Crimes Against Humanity* by Michael Mandel, and *Fools’ Crusade: Yugoslavia, NATO and Western Delusions* by Diana Johnstone.

Johnstone’s book provides the historical background, the context, and analysis of the role of the United States, of Germany, of the mass media, and of various players in Yugoslavia. Mandel’s book provides the immediate events and a lawyer’s analysis of the crimes committed. While many ordinary people in the United States and Europe supported or tolerated the war out of good intentions — that is, because they believed the propaganda — the motivations and actions of the U.S. government and NATO turn out to have been as cynical and immoral as usual.

The United States worked for the breakup of Yugoslavia, intentionally prevented negotiated agreements among the parties, and engaged in a massive bombing campaign that killed large numbers of people, injured many more, destroyed civilian infrastructure and hospitals and media outlets, and created a refugee crisis that did not exist until after the bombing had begun. This was accomplished through lies, fabrications, and exaggerations about atrocities, and then justified anachronistically as a response to violence that it generated.

After the bombing, the U.S. allowed the Bosnian Muslims to agree to a peace plan very similar to the plan that the U.S. had been blocking prior to the bombing spree. Here’s U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali:

“In its first weeks in office, the Clinton administration has administered a death blow to the Vance-Owen plan that would have given the Serbs 43 percent of the territory of a unified state. In 1995 at Dayton, the administration took pride in an agreement that, after nearly three more years of horror and slaughter, gave the Serbs 49 percent in a state partitioned into two entities.”

These many years later it should matter to us that we were told about fake atrocities that researchers were unable to ever find, any more than anyone could ever find the weapons in Iraq, or the evidence of plans to slaughter civilians in Benghazi, or the evidence of Syrian chemical weapons use. We’re being told that Russian troops are massing on the border of Ukraine with genocidal intentions. But when people look for those troops they can’t find them. We should be prepared to consider what that might mean.

NATO had to bomb Kosovo 15 years ago to prevent a genocide? Really? Why sabotage negotiations? Why pull out all observers? Why give five days’ warning? Why then bomb away from the area of the supposed genocide? Wouldn’t a real rescue operation have sent in ground forces without any warning, while continuing diplomatic efforts? Wouldn’t a humanitarian effort have avoided killing so many men, women, and children with bombs, while threatening to starve whole populations through sanctions?

Mandel looks very carefully at the legality of this war, considering every defense ever offered for it, and concludes that it violated the U.N. Charter and consisted of murder on a large scale. Mandel, or perhaps his publisher, chose to begin his book with an analysis of the illegality of the wars on Iraq and Afghanistan, and to leave Yugoslavia out of the book’s title. But it is Yugoslavia, not Iraq or Afghanistan, that war proponents will continue pointing to for years to come as a model for future wars — unless we stop them. This was a war that broke new ground, but did it with far more effective PR than the Bush administration ever bothered with. This war violated the UN Charter, but also — though Mandel doesn’t mention it — Article I of the U.S. Constitution requiring Congressional approval.

Every war also violates the Kellogg-Briand Pact. Mandel, all too typically, erases the Pact from consideration even while noting its existence and significance. “The first count against the Nazis at Nuremberg,” he writes, “was the ‘crime against peace . . . violation of international treaties’ —

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AMERICA'S SEVASTOPOL

Guantanamo Bay: America's Sevastopol?

by Sean Fenley, April 16th, 2014

Not only is Guantanamo Bay an illicit torture and concentration camp for alleged terrorists, but numerous legitimately recognized legal scholars have called into question the continued acceptance for the US government to still be occupying its military enclave there. Additionally, many of the purported "terrorist" poor unfortunates who continue to reside there were actually individuals who were picked up in avaricious sweeps — by less than utterly scrupulous people — in return for bounties/reward money. The government of Cuba, of course, thinks that the US has far overstayed its welcome and is certainly in contravention of international laws and standards by retaining a foothold at "its" age-old military stomping grounds. And moreover, indeed the former head of the U.S. interests section in Havana from 2005-2008, Michael Parmly, has stated that, "Guantanamo Bay Naval Base is not U.S. territory. Cuba is the ultimate owner."

President Theodore Roosevelt dictated the terms to the Cuban Constitutional Assembly in 1903 that the base would be leased in perpetuity. The agreement does, however, conclusively and unreservedly state that the ultimate sovereign over the base is the government of Cuba. A provision that is, of course, rendered superfluous today by the empire's authoritative and domineering actions. And so in other words, the United States is unequivocally bullying the government of Cuba, which is only something that Secretary of State John Kerry recently lectured Vladimir Putin on *vis a vis* his ongoing reaction to the situation in Crimea/the Ukraine. Additionally, Cuba also refuses to cash monthly checks of \$4,085 that it receives ostensibly in payment for the American purported lease of the base. It has only ever cashed one such check at all, however, and that was in error in the early days of the tumult and instability of the nascent Cuban Revolution.

