



The Peace Issue . . .

The Newsletter of Just Peace Queensland Inc

Issue No. 62

April 2021

ISSN 2652-7006 [print]

ISSN 2652-7014 [online]

Just Peace holds bi-monthly public forums and monthly committee meetings. All are welcome.

Please feel free to contact one the co-convenors below for details of times and venues.

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Struggles for an Independent Australia

Australia Struggles to Find an Independent Voice

by James O'Neill

April 6th, 2021

Australia has always struggled to present an independent foreign policy to the world. For example, during its early days as a British colony its soldiers fought in the Crimean war in the mid 19th century, although it would be impossible to identify any Australian interest in that conflict. World War One saw a similar eagerness to die on behalf of the British Empire. To this day the most solemn day in the Australian calendar is 25th April, ANZAC Day, when Australian and New Zealand troops were sacrificed by their incompetent British officers to a hopeless campaign in Turkey during World War One.

The same saga was repeated during World War II when Australian troops were rushed to North Africa to fight Rommel's desert army. They were only withdrawn from that theatre following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, when defending home territory from the Japanese superseded defending Britain in its European war.

The fall of Singapore to the Japanese had a profound effect on Australian military thinking. Foremost was the realisation that they could no longer rely on Britain for their safety. Rather than formulating a plan for having a uniquely Australian tinge to their defence, Australia simply switched its allegiance from the British to the Americans. That allegiance has continued to the present day and is essentially a bipartisan affair, with both

the major political parties swearing undying allegiance to the Americans.

What did not change from the days of allegiance to a participation in Britain's wars, was an affinity simply transferred to the Americans to join their wars, regardless of the merits, military or otherwise, of doing so.

Thus Australia was an eager participant in the first post-World War II exercise in American imperialism when it joined the war in Korea. Australian troops later joined in the invasion of North Korea, contrary to the terms of the United Nations resolution authorising the conflict. After the Chinese joined the war when the western forces reached the North Korea – China border, they were quickly expelled back to the southern portion of the Korean peninsula.

As is well known, the Americans used their aerial domination to bomb the North until the armistice was finally signed in 1953. During that air war every city in the North suffered severe damage. More than 600,000 civilians died, which was greater than the military losses of around 400,000. To this day the war remains technically alive as no peace treaty has been signed. Of the 17,000 Australian troops that served in Korea, there were 340 fatalities and more than 1400 injured, a comparatively small number for a war that lasted three years.

In 1962 Australian troops arrived in South Vietnam and remained there until January 1973 when they were withdrawn by the Whitlam Labor government. It was Australia's longest
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war up until that time. The withdrawal of Australian troops by the Whitlam government incensed the Americans, on whose behalf they were there. The withdrawal drew the enmity of the Americans and was a major factor in the American role in the overthrow of the Whitlam government in November 1975. It is a fact barely acknowledged in Australian writing on the demise of the Whitlam government. It did, however, have a profound effect on Australian political and military thinking. Since November 1975 there has been no recognisable Australian difference from United States belligerence throughout the world.

The next miscalculation was Australia joining the United States led war in Afghanistan. That is now Australia's longest war, rapidly approaching 20 years of involvement with no sign or political talk about withdrawing. It is a war that has largely passed out of mainstream media discussion. This ignorance was briefly disrupted by revelations in late 2020 that Australian troops had been involved in war crimes in Afghanistan, specifically, the killing of innocent Afghanistan civilians.

The brief publicity given to this revelation rapidly passed and Australia's involvement in its longest war once more

faded from public view. The mainstream media remains totally silent on Australia's involvement on behalf of the Americans in protecting the poppy crop, source of 90% of the world's heroin supply and a major source of uncountable illicit income for the CIA.

Australia's next foreign intervention on behalf of the Americans was in the equally illegal invasion of Iraq in 2003. They have simply ignored demands by the Iraqi government in 2020 that all uninvited foreign troops should leave. The involvement of Australian troops in that country, and indeed in adjoining Syria where they have been since at least 2015 is simply ignored by the mainstream media.

Australia also plays a role in the United States war machine through the satellite facility at Pine Gap in the Northern Territory. That base is one of a number of United States military facilities in the country, another topic that is deemed by the mainstream media as being unfit for public discussion.

Another unsung role of the Australian Navy is to be part of the United States confrontation with China in the South China Sea where they protect so-called freedom of navigation exercises, despite the complete absence of any evidence of Chinese interference with civilian navigation in those waters. Equally

unexplained is the Australian Navy's presence in the narrow Straits of Malacca, a vital Chinese export waterway.

Last year the Trump administration resurrected the "gang of four" that is, India, Japan, the United States and Australia, a blatantly anti-China grouping designed to put pressure on the Chinese government in the Indo Pacific region. The measure is doomed to fail, not least because both India and Japan have more attractive opportunities as part of the burgeoning cooperation in trade among multiple countries in the Asia-Pacific who see better opportunities arising from a friendly relationship with China than the blatantly antagonistic options offered by the Americans.

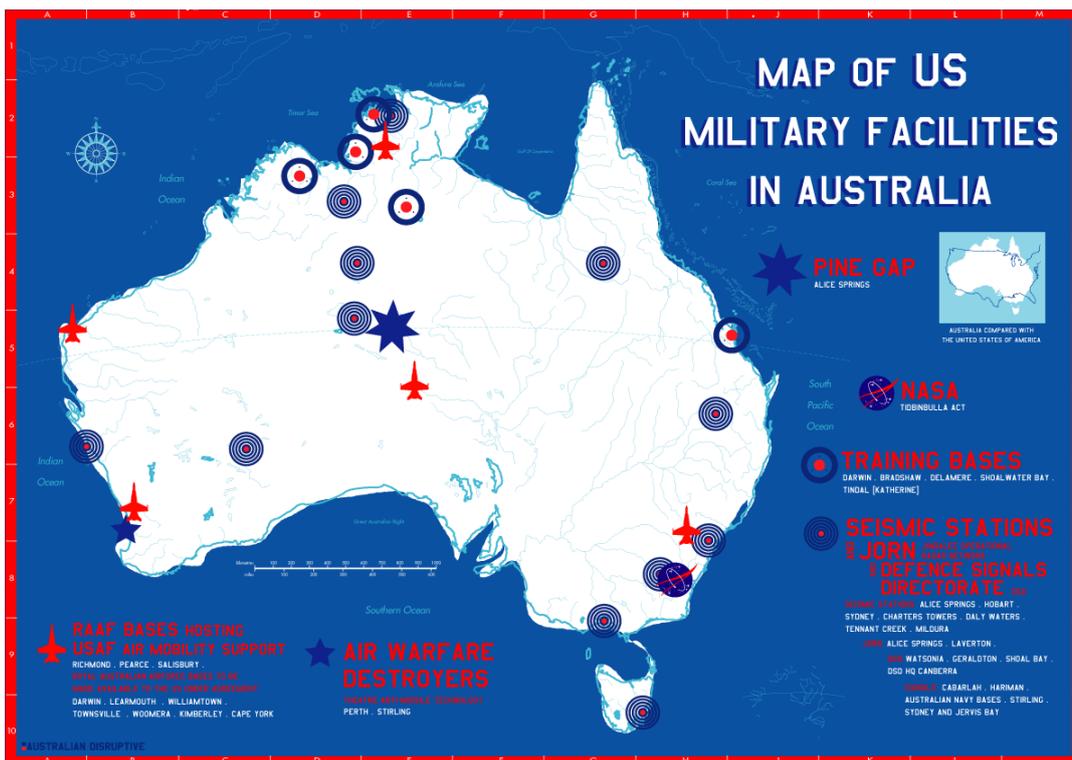
Australia seems impervious to these signals. It has already suffered major setbacks to its trade with China, not to mention a diplomatic cold shoulder. The political leadership is silent on this development, perhaps unable to grasp the implications of its changing relationship with China. The inability of the Labor Opposition to grasp the implications of the consequences of Australia clinging to the fading American coattails is of profound concern.

All the signs are that the relationship with its largest trading partner, by a big margin, will continue to deteriorate. Australians seem unable or unwilling to grasp the lesson that its economic problems are intimately linked to its subservient role to the United States.

There is every indication that their fortunes in Asia will sink together.

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This article was posted on Tuesday, April 6th, 2021



**EDITORIAL**

We exist in an age of deep insecurity. During his lengthy stint as Minister for All Things to Keep Australian Borders Safe across various portfolios, the newly-minted Minister for Defence tried to persuade us that terrorists under the bed were the greatest cause of national insecurity for us all. This, however, is far from the case. (Which is not to say that there are not problem pockets in that respect to which appropriate funds should be allocated. But these funds should not, as has been the case in recent years, be obscenely bloated amounts that aggressively vacuum monies from social projects.)

The most pressing threat to security in this country arises from the current government's frantic desire to be regarded as a serious military nation with clout. One that demonstrates unwavering support for big brother United States and that protects the defence forces at any cost.

Australian once had a craven devotion to its underling status vis-a-vis "Great Britain." Many readers will remember colouring countries pink or red during primary school mapping classes and being told that this was the "empire on which the sun never sets." (The colonialist violence of such a project was conveniently buried.) As the war in the Pacific escalated, John Curtin took the initiative and turned from Britain to call on United States Armed Forces support to protect Australia from what was feared to be imminent Japanese invasion.

At the time, Curtin's actions were a sign of strong independent thinking. Seven and a half decades later, we can no longer make that claim.

The United States has a sorry postwar history of peddling influence across "the free world." While this influence was expressed through the soft power of figures such as Life magazine editor, Henry R. Luce, it was most obvious in the hardware of war. As the Cold War escalated, the United States argued that the need for bilateral balance – to have at least what the Soviets had and more – justified an arms race. The urge for both sides to outdo each other justified the development of "super" nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic

missiles. Happily, although the two countries circled each other with greater or lesser suspicion across several decades, neither made a pre-emptive strike.

During this time, Australia stayed linked to US fortunes. These fortunes were bolstered by invasive secret operations in various places throughout the world. The American War (as the locals call it) in Vietnam commenced with the despatch of agents on the ground before the conflict escalated to take such a heavy toll on the people of the former French colony. The Vietnam environment suffered also from relentless blasts of Napalm and Agent Orange drenching. The case currently before the French courts against companies such as the former Monsanto, a case that seeks reparations for the damage caused by sales of Agent Orange chemicals to the US military, reminds us that armaments corporations are not the only ones that benefit from war. Neither should we forget that the impact of war lingers through the generations. An article in the 2 February 2020 Washington Post noted that land mines and other explosive devices left by the US in Vietnam have been responsible for the deaths of 40 000 people since that war ended. The writer explained that it could take a further 300 years for all live munitions to be cleared. The last person in Vietnam to be killed by an as-yet unexploded US device may therefore not even be yet born.

After Australia's Labor government openly spoke against the Nixon administration's December 1972 "Christmas bombings" of Hanoi and Haiphong, it was perhaps inevitable that several years later US intervention would play a role in the Whitlam administration downfall. Talking back to the US had consequences. The list of other legitimate political entities that were subject to US intervention is too long to provide here. Suffice to say that the 1975 Church Committee determined that the CIA had undertaken "continuous and extensive" covert operations in Chile between 1963 and 1973 with a view to conducting a coup to prevent the election of Marxist leader, Salvadore Allende. That was a pattern repeated in various places throughout the world ad infinitum, a harbinger perhaps of the

policy of extraordinary rendition. Refined to a high art by the George Bush Jr administration, extraordinary rendition saw the US ship detainees from place to place to facilitate torture. In 2001, Bush's "war on terror" led to the tragic invasion of Afghanistan. Australia was there all the way. The nature of Australian defence force involvement was laid out clearly in the Brereton Report.

Why is Australia so wedded to an alliance with the US? Why can we not be more like New Zealand and acknowledge the value of a relationship with US while retaining independence? Such independence would guarantee the ability to say no when, rather than if, the US raises its hand to gather its "allies" to war once more.

Regarding Australia's longing to be a military nation with clout, we are now in a Monty Pythonesque setting in which the following can occur. A South Australian politician who comes up through the university Liberal Club and senatorial research assistant path to Federal Parliament – with a couple of years as a solicitor before age 25 – eventually becomes Defence Minister. The politician is Christopher Pyne. As Minister, he oversees a reform of Australian armed forces that increases the Federal Government's defence capability investment to almost \$200 billion. Just after departing Parliament, the former politician takes a position with global consulting giant EY specifically to assist it to "expand its footprint in the defence industry."

EY's defence industry footprint was already significant. In 2019, writing in the Guardian, Christopher Knaus observed that over the past four years (that is to June 2019), EY had won "138 contracts with the defence department worth \$148 million." Significantly, Knaus noted that this did not include EY "consulting for other corporations, to help them win and complete government contracts." We can only ask how many of those "other corporations" are involved in the production of armaments and the associated accoutrements of war.

This story does not end there. Australia's establishing itself as a
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military force with clout seems to mean that it must confront China. Following US discourse, this emerging power is constructed by hawks as a threat. That narrative was once totally confected. Tensions, however, have become more real given that almost every conservative politician in the land and not a few from the other side insist on labelling this great power as a danger to Australia. You can only insult someone so many times before they retaliate.

At a recent address to graduating students at the University of Adelaide, Pyne claimed, in the words of an ABC report of the event, that: “The chances of war in the Indo-Pacific region involving China are rising sharply” and that “Taiwan was most likely the next flashpoint.” As further evidence of China as risk, the speaker threw in mistreatment of the Uighur population and events in Hong Kong (no mention, of course, of Australia’s atrocious treatment of refugees or its appalling rate of incarceration of Indigenous Australians and the deaths of many in custody). Pyne’s talk was, in fact, a little muddled in that, after warning of war, the ex-Minister encouraged “engagement” rather than “containment” of China. Unfortunately, the body of his talk seemed to provide no concrete strategies to ensure that engagement might occur. Is it too cynical to suggest that former Defence Minister Pyne, whose role is now to help EY to expand its “defence footprint,” might actually be seeking to drum up business for EY and its clients, while also creating an environment in which he can helpfully lobby the Federal Government to further increase its already ballooning spending on defence?

Perhaps we should be happy that EY is headquartered in the UK rather than the US. However, as reported in many outlets in mid-March 2021, Boris Johnson appears to have plans to expand his nuclear warhead arsenal from 180 to not more than 260 and to send more troops overseas more often. This information was obtained from a leaked review of UK defence which noted the need to “do a better job of putting the interests and values of the British people at the heart of everything

we do.” Just who these “we” are remains a little unclear.

On this point we can return to Australia. After some girls recently jumped about on a Navy ship in tiny shorts, the Assistant Defence Minister, Andrew Hastie felt compelled to observe that “the ADF’s core business will always be the application of lethal force.” This, he continued, was necessary to defend “our values, sovereignty and interests.” As with the UK report, Andrew Hastie puts forward values as the justification for “lethal action.” Values, of course, are highly contested sets of beliefs. Yet, this has been the sophistry used to send young people and some not so young to their deaths in war at least throughout the modern era and the emergence of the nation state.

Lethal action is what the current Australian administration seems to want to make defence all about. And defending those who apply that force. While criticised by some, the Brereton report was very direct and left little doubt that in some quarters at least the country’s defence culture had atrophied. Any hope that this atrophy might be addressed now seems moot in light of the new Defence Minister’s overruling of the Report’s recommendation on awards and citations. Made in Chapter 3.03 entitled “Command and Collective Responsibility,” (Brereton, 115) this recommendation advised that “the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation to SOTG (Task Force 66) be revoked” (Brereton, 116). The Brereton Report is heavily redacted which makes it difficult to read. Nevertheless, there is no redaction of the author’s conclusion that certain actions were “possibly the most disgraceful in Australian military history” (Brereton, 103).

When the new Minister made his ruling, he made a point of couching his actions in terms of “fairness” for the putative “99%” whom he argued were not implicated by the Report. However, that fairness was already inherent in the findings. Brereton noted when justifying his recommendations that “any cancellation of individual decorations affects status and reputation, and is likely to require procedural fairness in each individual case.” This, he pointed out, was not the situation in the case of a

unit award. In other words, he understood that any stripping of individual awards should only occur after careful investigation. On the point of unit awards, however, he wanted to send a message that a general culture can be as damaging as the actions of “bad apples.”

Returning to and concluding with the issue of Australia’s insistence on attaching itself to the US. The new Minister’s love for unit medals does not seem to augur well for a review of current defence practice in Australia – although it would be wonderful to have that assumption proved incorrect. For this reason, it is imperative that all Just Peace members make a submission to the IPAN People’s Inquiry for an independent and peaceful Australia. As many readers already know, the purpose of the inquiry is to investigate the costs and consequences of Australia’s involvement in US-led wars and the US-Alliance. Importantly, the inquiry gives every person inside – and outside – Australia the opportunity to have their say on these issues. The Just Peace organising committee urges everyone to make a submission which can be as short or as extended as suits the individual. Although submissions close on 31 July, the committee encourages as many people as possible to submit before that deadline.

Barbara Hartley, April 2021

ACTIVITIES REPORT

Dear friends,

This report covers the activities of *Just Peace* from December 2020 to April 2021.

Just Peace organisation

Our committee of 12 meets on the first Wednesday of the month - in person since July 2020. United in purpose but separated in space for a few hours. Our membership dropped a bit (to 80) due to fewer in-person activities, but no longer, after April 15th.

We welcome returning officers as well as new members Karla Orellana, Janny Boersma and Barbara Hartley.

We gave a vote of thanks to Don and Rose Yule. Rose agreed to design more of her brilliant flyers for us.

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Sub Groups

Just Peace for Palestine, Vikki Henry Convener

This group can feel overwhelmed by the challenges facing Palestinians in Palestine, currently occupied by a foreign power. Nevertheless, our members have played active roles in supporting this cause through numerous groups including APAN, Parliamentary Friends of Palestine, AFOPA, Free Palestine Melbourne, Medical Aid for Palestine, Justice for Palestine and several others.

Anti-Nuclear Group, Rosie Severin Convener

A focus is currently on opposition to small modular nuclear reactors, which don't really exist in commercially viable numbers. In addition, Rosie (with Robin Taubenfeld, Friends of the Earth Brisbane), organizes throughout the year, commemorations of numerous nuclear-related tragic events. These include, Fukushima, Chernobyl, Hiroshima and Nagasaki days, and Maralinga day. Rosie regularly reports on issues such as the UN Nuclear Treaty, Nuclear waste dumps and their effect upon indigenous peoples.

EVENTS:

ZOOM:

Book Launch: Peter Cronau and Felicity Ruby: **A Secret Australia**. Avid Reader 17th January, 2021. Annette Brownlie moderator.

Others too numerous to mention!

NOTZOOM:

GUIDED TOUR (March 3rd) of the Queensland Museum showing the permanent Anzac Legacy exhibit. Here you will find out much history of the anti-war movement in Queensland. There are also videoed interviews with members Ross Gwyther and Maureen Todhunter.

Commemoration of Fukushima Nuclear Meltdown 11th March. A small group gathered at Queens Park.

PALM SUNDAY RALLY with Refugee Action Collective. March 28th. Guest speakers Peter Catt, Ian Lowe and others.

POLITICS in the PUB. Forum on IPAN INQUIRY. Held Sunday, April 18th with Professor Ian Lowe speaking on **The Environmental Impacts of Militarism and Nuclear War.**

ANITA REED COMMEMORATION CONCERT. This exciting concert is on May 9th 2pm – 4:30 pm, Coorparoo School of Arts. Headline musicians, Cath Mundy and Jay Turner.

CHERNOBYL. April 26th Reddacliff Place gathering.

ANZAC Eve Vigil 24th April, 6pm. Shrine of Remembrance.

ROTARY CENTENARY PEACE POLE DEDICATION. April 18th, Brisbane. Rotary Park.

perhaps 30 countries descending on an unsuspecting Queensland population in this age of Covid19. They will want to sell and buy military hardware, software and services worth an estimated \$35 billion over 3 days.

IPAN

Just Peace members Annette Brownlie and Ross Gwyther are president and vice president, respectively.

Major Project: People's Enquiry into Costs and Consequences of Australia's involvement in US Led Wars (see <https://ipan.org.au/the-ipan-inquiry/>). Scores of submissions have been made to the enquiry so far.

ICAN

Working with WILPF women to advocate for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Mayors for peace 50 nations have now ratified the UN Treaty to ban nuclear weapons. It entered into force on January 22nd 2021

UNAAQ

(Annette Brownlie, Chair of Peace and Security Sub-Group) Meetings via Zoom. Lenora O'Connor developed a project Video on SDG3 focusing on the Covid19 and health implications - hope it can be used widely in education system.

YOUTH VOICES FOR

PEACE

This project is the brainchild of Lenora O'Connor, a Just Peace member. In 2021 she and Ross Gwyther have been working closely with the UNAAQ and sponsored by Quakers Brisbane, to hold workshops in four high schools. These exciting events will involve dozens of students in a variety of activities including writing, art, dance, engineering and photography, all focused on the theme of **Climate, Peace and Care for the Land.**

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MEMBERSHIP of RELATED ORGANISATIONS

Just Peace Queensland and many of our members belong to and/or actively and financially support the work of National and International organizations. Here are just a few:

AAPP This is Australians Against Political Prosecutions, a new group formed to support whistleblowers such as Witness K and publishers such as Julian Assange and many journalists.

STOP LAND FORCES 2021 COALITION. In advance of the upcoming war weapons fair being held in Brisbane in June 1st - 3rd. There will be an estimated 15,000 representatives of



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APAN

This is one of the most effective groups supporting the rights of Palestinians. Powerful fundraising group, regularly speaking to Federal and other politicians, with great success.

INTERNATIONAL PEACE BUREAU, BERLIN.

Just Peace supports the work of this Nobel Peace Prize-winning organization. In particular the Global Day of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS). Watch various spaces for visible actions – with the QUAKERS – of GDAMS in Brisbane.

WORLD BEYOND WAR, VIRGINIA. Just Peace is not, strictly speaking, a member of WBW but we support and participate in the enormously creative and effective work they do, including webinars and workshops.

SUPPORT.

Just Peace supports a wide range of projects, groups and individuals, all



(<https://www.justpeaceqld.org.au/future-earth-pie>).

Pacific Peace Network: RIMPAC Webinars in June and August.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exercise_RIMPAC

Quakers Brisbane Just Peace is part of a group to highlight the weapons fair known as **LandForces 2021**

University of Queensland Peace Group organized by Pastor David Hale. Just Peace attended this group meeting on August 12th. Of note was a representative of Religions for Peace which is the largest international coalition of representatives from the world’s great religions dedicated to promoting peace.



seeking a less violent world.

Antidote Films - The Reluctant Savior, Gil Scrine Producer and Director. Due for release in May 2021.

Spirit of Eureka - Rally outside News Corp Australia Head office.

Glen Major: Singer, songwriter, architect. Writer of **FUTURE EARTH PIE**, an epic look at global society

Julian Assange – publisher of war crimes evidence. Ongoing.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Environmental impacts of warfare

In 2014, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon observed, “From contamination of land to plundering of natural resources, the environment is the ‘silent casualty’ of war”. James Porter, a professor of ecology, concluded “War is more destructive to the environment than any other normal

activity that we associate with humankind”. Catherine Lutz, a professor in the Watson Institute for International Studies, pointed out that war changes our parameters. In the face of a threat to the nation, real or perceived, “acts that would normally be abhorrent become acceptable, even routine”.