Does this sound like a democratic practice by free association — the means of which the empire retains a hold/control over this military base? The resounding message from the Republic of Cuba seems to be akin to that which one would want to send to an unwanted house guest. The patron no longer cares what the guest is willing to barter, trade, or dicker in exchange for some continuous refuge. It's simply just there frankly isn't any other easy way to put it, gotten/deteriorated to the point of (getting the person out of there) any way and how! Indeed, it's said in the lexicon that a creature — such as a leopard — never changes its spots. And so, in the context of our current question it's not unreasonable then to lead one to wonder if a bully is a creature that is ever prone to change any of its such body insignia/demarcations either? In fact, in a recent *Guardian* of London article President Maduro of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, seemed to verify that in the case of the United States a chronic, deep-seated, and moreover incorrigible behavior might be something that's at fault here.

In the article President Maduro elucidated that, "Is 100 years of intervention... enough: against Haiti, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Chile, Grenada, Brazil? Is the coup attempt against President Chávez by the Bush administration not enough? Why does the US have 2,000 military bases in the world? To dominate it. I have told President Obama: we are not your backyard anymore." This penetrating quotation, to be sure, may suggest that what's at the root of the US imperialism/neo-colonialism is a personality disorder of sorts, and of an extreme proportion that afflicts the American body politic on a widespread and indeed on a comprehensive scale. In fact, the patient could be on the gurney — and the doctors might be at the ready, but if an unwilling subject is abetted by a static constitution and is not amenable to humanitarian intervention, then the odds of a solution emerging are about as unlikely as nearly anything that one is thoroughly capable (or even predisposed or inordinately prone) to quite vividly imagine.

Sean Fenley is an independent progressive who would like to see the end of the dictatorial duopoly of the so-called two party adversarial system. He would also like to see some sanity brought to the creation and implementation of current and future U.S. military, economic, foreign and domestic policies.

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international treaties just like the Charter of the United Nations." That can't be right. The U.N. Charter did not yet exist. Other treaties were not just like it. Much later in the book, Mandel cites the Kellogg-Briand Pact as the basis for the prosecutions, but he treats the Pact as if it existed then and exists no longer. He also treats it as if it banned aggressive war, rather than all war. I hate to quibble, as Mandel's book is so excellent, including his criticism of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch for refusing to recognize the U.N. Charter. But what they're doing to make the U.N. Charter a treaty of the past, Mandel himself (and virtually everyone else) does to the Kellogg-Briand Pact, awareness of which would devastate all arguments for "humanitarian wars."

Of course, proving that every war thus far marketed as humanitarian has actually harmed humanity doesn't eliminate the theoretical possibility of a humanitarian war. What erases that is the damage that keeping the institution of war around does to human society and the natural environment. Even if, in theory, 1 war in 1,000 could be a good one (which I don't believe for a minute), preparing for wars is going to bring those other 999 along with it. That is why the time has come to abolish the institution.

David Swanson is author of *War is a Lie*.

"The Imperial forces must keep their hands off, but they find that they can do much even so. Each sector is encouraged to be suspicious of its neighbours. Within each sector, economic and social classes are encouraged to wage a kind of war with each other. The result is that all over Trantor it is impossible for the people to take united action. Everywhere, the people would rather fight each other than make a common stand against the central tyranny and the Empire rules without having to exert force."

— **Isaac Asimov**, *Prelude to Foundation*

**POETRY**

“Never Forget”: for Rachel Corrie
By **Gary Corseri**

(Note: American peace activist Rachel Corrie was crushed to death on March 16, 2003, while trying to stop an Israeli Defense Force (IDF) armored bulldozer from demolishing Palestinian homes in the occupied Gaza Strip.)

Barely a woman, twenty three years old—
Soft, vulnerable. . . . Surely, the Monster
Will stop in its tracks!

She steels her will,
Thinks of the tank in Tiananmen Square—
One little man stopping a tank!

Surely,
They will perceive her love—resolve:
To die in a great cause is to martyr—
Not martyr—the Cause!

She must not die!
Cannot break her parents’ hearts—
Back home! (She sees them now!)
If only they knew
How she had grown!

They would understand. . .
This other love that held her now
In place, this love of home and place,
And the Other,
Of the faces, the voices, the laughter. . .
Olive groves and sun-scented skin;
The love she’d found for dispossessed:
Children, fathers, mothers—also *of her*,
Belonging to her, because
Everyone suffering was One.

It was hard to explain. . . but the Monster
Truck was coming now—remorseless Caterpillar,
Sci-fi bulldozer to scoop her up!