There are obvious examples from US-led wars in which Australia has participated. A key strategy of US forces during the American War in Vietnam was defoliation, the destruction of forests to prevent their use as supply channels for Vietnamese troops. One expert has lamented that the mangrove forests in the Mekong delta will take a hundred years to recover. In the first Gulf War in 1991, the US bombed Iraq with 340 tonnes of missiles containing depleted uranium. Mac Skelton of Johns Hopkins University observed that the resulting radiation has poisoned the soil and water of Iraq. The war also destroyed infrastructure, causing sewage to flow into streets and rivers, while refineries and pipelines leaked oil. Over 500 oil wells were set on fire by the retreating Iraqi army. Illegal logging by US-backed warlords and wood harvesting by refugees has been estimated to have destroyed one-third of all forest area in Afghanistan between 1990 and 2007, resulting in drought, desertification and species loss. As an extreme example, the number of migratory birds passing through that country is now about 15 per cent of the typical figure thirty years ago.

The military are also very heavy users of fossil fuels and consequently produce huge amounts of greenhouse gases. The US Department of

Defense [sic] is that country’s largest consumer of fossil fuels, using about 21 billion litres of petroleum fuels a year and producing emissions comparable to those of a middle-sized country like Denmark. That is before they go to war, when fuel use increases. During the Iraq war, the US military was using 190 million litres of oil a month.

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While the environmental impacts of conventional warfare are disastrous, they pale when compared with the possible consequences of nuclear war. There has been some success in reducing the world stockpile of nuclear weapons from the 1986 high point, when an estimated 70,000 warheads were in readiness. The latest estimate by the Federation of American Scientists is that there are still more than 13,000 nuclear warheads in the world's arsenals, with about 1900 of those on "high alert" ready to be launched at a moment's notice. The US and Russia each have about 6000 nuclear warheads, China about 350, France and the UK each about 200, India and Pakistan each about 160, Israel 80-90 and North Korea is believed to have enough fissile material for about 40 bombs. The nuclear weapons now deployed have typically 100 to 1000 times the destructive capacity of the weapons that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Each one could wipe out an entire large city. It has been calculated that even a restrained, localised nuclear war involving the use of only thirty to forty weapons could put so much debris into the atmosphere that the world would be plunged into a "nuclear winter" with more than 10 degrees reduction in temperatures, 90 per cent reduction in plant growth etc: probably the end of civilisation. The UN's Non-Proliferation Treaty has not succeeded, largely because the five nations that had nuclear weapons in 1970 have not disarmed as they undertook to do; in fact, they are all still developing and deploying new nuclear weapons. A new treaty to outlaw nuclear weapons has been signed by more than 50 countries, but none of the nations with nuclear weapons has signed. Nor has Australia.

Conventional warfare is very destructive of the natural environment. The potential of nuclear war is very much worse. The obvious conclusion is that we have to develop more civilised ways of resolving disputes.

Prof. Ian Lowe

Summary of presentation to Politics in the Pub, 18/04/2021, by panel member to IPAN *Peoples Inquiry into the US Alliance*.

LIES AND MORE LIES

Not sleepwalking but marching with eyes wide open to war

By [William Briggs](#)

13 April 2021



Former Defence Minister Christopher Pyne talked up the "threat" of China at a Sydney University graduation ceremony (Image by Dan Jensen)

While the USA moves towards war, anti-China rhetoric grows on a daily basis and the idea of war is being sold as the "right" thing, writes Dr William Briggs.

ALIE told often enough can become accepted, but it can never be the truth. China has been declared a threat to all that we hold dear, but it is just not so. China, for all its faults, is not a threat and nor is it practising genocide!

The Uyghur genocide claim gets bigger as each day dawns. Peter Hartcher, in *The Age* on the 10 April, writes of this genocide and of 'the evil genius of the system of genocide with Chinese characteristics.' The "genius" according to Hartcher is that the Chinese are allowing the Uyghurs to live. What a clever and cunning genocide that is!

The plight of the Uyghurs is but the latest lurid episode in a sustained and enormously successful push to demonise China in the eyes of the world. The motivations behind this are simple enough. China's economic star is rising and America's best days are behind it.

The world is certainly on the edge of a precipice. There is a broad acceptance, despite an embarrassing lack of evidence, that China is an enemy and, as an enemy, a threat. Nobody is ever eager for war, but people have often enough been persuaded that war is an acceptable option. This is

particularly so when an existential threat exists, or in this case, is manufactured. The potential for war, justifications for it and warnings of how it might almost "accidentally" become a reality have come to dominate thought.

In early 2021, Elliot Ackerman and James Stavridis published a novel that caused an immediate stir. The book, *2034 A Novel of the Next War*, is a work of fiction. It gained immediate attention, less from any creative skills of the authors, but from their credentials. Ackerman is an author who previously served with the U.S. Marines as a special operations officer. Stavridis is a former U.S. Admiral and NATO commander.

While the book may be fiction, its description of the lead-up to war and the prosecution of that war has an air of authenticity, coming as it does from Stavridis' hands-on experience. Their book follows a familiar theme, that war while being almost inevitable ultimately comes from an act of chance or "error".

If the USA goes to war with China, it will not be by chance. It has been meticulously planned, costed, budgeted for and the weapons, including "low-yield" nuclear weapons, have been manufactured and deployed by the USA. The world should be aghast at such blatant preparations, but it is not. Those who would take us to war need first to convince us that we have no option, that we are protecting freedom, that we are standing for justice and that a threat exists that the enemy is engaging in genocide.

In the space of just a decade, the people have come to accept this. China has gone from economic saviour of the world to arch enemy. Governments begin the process but could not be expected to convince the people alone. Television and print media: editorials, opinion pieces from leading journalists and international editors, columnists and experts, have all played a decisive role.

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A recent poll by the Lowy Institute showed that in 2018, 52 per cent of Australians believed that China would act responsibly in the world. Two very short years later and that figure had dropped to just 23 per cent! The polls are then used by the same anti-China crusaders to prove that a problem exists. They are happy to ignore the effect that a daily barrage of anti-China campaigning can do and how it can shift people's views.

Shelves groan under the weight of books that show us the danger that China poses. The "re-education" of the people begins and piece by piece, step by step all that we once knew to be true becomes a lie.

The propaganda campaign that so much of our media is so happy to promote has been carefully managed. Too much, too soon is hard to accept, but one step at a time ... after all the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. The history of the West's outrage about the treatment of the Uyghurs is a case in point.



Scummo with Trump – two peas in a pod

The most recent reporting of the treatment of the Uyghurs is that the Chinese are engaged in a campaign of genocide. Genocide was practised in Nazi Germany, in Kampuchea, in Rwanda, in Armenia, in Australia, but to suggest that the Chinese behaviour towards the Uyghurs, while quite possibly repressive, even reprehensible, is genocidal is ludicrous.

There has been discrimination and persecution. Life, for the Uyghurs, has never been easy. However, the West paid little or no attention to these people until about the time that the USA began to talk of "containing" China. It was, for the USA, a fortuitous discovery.

The Chinese, at the end of the 20th Century, waged a campaign against

Years of good relations with our Chinese friends are breaking.
It's time for me to march right in and give some hands a shakir
I'll wear my dumbest funny hat and strike a thumbs-up pose.
The footage will be guaranteed a run on TV shows.
I might arrange an ad campaign, a logo and a jingle,
And start a tour of China next, to shake some hands and mingle.
My genius in marketing is the fix to make things move.
It will not help Australia but my polling might improve.



Islamist separatist groups that had become active within the Uyghur population. Violence met violence and conditions worsened for the Uyghurs. None of this concerned Washington. What happened to make things change so dramatically? The Chinese, in all likelihood, did step up repressions but the USA have manipulated events to suit a specific propaganda purpose.

Uyghur stories become more and more horrifying. The Western media was once content to rail against the existence of "re-education" camps. Then it was reports of campaigns of mass rape and then mass sterilisation programs. This morphed into claims of social genocide. Reports of forced labour emerged and evolved into stories of slave labour. The term "social" genocide came into use but has now been shortened to genocide.

This ramping up of rhetoric has one real purpose. China must, at every turn, be shown to be a malignant force. The editorialists, international editors, columnists and journalists have become a willing and shameless weapon in this campaign. If it all ends in war it will not be a chance thing. The world will not be "sleepwalking".

Nobody wants war but we are being prepared for it.

Dr William Briggs is a political economist. His special areas of interest lie in political theory and international political economy. His latest book, 'China, the USA and Capitalism's Last Crusade' is due to be published by Zero Books in October.

QUOTE:

"No one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are not more than starting-points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white, or Black, or Western, or Oriental. Yet just as human beings make their own history, they also make their cultures and ethnic identities. No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness, as if that was all human life was about. Survival in fact is about the connections between things; in Eliot's phrase, reality cannot be deprived of the "other echoes [that] inhabit the garden." It is more rewarding - and more difficult - to think concretely and sympathetically, contrapuntally, about others than only about "us." But this also means not trying to rule others, not trying to classify them or put them in hierarchies, above all, not constantly reiterating how "our" culture or country is number one (or not number one, for that matter)." — Edward W. Said, [Culture and Imperialism](#)

**AUSTRALIAN NUCLEAR ROLE**

It Is Not Rocket Science: Australia Needs to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons.

By **Sam Brennan**



US nuclear weapons test at Bikini in 1946 by International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

On January 22 the possession and facilitation of nuclear weapons will be prohibited by international law, however, Australia has at every stage of the law's process shown its unwillingness to create an anti-nuclear world.

Back in July 2017, the UN General Assembly was ironing out the final wording of what would come to be known as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

This meeting was the culmination of years of work by NGOs such as Australia's own International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and countries such as Austria, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and New Zealand. The vast majority of the countries in attendance agreed on a treaty that would prohibit the development, testing, producing, acquiring, possessing, stockpiling, use or threatened use of nuclear weapons.

Australia, however, was not supportive of the TPNW and had tried to derail previous negotiations. Despite this 122 countries supported the TPNW in 2017, and late last year Honduras became the 50th country to ratify it. This means that on January 22 the TPNW will become international law.

Australia did not vote in favour of adopting TPNW in 2017, despite countries like Iran doing so, nor did it sign the document, siding instead with the nuclear-armed states. At every stage, Canberra has rejected the TPNW and in doing so helped prevent a world where nuclear weapons no longer exist.

This is despite the devastating threat of nuclear weapons, being declared a human rights violation, and the Australian government itself supposedly supporting nuclear disarmament.

The Threat Nuclear Weapons Pose

Since the end of the Cold War nuclear weapons were overshadowed by other apocalyptic concerns like climate change and

pandemics.

However, just because it is less reported on, it does not mean nuclear weapons have become any less of a danger.

Currently, nine countries hold an estimated total of 13,400 nuclear weapons, the US and Russia have the vast majority of these.

There has been a lot of research into the effects of nuclear weapons to try and contextualise these numbers. A recent example is a 2019 paper on nuclear war between India and Pakistan, which both possess nuclear weapons.

The paper predicted that if these countries used their stockpile on each other the death toll would be between 50 to 125 million people. This means that at the most conservative estimate this war would see as many deaths as the entirety of World War Two.

The smoke from the blast would block out the sun in large areas of the world and cool global temperatures by 2° to 5°. This is not even taking into account the nuclear fallout that would make large swaths of the world uninhabitable or the decline in food supplies.

All this would happen if only 2% of nuclear arms – the amount held by India and Pakistan – were used.

Even if you do not believe countries would use nuclear weapons – a dangerous assumption – there is still a threat that they could be stolen by other actors who would. Nuclear materials have been stolen previously and as recently as 2017.

Furthermore, there is no planning for human error and there have been dozens of accidents involving nuclear weapons. One particularly bizarre one comes from 1961 when the US air force accidentally dropped two hydrogen bombs – each one

over 200 times more powerful than the one the US dropped on Hiroshima – in North Carolina.

It was only because one low-voltage switch did not flick that the bombs' explosions didn't spew nuclear fallout over Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York.

Events like these only further highlight the need to eradicate this threat to humanity, and, unlike during the Cold War, the immediate threat of nuclear war is low enough that countries could engage in de-nuclearisation, and in fact are.

Nuclear weapons have dropped significantly from their peak in the mid-1980s of 70,300, thanks in large part to international treaties.

With a threat so devastating, momentum on side and now international law; not to mention the Australian public also overwhelmingly wants to sign and ratify the treaty – with 79% in favour – why hasn't Australia signed?

Australia Against the Treaty

Officially, Australia does not support the "ban treaty" for three reasons outlined by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Firstly, they claim it "would not eliminate a single nuclear weapon;" secondly it would conflict with another treaty that seeks to stop an increase in nuclear weapons, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); thirdly it would be inconsistent with [Australia's] US alliance obligations."

These are three extremely weak reasons all of which were responded to by ICAN, which addressed the bizarre mental gymnastics of the first point by saying: "Australia has argued that nuclear weapons should only be prohibited once they have been eliminated."

Secondly, the TPNW strengthens previous international agreements concerning nuclear weapons. An argument that is supported by the majority of States signing up to both the NPT and TPNW.

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This leaves the final point, that Australia would not sign this agreement because it would stop the US from placing Australia under its nuclear umbrella.

The degree to which Australia is involved in the US nuclear umbrella is convoluted. This should be expected, the US and Australian military and defence establishments are not known for their openness.

However, there are good reasons to believe that they are used for activities concerning nuclear weapons with reporter Brian Toohey writing in 2019 that Australia “still relies on the US nuclear umbrella, and is also directly complicit [in it].”

This is largely through joint military facilities (‘joint’ is doing a lot of heavy lifting, as the US often exerts control over these bases) in Australia such as Pine Gap and the North West Cape. These bases have been reported to collect intelligence on nuclear targets as well as detect and destroy other countries’ weapon systems.

This is in opposition to the TPNW, specifically Article 1 (e) which says signatories must never, “assist, encourage or induce, in any way, anyone to engage in” the use of or threatened use of nuclear weapons.

Australia’s rejection of the TPNW conforms to a long history of secrecy and belligerence from Canberra on the issue. This goes back to 1956-1963 when Prime Minister Robert Menzies allowed the British to detonate seven atomic bombs in South Australia without informing the Cabinet let alone the Australian people.

However, international law compels nations to behave a certain way: treaties concerning mines, cluster munitions and biological weapons have drastically reduced the stockpiling and use of these weapons. Furthermore, the Australian Labor Party has come out in support of the TPNW and said they would sign it.

Yet Australia as of yet has not been pulling its weight and with nearly 80% of the population supporting the TPNW the government is not representing the people.

Lucky we have groups like ICAN pushing Australia to adhere to international law. If you want to let your MP know that you support the TPNW you can do so [here](#) and you can join in the celebrations around Australia in anticipation of the TPNW becoming international law.

MISSILES FOR GUAM

Pentagon pushes for Pacific missile defence site to counter China's threat to the US

[Pacific Beat](#)

By **Marian Faa** and **Prianka Srinivasan**

Posted Friday 19 March 2021



The US Pacific territory of Guam is the proposed site of a new missile defence base. (US Navy: Stacy Laseter)

The head of the US Navy's Indo-Pacific Command is urging Congress to build a new missile defence base in the Pacific as part of a larger strategy to counter China's military threat to the region.

Key points:

- The Indo-Pacific Deterrence Initiative would inject a reported \$35 billion of US military spending in the Pacific
- The Pentagon wants greater funding to counter the threat of a Chinese attack on Guam
- The US Navy plans to increase marine troops in the region, including in Darwin

The Pentagon is seeking \$US77 million (\$98 million) to build a permanent "land-based integrated air and missile defence system and associated weapon delivery system on Guam", as outlined in the Indo-Pacific Deterrence Act.

In addition to the defence system, which is designed to track down and destroy missiles before they do harm, the US is considering an increase to its ground-based missiles on Guam that could fire on targets over 500 kilometres away.

It comes amid mounting fears that China could launch an attack on the US Pacific territory, which lies east of the Philippines and south-east of Shanghai.

Admiral Philip S Davidson from the United States Indo-Pacific Command said it was imperative for the US to protect its Pacific territories from a possible Chinese incursion.

"Guam is a target today, it needs to be defended, and it needs to be prepared for the threats that will come in the future," he said.

"Guam is not just a place that we believe that we can fight from, as we have for many decades — we are going to have to fight for it."

US plans to deter China in the Pacific



China's DF-26 ballistic missile is nicknamed the "Guam killer" for its ability to strike the Pacific island. (Reuters: Andy Wong)

The proposed missile defence facility is part of the Pacific Deterrence Initiative, also called PDI — a reported \$US27 billion (\$35.5 billion) proposed Pentagon strategy to increase US defence spending in the Pacific.

Mimicking Europe's European Deterrence Initiative that attempts to confront Russia's growing dominance, the PDI aims to dampen China's military expansion in the Pacific.

In submissions to the US Senate Armed (continued on Page 11...)



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Services Committee, the Indo-Pacific Command outlined the need to develop other defence facilities in addition to the one in Guam, in Japan and Hawaii.

The proposal includes an upgrade of "underseas warfare capabilities" and a greater military partnership with Australia, which already hosts over 1,000 US marines in the Northern Territory.

Space to play or pause, M to mute, left and right arrows to seek, up and down arrows for volume.

Guam, the site of the closest US military base to Asia, has been the subject of a number of threats from foreign actors.

Last year, China released a propaganda film depicting a fake bombing of a US Air Force base on the island, pieced together from Hollywood movie clips.

It has also tested a ballistic missile nicknamed the "Guam killer" because of its ability to strike US military bases on the Pacific island.

North Korea leader Kim Jong Un also threatened Guam with ballistic force during confrontations with former US president Donald Trump.

'It's very dehumanising'

For some residents in Guam — particularly the island's indigenous Chamorro people — the proposal for greater military presence on the island is an insult.

Siobhon McManus is a Chamorro teacher and peace activist on Guam, and opposes the idea for a missile defence facility to be built on the island.



Siobhon McManus is worried greater military presence on Guam may destroy her island. (Supplied)

"It's just a reminder that we have always only ever been a piece of American property and it's very dehumanising," she said.

Almost a third of Guam's land is controlled by the US military, and Ms McManus fears its presence is destroying the island's natural environment.

Sylvia Frain, an expert in US-Pacific relations who is affiliated with the Auckland University of Technology, said Guam was a "prime, strategic location" for the US military, and that within defence circles "all roads lead to Guam".

That strategic location has made Guam an obvious target for China and put its residents at risk, she said.

"There are missile systems currently pointed to Asia. This is public knowledge. Of course, it's going to be a target," she said.

For Moneka De Oro, a Guam-based climate activist and indigenous Chamorro woman, the US military has great support on Guam, with many men and women on the island employed directly in its ranks.

"Every single family here has some sort of tie either through active service or through civilian service and working for the military bases here," she said.

But Ms De Oro believes the creation of a missile defence system and ramping up of military activity in the Pacific will only make Guam more vulnerable to China.

"Any further militarisation only further increases the size of the target on our backs," she said.

Other US Pacific territories are also concerned about what the increased military presence could mean for them.

Dr Isa Arriola, an anthropologist and Chamorro woman from Saipan, said although the US did not have a military base in the Northern Mariana Islands, she worried what the future might hold.

"We are often considered ... a backup location to military planning that's happening on Guam, essentially," she said.

"There's no slowing down even in the middle of the pandemic, militarism has continued to increase."

The Indo-Pacific Deterrence Initiative act is currently being considered in the US Congress, and outlines defence budget guidelines for the coming financial year.

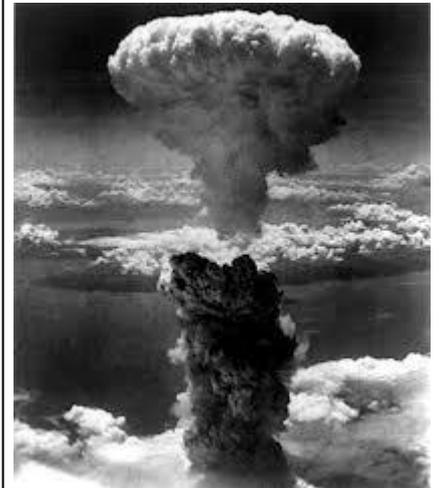
The ABC has approached the US Indo-Pacific Command for comment.

BRITAIN'S INSANITY

Britain Threatens Humanity with Nuclear Winter without Explaining Why It Foresees War

by Jay Janson

March 20th, 2021



Both before the First World War and before the Second World War, the world public basically simply watched the arms build up and other preparations for war. This lackadaisical blandly interested public attitude seems to be present again. Criminally insane investors in war openly race forward with the inventing and manufacturing of ever new and novel weapons of mass destruction, while planning and propagandizing a need for war. From time to time, spokespersons for their political, media and military lackeys discuss their prerogatives for war as if the rest of us didn't matter a hoot.

CNBC published an article headlined: "Britain changes policy so it can use nuclear weapons in response to 'emerging technologies'" on 17 March.

The U.K. has changed its defense policy which may enable it to use nuclear weapons in response to "emerging technologies."

The country's 111-page Integrated Defense Review, published Tuesday, included a subtle line on when the U.K. "reserves the right" to use nuclear weapons.

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It says the U.K. could use nuclear weapons if other countries use “weapons of mass destruction” against it. Such weapons include “emerging technologies that could have a comparable impact” to chemical, biological weapons or other nuclear weapons. [italics added by author]

So if the British feel or think they feel an attack of whatever sort, they have the right to cause the possible destruction of all life on the planet.

The U.K.’s nuclear program, known as Trident, was established in 1980. The Integrated Defense Review confirmed that the U.K. is allowing a self-imposed cap on its nuclear weapon stockpile to rise to 260, abandoning the previous cap of 225 warheads as well as the current reduction target of 180 by the mid-2020s.

A single Trident II submarine can inflict more death than all prior wars in history. Twenty-four missiles, launched while submerged, each with seventeen independently targeted, maneuverable nuclear warheads five times more powerful than the atom bomb that destroyed Nagasaki, can travel 5,000 nautical miles to strike within 300 feet of 408 predetermined targets. Nuclear winter might very well follow even if no other weapons are used.

No nation or individual should be permitted to possess the power to destroy the world. An imperative need is for an informed and active public to struggle for its right to survive.

— Former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark¹

Is it not a crime to claim a right to endanger all life on Earth?

Is there no legal authority to sanction the UK and its officials involved in threatening humanity — the UN Monitoring Verification and Inspection Commission, the IAEA, the WHO, the International Criminal Court? Is it not a crime to claim a right to endanger all life on Earth?

Shall we all ignore the fact that the officials of the United Kingdom claim Britain to be threatened by China, Russia and Iran without giving any evidence for this claim, or what could possibly be a motive to attack Britain. And what simple-minded tough talk leaves out mention of the incoming nuclear missiles that would

be in response to Britain’s Trident missiles.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson informed Parliament that the UK will now expand its nuclear arsenal.