It would stop in its tracks!
Because a man drove it!
A man who would see her,
In her orange jacket
Like a bumble bee!

He would see she had to
Do it—stand there in its way
(Though its iron mouth gaped,
Though its hard lips snarled.)

To save their houses, olive groves. . . to save
Herself! And these other selves—part of her
And part of the one who drove the Monster
Closer now, with droning, cacophonous,
Tank-like clanking,
And the sun in its panes like eyes.

Surely
It must stop, if she steels her will, is resolute,
Peers in his eyes. . . surely. . . then. . . understand. . .
He will—the suffering. . . the children. . . why she stood
In its way—

Barely a woman, bones against
The iron tread, encircling,
Winding, crushing, crackling,
Bursting in sunburst light,
In the dying light,
For the sake of all.

WWIII

by **Paul Lojeski**

So very close, the lunatics
in charge, panting and sweating
with anticipation. Mad dogs
hovering over red buttons,
aching to fire the missiles,
to blast those fucking

Russians to hell, once and
for all, to finally claim
the world as ours, as God
ordained and intended.

Let the bombs rain down
and evil burn. No matter
the cost, even unto extinction.
So close. So very close.

April 21st, 2014

Paul Lojeski's poetry has appeared in journals and online. He's also the author of the satiric novel, *The Reverend Jimmy Pup*.

From Dissident Voice <http://dissidentvoice.org/2014/04/wwiii/>

SONG OF THE THREE SOLDIERS

By **Bertolt Brecht** (translated by Eric Bentley)

1
George was around, and John was too,
And Fred became a sergeant in short order.
And the army, to show what it could do,
Marched northward to the border.

2
And Freddy found the whisky warm
And George at night would shake and shiver
But John said as he took George by the arm:
Remember that the army lives forever!

3
Now George has fallen and Fred is dead
And John got lost in the shooting.
Blood, however, is still blood-red
And the army is again recruiting.

**AMERICA'S PEACE SHIP***The Remarkable Voyages of the Golden Rule*

by Lawrence Wittner

April 09, 2014

Is there an emotional connection between the oceans and the pursuit of peace? For whatever reason, peace ships have been increasing in number over the past century.

Probably the first of these maritime vessels was the notorious Ford Peace Ship of 1915, which stirred up more ridicule than peace during World War I.

Almost forty years later, another peace ship appeared—the *Lucky Dragon*, a Japanese fishing boat showered with radioactive fallout from an enormous U.S. H-bomb explosion, on March 1, 1954, in the Marshall Islands. By the time the stricken vessel reached its home port in Japan, the 23 crew members were in advanced stages of radiation poisoning. One of them died. This “*Lucky Dragon* incident” set off a vast wave of popular revulsion at nuclear weapons testing, and mass nuclear disarmament organizations were established in Japan and, later, around the world. Thus, the *Lucky Dragon* became a peace ship, and today is exhibited as such in Tokyo in a Lucky Dragon Museum, built and maintained by Japanese peace activists.

Later voyages forged an even closer link between ocean-going vessels and peace. In 1971, Canadian activists, departing from Vancouver, sailed a rusting fishing trawler, the *Phyllis Cormack*, toward the Aleutians in an effort to disrupt plans for a U.S. nuclear weapons explosion on Amchitka Island. Although arrested by the U.S. coast guard before they could reach the test site, the crew members not only mobilized thousands of supporters, but laid the basis for a new organization, Greenpeace. Authorized by Greenpeace, another Canadian, David McTaggart, sailed his yacht, *Vega*, into the French nuclear testing zone in the Pacific, where the French navy deliberately rammed and crippled this peace ship. In 1973, when McTaggart and the *Vega* returned with a new crew, French sailors, dispatched by their government, stormed aboard and beat them savagely with truncheons.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s, peace ships multiplied. At major ports in

New Zealand and Australia, peace squadrons of sailboats and other small craft blocked the entry of U.S. nuclear warships into the harbors. Also, Greenpeace used the *Rainbow Warrior* to spark resistance to nuclear testing throughout the Pacific. Even after 1985, when French secret service agents attached underwater mines to this Greenpeace flagship as it lay in the harbor of Auckland, New Zealand, blowing it up and murdering a Greenpeace photographer in the process, the peace ships kept coming.

Much of this this maritime assault upon nuclear testing and nuclear war was inspired by an American peace ship, the *Golden Rule*.