The 100 page report titled ‘Global Britain in a Competitive Age,’ is the product of an integrated review of security, defence and foreign policy designed to refocus British policy in the face of perceived threats from Russia, China, and other adversaries.

Do humans just sit around and merely listen to the officials of the former #1 genocidal colonial powered British Empire citing imaginary threats from Russia and China and calling them adversaries? Neither the Chinese nor Russians refer to Britain as an adversary. It is up to us observant bystanders to call a spade a spade, and expose such braggadocio from a apparent bunch of jerks.

The same CNBC article seemed to report a British plan to return to world empire status.

Indo-Pacific tilt

The Integrated Defense Review also outlined a new “tilt” toward the Indo-Pacific region.

“By 2030, we will be deeply engaged in the Indo-Pacific as the European partner with the *broadest, most integrated presence in support of mutually-beneficial trade, shared security and values,*” the document reads.

It says the *U.K. will the push into the Indo-Pacific region* partly in response to “geopolitical and geoeconomic shifts” including China’s global “power and assertiveness,” as well as the growing importance of the region to “global prosperity and security.”

The report references partnerships with countries including India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. [italics added by author]

Another headline reads, “UK seeks more influence in Indo-Pacific as ‘moderating impact’ on China”:

Calling the Indo-Pacific “increasingly the geopolitical centre of the world”, the government

highlighted a planned British aircraft carrier deployment to the region and said a previously postponed visit to India would go ahead in April.

The Chinese and Indians, representing two fifths of the population of planet Earth, have not forgotten the long murderous British military occupation of their lands. Does PM Boris Johnson imagine the rest of us have? The UK will *push back* into the Indo-Pacific region? We assume that those who wrote the Integrated Defence Review mean for Britain to ‘push back in’ Asia by riding on the coat tails of the American Empire’s killing machine, similarly as it has done in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Whew! It is sad to see such preposterous tough-guy war talk go unanswered by our leading alternate media anti-imperialist journalists. This nonsensical, boisterous, almost childish posturing of grown men (and some women) may be puerile, but they are curiously officials representing a nation with the sixth most powerful economy in the world. This is regardless of the fact that it be ever so dwarfed by that of China.

This author, awaited some response to the British announcement of its increasing its number of nuclear warheads, but to date, has not read any published response.

Postscript

There is presently a renewed Western media frenzy over a hyped up demand for North Korea to give up its (defensive) nuclear weapons even after having been threatened by at least three US presidents with atomic attack (Truman, Eisenhower, and Trump, who threatened nuclear annihilation). Meanwhile Britain announces plans to increase its nuclear arsenal, claims a right to use nuclear weapons, and at the same time calls for China to reduce its nuclear arsenal.

Cosmic insanity! North Korea, a tiny nation of twenty-five million has its citizens of all ages punished with cruel economic sanctions by the United Nations because it finally has

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a few nuclear weapons as a deterrent, after having been threatened for years with nuclear destruction. Meanwhile officials of the government of the United States of Americans, which once destroyed every North Korea city and town with napalm and bombs before threatening to use atomic bombs, regularly discusses how and when it might use its tens of thousands of nuclear tipped missiles in wars without referring to what would happen to the Earth's atmosphere.

It was the Americans, after dropping two atomic bombs on Japanese cities, who then targeted Soviet cities before the Soviets got their own nuclear bombs and were able to reply in kind. Yet, there is never even a polite request from the mass of Americans to destroy their vast nuclear arsenal — an arsenal of apocalyptic proportions!

Last, but not least, is it apropos to mention the probability that humankind can no longer afford to have so much of its financial and human resources used for weapons and wars, and still have enough to avert a cataclysm by climate change and the abysmal ongoing degradation of Mother Nature.

1. From foreword, Micho Kaku and Daniel Axelrod, *To Win a Nuclear War*, 1987.

Jay Janson, spent eight years as Assistant Conductor of the Vietnam Symphony Orchestra in Hanoi and also toured, including with Dan Taison, who practiced in a Hanoi bomb shelter. The orchestra was founded by Ho Chi Minh, and it plays most of its concerts in the Opera House, a diminutive copy of the Paris Opera. In 1945, our ally Ho, from a balcony overlooking the large square and flanked by an American Major and a British Colonel, declared Vietnam independent. Everyone in the orchestra lost family, "killed by the Americans" they would mention simply, with Buddhist un-accusing acceptance. Jay can be reached at: tdmedia2000@yahoo.com. [Read other articles by Jay.](#)

BULLETIN OF ATOMIC SCIENTISTS

*"I Told You So. You Damned Fools":
75 Years of the Bulletin of the Atomic
Scientists*

by **Binoy Kampmark**

December 11, 2020

Leafing – or in this case scrolling through – the commemorative issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* after 75 years of publication is a tingling exercise of existence. The subject matter pushes you to the edge. You threaten to fall off. Death is promised; extinction contemplated. Nuclear holocaust. Your sanity is called into question. The *Bulletin's* own Doomsday Clock pointing to potential nuclear Armageddon continues to guarantee a permanent state of terrifying insecurity.

The commemorative issue is a compendium of highlights. Early attitudes to the atomic bomb are covered in the June 1947 issue of the *Bulletin*, with Sylvia Eberhart's report. Eberhart had been tasked by Dr. Leonard S. Cottrell, Jr., subcommittee chair of the Committee on the Social Aspects of Atomic Energy of the Social Science Research Council, to compile the findings. Few Americans, she suggested, ventured to "depreciate the power of the bomb." There was a universal emphasis on "its destructiveness." A sense of the weapon's normality was detected. "On the whole, it must be concluded from the survey that the threat of the bomb does not greatly preoccupy the people, and that they are not giving special attention to the issues in which it is involved."

Much of this might have been put down to ignorance. A third of those surveyed were unable to explain the role of the United Nations or know what it was designed to accomplish. This was all the more notable for the fact that the UN was meant to be responsible for the control of the bomb. Opposition to the UN having such control was notable in the survey, as it was perceived to be "giving the bomb secret away to foreign countries."

For those surveyed, the bomb as a "psychological refuge" was also a detectable theme. The terrifying notion of nuclear deterrence can already be found, as many "reasoned that the bomb was a contribution to peace because it seemed unthinkable that governments would dare to provoke a war when so terrible a weapon might be used by any side."

Concern of the Soviet Union – or Russia, as the report terms it – had already taken root, providing the raw material for a future arms race. "Most of the people believe that we cannot depend on her to be friendly to us, and their desire to keep the bomb secret, their criticisms of our giving in too much, their dissatisfactions with the progress of the UN are often related to misgivings about Russia."

The commemorative issue then takes us to the debate of legitimised insanity: that any balance of terror required each side to discover the next incalculably lethal weapon. In March 1950, the scientists took to the podium of debate. President Harry S. Truman had announced on January 31 that year that the Atomic Energy Commission would "continue its work on all forms of atomic weapons, including the so-called hydrogen or super-bomb." This was, in no small part, occasioned by the destruction of the US atomic monopoly in August 1949, with the Soviet Union's first successful test.

Albert Einstein's contribution is all warning and foreboding about the coming National Security State. According to the Nobel laureate, "The idea of achieving security through national armament is, at the present state of military technique, a disastrous illusion." The bomb had given the US a false sense of comfort: that it, and it alone, could attain "decisive military superiority." The contours of the Cold War and its future social and political costs are charted. Superiority could only be achieved through intimidation. Global military bases would have to be established; potential allies would have to be strengthened and armed. Society would be militarised; the loyalty of citizens supervised. Independent thinking would be questioned. Radio, press and school would become tools of indoctrination. Public information would be restricted for reasons of military secrecy.

As pessimistic as he was, Einstein's note outlines a view that would govern the disarmament movement for years. The Second World War might have seen the vanquishing of "an external enemy," but the mentality created by

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the war had remained. Mutual fear and distrust had to be dealt with. Trust could only be attained through “loyal give and take.” Violence had to be eschewed.

The militarily minded Edward Teller, future father of the hydrogen bomb, refused to wade into the moral implications of such weapons. Those in the business of working on atomic weapons had “grave responsibility.” But scientists were not responsible for the laws of nature. It was merely their job “to find out how these laws operate.” There have been fewer better expositions of the amoral scientist. It was “not the scientist’s job to determine whether a hydrogen bomb should be constructed, whether it should be used, or how it should be used.” Design the weapons of mass murder; let others – namely “the American people” and their “chosen representatives,” decide on their use.

For the squeamish, Teller recalled the bomb loving scientists of 1939 who were keen to get the business of building an atomic weapon underway. Poland had been crushed; Nazi Germany, rampant. Scoffingly, he recalled a colonel who had little time for such weapons. They were faddish things. Wars, he suggested “are not won by weapons.” Now, it was the turn of the scientists to voice that same scepticism. “Ghost of the colonel!” With gravity, Teller proclaimed the holiday over. “Hydrogen bombs will not produce themselves. Neither will rockets nor radar.”

With such thinking as Teller’s, the voices of reason became heretical prophets; the lunacy of mega death intellectuals held sway. But the *Bulletin* would still run pieces bucking the trend. Contributions by J. Robert Oppenheimer the director of the Los Alamos Laboratory during the Manhattan Project, and the mathematician philosopher Bertrand Russell, reflect on the role of science more broadly and the need for new political orders. In September 1956, Oppenheimer wrote of science as alleviating “man’s sufferings, moderated his harshest limitations, and responded to his long-sustained aspirations.” But with scientific knowledge came the potential of powers the exercise of which could “spell disaster.” The nuclear legacy could spell an end to “our human inheritance”. But

hopes could be entertained: that “honest and viable international communities, with increasing common knowledge and understanding” might be created.

Russell, in September 1958, sees such an honest international community as only possible with renouncing the bomb (unilateral disarmament for Britain is advocated) and confining it, via agreement, to the US and Soviet Union. The piece takes issue with the ignorance of politicians. The views of US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles is taken as an example. “Does Dulles really think that anybody could ‘win’ a hot war, or does he merely pretend to believe it in order to encourage bellicosity in his dupes?”

The Soviet Union’s Premier Nikita Khrushchev is not spared either, he also being of the view that a nuclear war might be winnable against the “imperialists”. It was important to state “that the views of such men as Mr Dulles and Mr Khrushchev are utterly disastrous, and would receive almost no support if the facts were widely known.” Cooling measures were preferable: disengagement in Central Europe; the use of international arbitration for disagreements between the powers; disarmament summits; the abolition of poisonous nuclear testing. But for Russell, it was the idea of world government as part of the “machinery for the permanent prevention of great powers” that held most promise, “a single federal world government, possessing a monopoly of all the serious weapons of war.”

As for discussions of the weapons themselves, the assessment of hydrogen weapons and the neutrino bomb by theoretical physicist Freeman Dyson from September 1961 remains chilling. The hydrogen bomb was a symptom of a disease, part of “the continuous and apparently irresistible march of technology which makes all kinds of weapons progressively more simple, more versatile, and more lethal.” He turns to the potential use of a neutrino weapon. Were it to be deployed by infantry units as “standard ammunition,” Dyson was “convinced that the effects would be as important as the effects of the hydrogen bomb.”

In both cases, the physicist muses that such weapons would be needless, their

lethal mission being easily accomplished by older weapons. But nuclear weaponry remains symbolic and political. “Politically, these [neutrino] bombs would be the symbol of military power in the eyes of the world, the latest, most modern, most refined, most chillingly murderous of mankind’s instruments.”

With the Soviet Union’s termination as a political entity and the conclusion of the Cold War, we have Arthur C. Clarke, science fiction scribe and futurist, likening nuclear weapons to gun lust. Few people need guns; too many want them. He reminds us of his slogan: “Guns are the crutches of the impotent.” Weapon systems of high-tech wonder were also “crutches of impotent nations; nukes are just the decorative plating.”

Clarke ponders a utopia without such crutches, some of them startling: devices that could kill no more than one person (“civilised weaponry”); martial-arts devices of a non-lethal nature; genetically modified aides (“canine, ursine, or simian”) taking the role of guard dogs, albeit with higher IQs; passive defence robots governed by Isaac Asimov’s three laws of robotics. “We are now one global family, and however much we may dislike our siblings, family quarrels should not be settled with hand grenades or AK-47s – much less with ICBMs.”

The author indulges his readers with a moment of reflection. It is a trip down madness lane, recalling the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction he first articulated in the March 1946 issue of the *Royal Air Force Quarterly*. (This point eludes the drier texts on the subject.) “Too much thinking about MAD is liable to induce that dislocation from reality, the Strangelove syndrome, for which there is no known cure.” By 1986, he had bidden “the whole dismal subject” farewell in his Nehru address “Star Wars and Star Peace” in Delhi. The bomb could be loved no longer.

In concluding, Clarke throws us the quotation from H.G. Wells: “You damn fools! I told you so!” (The epitaph by Wells, from his 1941 edition of *The War in the Air*, was actually: “I told you so. You damned fools.”)

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**TERMINATE NATO**By **Jacob G. Hornberger**March 20, 2021 "[Information Clearing House](#)" - - "[FFF](#)"

The *Washington Post* has published a long piece calling for NATO to take on a new official enemy — China. The piece is written by Sara Bjerg Moller, an assistant professor in the School of Diplomacy and International Relations at Seton Hall University. She argues that after 30 years since losing the Soviet Union as its official enemy and struggling to find a replacement to justify its continued existence, a perfect replacement would be China.

I've got a better idea. Let's just put NATO out of its misery and terminate it.

After all, let's not forget NATO's original mission: to defend Europe from the possibility of an invasion by the Soviet Union, which had been America's and Britain's World War II partner and ally but which had been converted to their official enemy at the end of the war.

But the likelihood of a Soviet invasion of Europe was always nil. The Soviet Union had been decimated by World War II, especially as a result of the German invasion of the country. Even though the invasion was ultimately repelled and Germany was defeated, the Soviet Union's industrial capacity had been destroyed, not to mention the millions of Russian citizens who had been killed. The last thing the Soviet Union wanted was another war, especially given that the United States possessed nuclear weapons and had shown a willingness to employ them against large cities.

The advocates of a national-security state in the United States, however, needed a new official enemy to replace Nazi Germany, especially to justify the conversion of the U.S. government from a limited-government republic to a national-security state, a type of governmental structure with omnipotent, non-reviewable powers. The Soviet Union and "godless communism" fit the bill perfectly. The American people were then inculcated with the notion that there was an international communist conspiracy to take over the United States

and the rest of the world that was based in Moscow, Russia.

To convince Americans and western Europeans that the Soviet Union posed a grave threat to them, U.S. officials pointed to the postwar Soviet occupations of Eastern Europe and East Germany as examples of communist aggression. They apparently forgot that President Franklin Roosevelt had delivered such lands into the hands of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, who FDR affectionately referred to as his "Uncle Joe," at their wartime summit in Yalta. Was it really too surprising that Stalin accepted FDR's gift, especially given that Eastern Europe and East Germany would serve as a buffer against another German invasion of the Soviet Union?

It was within this fervent anti-communist environment that NATO was formed. But in 1989, the Cold War suddenly and unexpectedly came to an end, which, needless to say, put the U.S. national-security establishment and NATO into a panic. After all, the Cold War was the justification for both of these institutions. With no Cold War, they could both be dismantled.

Instead, the national-security establishment simply went into the Middle East and began poking hornets' nest, which ultimately brought terrorist retaliation, which in turn brought the "war on terrorism," another racket that has kept the national-security establishment in high cotton.

Meanwhile, unwilling to let Russia go as an official enemy, NATO began gobbling up former members of the Warsaw Pact, with the aim of placing U.S. troops and missiles ever closer to Russia's borders and with the hope of provoking a reaction, which ultimately came about in Ukraine.

As Moller argues, however, Russia poses no real threat to Europe and, therefore, cannot be seriously considered to be a justification for NATO. Instead, she argues, it's time to replace Russia with China, owing to China's rise as an international powerhouse. The reasoning is classic empire-think: If a nation starts to

prosper and rise, it's best to put it down before it gets too large and powerful.

How about just leaving China and Russia alone? What's wrong with that? What's wrong with other nations becoming prosperous? The fact is that NATO should never have been established in the first place. Moreover, the biggest mistake in U.S. history was to convert the federal government to a national-security state. The best thing American could do now is terminate NATO and restore a limited-government republic to our land.

Jacob G. Hornberger is founder and president of The Future of Freedom Foundation. He was born and raised in Laredo, Texas, and received his B.A. in economics from Virginia Military Institute and his law degree from the University of Texas. He was a trial attorney for twelve years in Texas. He also was an adjunct professor at the University of Dallas, where he taught law and economics. In 1987, Mr. Hornberger left the practice of law to become director of programs at the Foundation for Economic Education. He has advanced freedom and free markets on talk-radio stations all across the country as well as on Fox News' Neil Cavuto and Greta van Susteren shows and he appeared as a regular commentator on Judge Andrew Napolitano's show Freedom Watch. View these interviews at [LewRockwell.com](#) and from [Full Context](#). Send him [email](#).

BRITISH DELUSIONS*Global Britain, Global Delusions*By **Finian Cunningham**March 20, 2021 "[Information Clearing House](#)" - - "[Sputnik News](#)"

In a strategic review, the British government says the United States will remain its closest ally because of "shared values" which are allegedly attributed as being democracy, rule of law and human rights.

Far more realistic than these panegyrics is the way Britain and the US routinely trash those purported "shared values" by launching illegal wars of aggression (for example, Iraq, Afghanistan); subvert foreign nations for regime change (for example, Syria, Libya); and arm despotic regimes to the teeth which suppress human rights (for example, Saudi Arabia).

The 111-page British strategic [review](#) makes for painful yet hilarious reading.

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It is full of delusional self-flattery.

Another “shared value” is the way Britain and the US gratuitously label other nations as enemies and security threats. This scaremongering is invoked primarily against Russia and China but also other smaller nations like Iran, North Korea, Venezuela and Cuba.

This preposterous demonization of others is of course a form of psychological projection by the British and American ruling class to distract from the fact they are the biggest security threat to the world.

Scaremongering is also an essential precursor for warmongering and the continuance of militarized economies which underpins Anglo-American capitalism. Just imagine if the British and Americans tried to live in peace and cooperation with the rest of the world. Their economies would totally collapse from the absence of militarism and weapons industries.

In its so-called strategic review, it is apparent more than ever that the British rulers suffer from delusions of grandeur. Prime Minister Boris Johnson talks fancifully as if Britain is a global dynamo for economic growth and development. No longer content to exaggerate Britain’s international image as “Great Britain”, it is now referred to as “Global Britain”.

This is partly about promoting Britain to the rest of the world to make better its post-Brexit isolation from the European Union. And so by talking up its presumed power “to shape the world”, the British ruling class are obliged to pose as flexing muscles.

This would explain the policy reversal on decreasing its nuclear arsenal. Britain is now planning to increase its stockpile of nuclear warheads over the next decade from around 180 up to 260. This is in violation of Britain’s obligation to disarm under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Johnson talks about Britain being a “beacon of democracy” to the world when in reality it is a rogue state which is dangerously destabilizing international security by its wanton militarism.

Yet the British rulers have the brass neck to accuse Russia and China of jeopardizing global security and to assert that they will “prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon”.

On Russia, the British are particularly vociferous, claiming that “Russia will

remain the most acute direct threat” to the United Kingdom (Britain’s other fanciful name for itself).

The strategic review document states, “we will actively deter and defend against the full spectrum of threats emanating from Russia”.

But it does not substantiate what these alleged “full spectrum of threats” from Russia are.

For rogue-state Britain it is apparently sufficient to simply make an accusation and then proceed to “justify” plans for increasing its nuclear arsenal.

Russia and Iran condemned the British state planners for blatant hypocrisy. So should all other nations.

Maria Zakharova, Russia’s foreign ministry spokeswoman, nailed it when she said that Britain’s “imperial ambitions” are based on illusions. It’s as if the arrogant British rulers think they have turned the clock back a 100 years to a time when “the sun never set on their empire”. Even then British power was also over-rated.

Today, Britain may have nominally the fifth-biggest economy in the world, but it also is broken-down nation with rampant poverty and inequality. A third of its children struggle with poverty and hunger, and the numbers are increasing. Look at the shambles of its public health service, yet its ruling class is planning to spend £24 billion over the next four years to increase its military forces, including the number of nuclear weapons.

The reprehensible and reckless move to increase its nuclear arsenal is an absurd and grotesque waste of public finances. It is criminal in the face of such harrowing social needs among ordinary Britons.

But what’s also criminal is that British rulers are undermining global security – all for the vain purpose of posing as a global power instead of actually being a global power.

Finian Cunningham has written extensively on international affairs, with articles published in several languages. He is a Master’s graduate in Agricultural Chemistry and worked as a scientific editor for the Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge, England, before pursuing a career in newspaper journalism. He is also a musician and songwriter. For nearly 20 years, he worked as an editor and writer in major news media organisations, including The Mirror, Irish Times and Independent. -

UKRAINE REDUX

War, Russophobia and Pipelineistan

By Pepe Escobar

April 7, 2021



A Ukrainian serviceman walks in a fortified position at the front line with Russia-backed separatists not far away, in Avdiivka, Donetsk region, on April 5, 2021. Photo: AFP

Ukkraine and Russia may be on the brink of war – with dire consequences for the whole of Eurasia. Let’s cut to the chase, and plunge head-on into the fog of war.

On March 24, Ukrainian President Zelensky, for all practical purposes, signed a declaration of war against Russia, via decree No. 117/2021.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky speaks during a joint press conference with European Council President in Kiev on March 3, 2021. Photo: AFP / Sergey Dolzhenko

The decree establishes that retaking Crimea from Russia is now Kiev’s official policy. That’s exactly what prompted an array of Ukrainian battle tanks to be shipped east on flatbed rail cars, following the saturation of the Ukrainian army by the US with military equipment including unmanned aerial vehicles, electronic warfare systems, anti-tank systems and man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS).

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More crucially, the Zelensky decree is the proof any subsequent war will have been prompted by Kiev, debunking the proverbial claims of “Russian aggression.” Crimea, since the referendum of March 2014, is part of the Russian Federation.

It was *this* (italics mine) de facto declaration of war, which Moscow took very seriously, that prompted the deployment of extra Russian forces to Crimea and closer to the Russian border with Donbass. Significantly, these include the crack 76th Guards Air Assault Brigade, known as the Pskov paratroopers and, according to an intel report quoted to me, capable of taking Ukraine in only six hours.

It certainly does not help that in early April US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin, fresh from his former position as a board member of missile manufacturer Raytheon, called Zelensky to promise “unwavering US support for Ukraine’s sovereignty.” That ties in with Moscow’s interpretation that Zelensky would never have signed his decree without a green light from Washington.



On March 8, 2021, US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin speaks during observance of International Women’s Day in the East Room of the White House in Washington, DC. Photo: AFP / Mandel Ngan

Controlling the narrative

Sevastopol, already when I visited in December 2018, is one of the most heavily defended places on the planet, impervious even to a NATO attack. In his decree, Zelensky specifically identifies Sevastopol as a prime target.

Once again, we’re back to 2014 post-Maidan unfinished business.