The remarkable story of the *Golden Rule* began with Albert Bigelow, a retired World War II U.S. naval commander. Appalled by the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, he became a Quaker and, in 1955, working with the American Friends Service Committee, sought to deliver a petition against nuclear testing to the White House. Rebuffed by government officials, Bigelow and other pacifists organized a small group, Non-Violent Action Against Nuclear Weapons, to employ nonviolent resistance in the struggle against the Bomb. After the U.S. government announced plans to set off nuclear bomb blasts near Eniwetok in the Marshall Islands—an island chain governed by the United States as a “trust territory” for the native people—Bigelow and other pacifists decided to sail a 30-foot protest vessel, the *Golden Rule*, into the nuclear testing zone. Explaining their decision, Bigelow declared: “All nuclear explosions are monstrous, evil, unworthy of human beings.”

In January 1958, Bigelow and three other crew members wrote to President Dwight Eisenhower, announcing their plans. As might be expected, the U.S. government was quite displeased, and top officials from the State Department, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the U.S. Navy conferred anxiously on how to cope with the pacifist menace. Eventually, the administration decided to ban entry into the test zone.

Thus, after Bigelow and his crew sailed the *Golden Rule* from the West

Coast to Honolulu, a U.S. federal court issued an injunction barring the continuation of its journey to Eniwetok. Despite the legal ramifications, the pacifists set sail. Arrested on the high seas, they were brought back to Honolulu, tried, convicted, and placed on probation. Then, intrepid as ever, they set out once more for the bomb test zone and were arrested, tried, and—this time—sentenced to prison terms.

Meanwhile, their dramatic voyage inspired an outpouring of popular protest. Antinuclear demonstrations broke out across the United States. The newly-formed National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy went on the offensive. Moreover, an American anthropologist, Earle Reynolds, along with his wife Barbara and their two children, continued the mission of the *Golden Rule* on board their sailboat, the *Phoenix*. In July 1958, they entered the nuclear testing zone. That August, facing a storm of hostile public opinion, President Eisenhower announced that the United States was halting its nuclear tests while preparing to negotiate a test ban with the Soviet Union.

Even as test ban negotiations proceeded fitfully, leading to the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 and, ultimately, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty of 1996, the *Golden Rule* dropped out of sight. Then, in early 2010, the vessel was discovered, wrecked and sunk in northern California’s Humboldt Bay. Contacted by historians about preserving the *Golden Rule* for posterity, officials at the Smithsonian Museum proved uninterested. But peace activists recognized the vessel’s significance. Within a short time, local chapters of Veterans for Peace established the Golden Rule Project to restore the battered ketch.

Thanks to volunteer labor and financial contributions from these U.S. veterans and other supporters, the ship has been largely rebuilt, and funds are currently being raised for the final stage of the project. Veterans for Peace hope to take the ship back to sea in 2014 on its new mission: “educating future generations on the importance of the ocean environment, the risks of nuclear
(continued on Page 30...)



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technology, and the need for world peace.”

As a result, the *Golden Rule* will sail again, restored to its role as America’s most important peace ship.

Lawrence Wittner (<http://lawrencewittner.com>) is Professor of History emeritus at SUNY/Albany. His latest book is a satirical novel about university corporatization and rebellion, *What’s Going on at UAardvark?*

"To be hopeful in bad times is not just foolishly romantic. It is based on the fact that human history is a history not only of cruelty, but also of compassion, sacrifice, courage, kindness. What we choose to emphasize in this complex history will determine our lives. If we see only the worst, it destroys our capacity to do something. If we remember those times and places — and there are so many — where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction. And if we do act, in however small a way, we don't have to wait for some grand utopian future. The future is an infinite succession of presents, and to live now as we think human beings should live, in defiance of all that is bad around us, is itself a marvelous victory." — **Howard Zinn**

Russia is a part of European culture. Therefore, it is with difficulty that I imagine NATO as an enemy. - **Vladimir Putin**

"In our new age of terrifying, lethal gadgets, which supplanted so swiftly the old one, the first great aggressive war, if it should come, will be launched by suicidal little madmen pressing an electronic button. Such a war will not last long and none will ever follow it. There will be no conquerors and no conquests, but only the charred bones of the dead on and uninhabited planet." — **William L. Shirer**, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany*

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Editorial Thank you. Thank you also to all those *Just Peace* members who sent in articles, and other contributions and suggestions. We try to use as much of this material as we can. But we reserve the right to edit articles where necessary to fit the layout of the newsletter. Such editing will be done in a way that, hopefully, doesn't change the essence of the articles. The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect those of the individual members of *Just Peace*.

<p>First they came for the Communists but I was not a Communist - so I said nothing. Then they came for the Social Democrats but I was not a Social Democrat - so I did nothing. Then they came for the trade unionists but I was not a trade unionist. And then they came for the Jews but I was not a Jew - so I did little. Then when they came for me there was no one left who could speak out for me.</p> <p>Pastor Martin Neimoller, 1937</p>
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