To contain Russia, the US deep state/NATO combo needs to control the Black Sea – which, for all practical purposes, is now a Russian lake. And to

control the Black Sea, they need to “neutralize” Crimea.

If any extra proof was necessary, it was provided by Zelensky himself on Tuesday this week in a phone call with NATO secretary-general and docile puppet Jens Stoltenberg.



NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg gives a press conference at the end of a NATO Foreign Ministers’ meeting at the Alliance’s headquarters in Brussels on March 24, 2021. Photo: AFP / Olivier Hoslet

Zelensky uttered the key phrase: “NATO is the only way to end the war in Donbass” – which means, in practice, NATO expanding its “presence” in the Black Sea. “Such a permanent presence should be a powerful deterrent to Russia, which continues the large-scale militarization of the region and hinders merchant shipping.”

All of these crucial developments are and will continue to be invisible to global public opinion when it comes to the predominant, hegemon-controlled narrative.

The deep state/NATO combo is imprinting 24/7 that whatever happens next is due to “Russian aggression.” Even if the Ukrainian Armed Forces (UAF) launch a blitzkrieg against the Lugansk and Donetsk People’s Republics. (To do so against Sevastopol in Crimea would be certified mass suicide).

In the United States, Ron Paul has been one of the very few voices to state the obvious: “According to the media branch of the US military-industrial-congressional-media complex, Russian troop movements are not a response to clear threats from a neighbor, but instead are just more ‘Russian aggression.’”

What’s implied is that Washington/Brussels don’t have a clear tactical, much less strategic game plan: only total narrative control.

And that is fueled by rabid Russophobia – masterfully deconstructed by the indispensable Andrei Martyanov, one of the world’s top military analysts.

A possibly hopeful sign is that on March 31, the chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces, General Valery Gerasimov, and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Mark Milley, talked on the phone about the proverbial “issues of mutual interest.”

Days later, a Franco-German statement came out, calling on “all parties” to de-escalate. Merkel and Macron seem to have gotten the message in their videoconference with Putin – who must have subtly alluded to the effect generated by Kalibrs, Kinzhals and assorted hypersonic weapons if the going gets tough and the Europeans sanction a Kiev blitzkrieg.



French President Emmanuel Macron speaks as German Chancellor Angela Merkel looks on after a German-French Security Council video conference at the Elysee Palace in Paris, on February 5, 2021. Photo: AFP / Thibault Camus

The problem is Merkel and Macron don’t control NATO. Yet Merkel and Macron at least are fully aware that if the US/NATO combo attacks Russian forces or Russian passport holders who live in Donbass, the devastating response will target the command centers that coordinated the attacks.

What does the hegemon want?

As part of his current Energizer bunny act, Zelensky made an extra eyebrow-raising move. This past Monday, he visited Qatar with a lofty delegation and clinched a raft of deals, not circumscribed to LNG but also including direct Kiev-Doha flights; Doha leasing or buying a Black Sea port; and strong “defense/military ties” – which could be a lovely euphemism

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for a possible transfer of jihadis from Libya and Syria to fight Russian infidels in Donbass.

Right on cue, Zelensky meets Turkey's Erdogan next Monday. Erdogan's intel services run the jihadi proxies in Idlib, and dodgy Qatari funds are still part of the picture. Arguably, the Turks are already transferring those "moderate rebels" to Ukraine. Russian intel is meticulously monitoring all this activity.

A series of informed discussions is converging on what may be the top three targets for the hegemon amid all this mess, short of war: to provoke an irreparable fissure between Russia and the EU, under NATO auspices; to crash the Nord Stream 2 pipeline; and to boost profits in the weapons business for the military-industrial complex.

So the key question then is whether Moscow would be able to apply a Sun Tzu move short of being lured into a hot war in the Donbass.

On the ground, the outlook is grim. Denis Pushilin, one of the top leaders of the Lugansk and Donetsk people's republics, has stated that the chances of avoiding war are "extremely small." Serbian sniper Dejan Beric – whom I met in Donetsk in 2015 and who is a certified expert on the ground – expects a Kiev attack in early May.

The extremely controversial Igor Strelkov, who may be termed an exponent of "orthodox socialism," a sharp critic of the Kremlin's policies who is one of the very few warlords who survived after 2014, has unequivocally stated that the only chance for peace is for the Russian army to control Ukrainian territory at least up to the Dnieper river. He stresses that a war in April is "very likely"; for Russia war "now" is better than war later; and there's a 99% possibility that Washington will not fight for Ukraine.

On this last item at least Strelkov has a point; Washington and NATO want a war fought to the last Ukrainian.

Rostislav Ischenko, the top Russian analyst of Ukraine whom I had the pleasure of meeting in Moscow in late 2018, persuasively argues that, "the overall diplomatic, military, political, financial and economic situation

powerfully requires the Kiev authorities to intensify combat operations in Donbass.

"By the way," Ischenko added, "the Americans do not give a damn whether Ukraine will hold out for any time or whether it will be blown to pieces in an instant. They believe they stand to gain from either outcome."

Gotta defend Europe

Let's assume the worst in Donbass. Kiev launches its blitzkrieg. Russian intel documents everything. Moscow instantly announces it is using the full authority conferred by the UNSC to enforce the Minsk 2 ceasefire.

In what would be a matter of 8 hours or a maximum 48 hours, Russian forces smash the whole blitzkrieg apparatus to smithereens and send the Ukrainians back to their sandbox, which is approximately 75km north of the established contact zone.

In the Black Sea, incidentally, there's no contact zone. This means Russia may send out all its advanced subs plus the surface fleet anywhere around the "Russian lake": They are already deployed anyway.



Russian President Vladimir Putin looks on as Novator Design Bureau director-general Farid Abdrakhmanov and Deputy Defense Minister Alexei Krivoruchko shake hands during a signing ceremony for government contracts in Alabino, Moscow region, Russia, on June 27, 2019. Photo: AFP / Alexei Druzhinin / Sputnik

Once again Martyanov lays down the law when he predicts, referring to a group of Russian missiles developed by the Novator Design Bureau: "Crushing Ukies' command and control system is a matter of few hours, be that near border or in the operational and strategic Uki depth. Basically speaking, the whole of the Ukrainian 'navy' is worth less than the salvo of 3M54 or 3M14 which will be required to sink it. I think couple of Tarantuls will be enough to finish it off

in or near Odessa and then give Kiev, especially its government district, a taste of modern stand-off weapons."

The absolutely key issue, which cannot be emphasized enough, is that Russia will *not* (italics mine) "invade" Ukraine. It doesn't need to, and it doesn't want to. What Moscow will do for sure is to support the Novorossiia people's republics with equipment, intel, electronic warfare, control of airspace and special forces. Even a no-fly zone will not be necessary; the "message" will be clear that were a NATO fighter jet to show up near the frontline, it would be summarily shot down.

And that brings us to the open "secret" whispered only in informal dinners in Brussels, and chancelleries across Eurasia: NATO puppets do not have the balls to get into an open conflict with Russia.

One thing is to have yapping dogs like Poland, Romania, the Baltic gang and Ukraine amplified by corporate media on their "Russian aggression" script. Factually, NATO had its collective behind unceremoniously kicked in Afghanistan. It shivered when it had to fight the Serbs in the late 1990s. And in the 2010s, it did not dare fight the Damascus and Axis of Resistance forces.

When all fails, myth prevails. Enter the US Army occupying parts of Europe to "defend" it against – who else? – those pesky Russians.

That's the rationale behind the annual US Army DEFENDER-Europe 21, now on till the end of June, mobilizing 28,000 soldiers from the US and 25 NATO allies and "partners."

This month, men and heavy equipment pre-positioned in three US Army depots in Italy, Germany and the Netherlands will be transferred to multiple "training areas" in 12 countries. Oh, the joys of travel, no lockdown in an open air exercise since everyone has been fully vaccinated against Covid-19.

Pipelineistan uber alles

Nord Stream 2 is not a big deal for Moscow; it's a Pipelineistan inconvenience at best. After all the

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Russian economy did not make a single ruble out of the not yet existent pipeline during the 2010s – and still it did fine. If NS2 is cancelled, there are plans on the table to redirect the bulk of Russian gas shipments towards Eurasia, especially China.



Connecting German infrastructure for Nord Stream 2 is in place. In this handout photo released February 4, 2020, by the press service of Eugal, a view shows the Eugal pipeline, in Germany. The Eugal pipeline, which will receive gas from Nord Stream 2 in the future, has reached full pumping capacity, and the second line of the pipeline has been introduced. Photo: AFP / Press-service of Eugal / Sputnik

In parallel, Berlin knows very well that canceling NS2 will be an extremely serious breach of contract – involving hundreds of billions of euros; it was Germany that requested the pipeline to be built in the first place.

Germany's *energiewende* ("energy transition" policy) has been a disaster. German industrialists know very well that natural gas is the only alternative to nuclear energy. They are not exactly fond of Berlin becoming a mere hostage, condemned to buy ridiculously expensive shale gas from the hegemon – even assuming the hegemon will be able to deliver, as its fracking industry is in shambles. Merkel explaining to German public opinion why they must revert to using coal or buy shale from the US will be a sight to see.

As it stands, NATO provocations against NS2 proceed unabated – via warships and helicopters. NS2 needed a permit to work in Danish waters, and it was granted only a month ago. Even as Russian ships are not as fast in laying pipes as the previous ships from Swiss-based Allseas, which backed down, intimidated by US sanctions, the Russian Fortuna is making steady progress, as noted by analyst Petri

Krohn: one kilometer a day on its best days, at least 800 meters a day. With 35 km left, that should not take more than 50 days.

Conversations with German analysts reveal a fascinating shadowplay on the energy front between Berlin and Moscow – not to mention Beijing. Compare it with Washington: EU diplomats complain there's absolutely no one to negotiate with regarding NS2. And even assuming there would be some sort of deal, Berlin is inclined to admit Putin's judgment is correct: the Americans are "not agreement-capable." One just needs to look at the record.

Behind the fog of war, though, a clear scenario emerges: the deep state/NATO combo using Kiev to start a war as a Hail Mary pass to ultimately bury NS2, and thus German-Russian relations.

At the same time, the situation is evolving towards a possible new alignment in the heart of the "West": US/UK pitted against Germany/France. Some Anglosphere exceptionals are certainly more Russophobic than others.

The toxic encounter between Russophobia and Pipelineistan will not be over even if NS2 is completed. There will be more sanctions. There will be an attempt to exclude Russia from SWIFT. The proxy war in Syria will intensify. The hegemon will go no holds barred to keep creating all sorts of geopolitical harassment against Russia.

What a nice wag-the-dog op to distract domestic public opinion from massive money printing masking a looming economic collapse. As the empire crumbles, the narrative is set in stone: it's all the fault of "Russian aggression."

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CHINA-RUSSIA AXIS

Welcome to shocked & awed 21st century geopolitics

With a Russia-China-Iran triple bitch slap on the hegemon, we now have a brand new geopolitical chessboard

By **Pepe Escobar**



March 23, 2021 "[Information Clearing House](https://www.informationclearinghouse.info)" - - "Asia Times" -

It took 18 years after Shock and Awe unleashed on Iraq for the Hegemon to be mercilessly shocked and awed by a virtually simultaneous, diplomatic Russia-China one-two.

How this is a real game-changing moment cannot be emphasized enough; 21st century geopolitics will never be the same again.

Yet it was the Hegemon who first crossed the diplomatic Rubicon. The handlers behind hologram Joe "I'll do whatever you want me to do, Nance" Biden had whispered in his earpiece to brand Russian President Vladimir Putin as a soulless "killer" in the middle of a softball interview.

Not even at the height of the Cold War the superpowers resorted to ad hominem attacks. The result of such an astonishing blunder was to regiment virtually the whole Russian population behind Putin – because that was perceived as an attack against the Russian state.

Then came Putin's cool, calm, collected – and quite diplomatic – response, which needs to be carefully pondered. These sharp as a dagger words are arguably the most devastatingly powerful five minutes in the history of post-truth international relations.

In *For Leviathan*, it's so cold in Alaska, we forecasted what could take place in the US-China 2+2 summit at a shabby hotel in Anchorage, with cheap bowls of instant noodles thrown in as extra bonus.

China's millennial diplomatic protocol establishes that discussions start around

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common ground – which are then extolled as being more important than disagreements between negotiating parties. That's at the heart of the concept of "no loss of face". Only afterwards the parties discuss their differences.

Yet it was totally predictable that a bunch of amateurish, tactless and clueless Americans would smash those basic diplomatic rules to show "strength" to their home crowd, distilling the proverbial litany on Taiwan, Hong Kong, South China Sea, "genocide" of Uighurs.

Oh dear. There was not a single State Dept. hack with minimal knowledge of East Asia to warn the amateurs you don't mess with the formidable head of the Foreign Affairs Commission at the CCP's Central Committee, Yang Jiechi, with impunity.

Visibly startled, but controlling his exasperation, Yang Jiechi struck back. And the rhetorical shots were heard around the whole Global South.

They had to include a basic lesson in manners: "If you want to deal with us properly, let's have some mutual respect and do things the right way". But what stood out was a stinging, concise diagnostic blending history and politics:

The United States is not qualified to talk to China in a condescending manner. The Chinese people will not accept that. It must be based on mutual respect to deal with China, and history will prove that those who seek to strangle China will suffer in the end.

And all that translated in real time by young, attractive and ultra-skilled Zhang Jing – who inevitably became an overnight superstar in China, reaping an astonishing 400 million plus hits on Weibo.

The incompetence of the "diplomatic" arm of the Biden-Harris administration beggars belief. Using a basic Sun Tzu maneuver, Yang Jiechi turned the tables and voiced the predominant sentiment of the overwhelming majority of the planet. Stuff your unilateral "rules-based order". We, the nations of the world, privilege the UN charter and the primacy of international law.

So this is what the Russia-China one-two achieved almost instantaneously:

from now on, the Hegemon should be treated, all across the Global South with, at best, disdain.

An inevitable historical process

Pre-Alaska, the Americans went on a charming offensive in Japan and South Korea for "consultations". That's irrelevant. What matters is post-Alaska, and the crucial Sergey Lavrov-Wang Yi meeting of Foreign Ministers in Guilin.

Lavrov, always unflappable, clarified in an interview with Chinese media how the Russia-China strategic partnership sees the current US diplomatic train wreck:

As a matter of fact, they have largely lost the skill of classical diplomacy. Diplomacy is about relations between people, the ability to listen to each other, to hear one another and to strike a balance between competing interests. These are exactly the values that Russia and China are promoting in diplomacy.

The inevitable consequence is that Russia-China must "consolidate our independence: "The United States has declared limiting the advance of technology in Russia and China as its goal. So, we must reduce our exposure to sanctions by strengthening our technological independence and switching to settlements in national and international currencies other than the dollar. We need to move away from using Western-controlled international payment systems."

Russia-China have clearly identified, as Lavrov pointed out, how the "Western partners" are "promoting their ideology-driven agenda aimed at preserving their dominance by holding back progress in other countries. Their policies run counter to the objective international developments and, as they used to say at some point, are on the wrong side of history. The historical process will come into its own, no matter what happens."

As a stark presentation of an inevitable "historical process", it doesn't get more crystal clear than that. And predictably, it didn't take time for the "Western partners" to fall back into – what else – their same old sanction bag of tricks.

Here we go again: a US, UK, EU, Canada "alliance" sanctioning selected

Chinese officials because, in Blinken's words, "the PRC [People's Republic of China] continues to commit genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang."

The EU, UK, and Canada didn't have the guts to sanction a key player: Xinjiang party chief Chen Quanguo, who's a Politburo member. The Chinese response would have been – economically – devastating.

Still, Beijing counterpunched with its own sanctions – targeting, crucially, the German far-right evangelical nut posing as "scholar" who produced the bulk of the completely debunked "proof" of a million Uighurs held in concentration camps.

Once again, the "Western partners" are impermeable to logic. Adding to the already appalling state of EU-Russia relations, Brussels chooses to also antagonize China based on a single fake dossier, playing right into the Hegemon's not exactly secret Divide and Rule agenda.

Mission (nearly) accomplished: Brussels diplomats tell me the EU Parliament is all but set to refuse to ratify the China-EU trade deal painstakingly negotiated by Merkel and Macron. The consequences will be immense.

So Blinken will have reasons to be cheerful when he meets assorted eurocrats and NATO bureaucrats this week, ahead of the NATO summit.

One has to applaud the gall of the "Western partners". It's 18 years since Shock and Awe – the start of the bombing, invasion and destruction of Iraq. It's 10 years since the start of the total destruction of Libya by NATO and its GCC minions, with Obama-Biden "leading from behind". It's 10 years since the start of the savage destruction of Syria by proxy – complete with jihadis disguised as "moderate rebels".

Yet now the "Western partners" are so mortified by the plight of Muslims in Western China.

At least there are some cracks within the EU illusionist circus. Last week, the French Armed Forces Joint Reflection Circle (CRI) – in fact an independent think tank of former high officers –

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wrote a startling open letter to cardboard NATO secretary-general Stoltenberg de facto accusing him of behaving as an American stooge with the implementation of NATO 2030 plan. The French officers drew the correct conclusion: the US/NATO combo is the main cause of appalling relations with Russia.

These Ides of March

Meanwhile, sanctions hysteria advance like a runaway train. Biden-Harris has already threatened to impose extra sanctions on Chinese oil imports from Iran. And there's more in the pipeline – on manufacturing, technology, 5G, supply chains, semiconductors.

And yet nobody is trembling in their boots. Right on cue with Russia-China, Iran has stepped up the game, with Ayatollah Khamenei issuing the guidelines for Tehran's return to the JCPOA.

1. The US regime is in no position to make new demands or changes regarding the nuclear deal.
2. The US is weaker today than when the JCPOA was signed.
3. Iran is in a stronger position now. If anyone can impose new demands it's Iran and not the US.

And with that we have a Russia-China-Iran triple bitch slap on the Hegemon.

In our latest conversation/interview, to be released soon in a video + transcript package, Michael Hudson – arguably the world's top economist – hit the heart of the matter:

The fight against China, the fear of China is that you can't do to China, what you did to Russia. America would love for there to be a Yeltsin figure in China to say, let's just give all of the railroads that you've built, the high-speed rail, let's give the wealth, let's give all the factories to individuals and let the individuals run everything and, then we'll lend them the money, or we'll buy them out and then we can control them financially. And China's not letting that happen. And Russia stopped that from happening. And the fury in the West is that somehow, the American financial system is unable to take over

foreign resources, foreign agriculture. It is left only with military means of grabbing them as we are seeing in the near East. And you're seeing in the Ukraine right now.

To be continued. As it stands, we should all make sure that the Ides of March – the 2021 version – have already configured a brand new geopolitical chessboard. The Russia-China Double Helix on high-speed rail has left the station – and there's no turning back.

Pepe Escobar is correspondent-at-large at [Asia Times](http://AsiaTimes.com)

THE RUSSIAN ALTERNATIVE

How Moscow is Capitalizing on US Retreat in Palestine, Israel

by **Ramzy Baroud**

February 12, 2021



Photograph Source: Mahmoud Abbas and Vladimir Putin. April 18, 2016 in Kremlin – CC BY 4.0

Israeli anxiety was palpable when it was reported that Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, was not contacted by the new American President, Joe Biden, for days after the latter's inauguration. While much is being read into Biden's decision, including Washington's lack of enthusiasm to return to the 'peace process', Moscow is generating much attention as a possible alternative to the United States by hosting inner Palestinian dialogue and conversing with leaders of Palestinian political groups.

Indeed, a political shift is taking place on both fronts: the US away from the region and Russia back to it. If this trend continues, it could only be a matter of time before a major paradigm shift occurs.

The Israelis are rightly worried at the potential loss of the unconditional support of their American benefactors. "There are 195 countries in the world, and ... Biden has not contacted 188 of them," Herb Keinon wrote in The Jerusalem Post on February 2, adding, "but only in Israel, people are concerned about the significance of this delay".

The concern is justified as Israel has been designated as Washington's most prominent ally for many years, both in the Middle East and globally.

It is unclear whether the relegation of

Netanyahu during Biden's early days in office is an indicator that Israel — in fact, the entire region — is no longer an American priority or a warning message to Netanyahu who has rallied for years in support of the Republican Administration of Donald Trump.

Thanks to Netanyahu's foreign policy miscalculation, support for Israel has, in recent years, become an unprecedented partisan issue in US politics. While the overwhelming majority of Republicans support Israel, only a minority of Democrats sympathize with Israel, as recent public opinion polls revealed.

While it is true that Netanyahu's behavior in recent years earned him

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special status within Republican ranks thus making him persona non grata among Democrats, it is equally true that the US seems to be divesting from the Middle East altogether.

According to Politico, reporting on the Biden Administration's initial days in office, a major restructuring has already taken place among the staff of the US National Security Council, flipping the previous structure "where the Middle East directorate was much bigger than it is now and the Asia portfolio was managed by a handful of more junior staffers."

However, it is not only Washington that is shifting its geostrategic center of gravity. Russia, too, is undergoing a major restructuring in its foreign policy priorities. While Washington is retreating from the Middle East, Moscow is cementing its presence in the region, which began gradually in its calculated involvement in the Syrian conflict in 2015. Moscow is now offering itself as a political partner and a more balanced mediator between Israel and the Palestinians.

Like the US, Russia might not necessarily see its political involvement as a precursor to actually ending the so-called Israeli-Palestinian conflict, though Moscow insists, unlike Washington, on the centrality of international law and United Nations Resolutions in the quest for a just peace. Writing in the Polish Institute of International Affairs, Michał Wojnarowicz argues that Russia's involvement in Palestine and Israel is consistent with its overall strategy in the Middle East, aimed at building "a network of influence among regional actors and boost its image as an attractive political partner."

A variation of this view was offered in the New York Times in 2016, when Moscow began working to translate its strategic gains in Syria to political capital throughout the region. It was during this time that the American-sponsored peace process had reached a dead end, giving Russia the opportunity to float the idea of a Moscow-sponsored talk between Israel and Palestine.

"Russia's new-found Middle East peace push, part of President Vladimir V. Putin's reinsertion of Moscow into

the region in a profound way after years of retreat, seems to be about everything but finding peace in the Middle East," a NYT op-ed argued. "Instead, it is about Moscow's ambitions and competition with Washington."

At the time, Netanyahu rejected the Russian overture, in the hope that a Republican Administration would grant Israel all of its demands without making any concessions. The Palestinians, including relatively isolated movements like Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, found in Moscow a welcoming environment and a crucial international power that is able to balance out Washington's blind support for Israel.

Despite Israel's refusal to engage with the Palestinians under Russian auspices, many Palestinian delegations visited Moscow, culminating, in January 2017, in a political breakthrough when rival Palestinian factions, Fatah, Hamas and others, held serious talks in the hope of bridging their differences. Although the round of talks did not bring about Palestinian unity, it served as Russia's political debut in a conflict that has fallen squarely within the American geopolitical space.

Since then, Russia has remained very involved through well-structured efforts championed by Putin's Special Envoy, Mikhail Bogdanov. These efforts are channeled through three different areas: inner Palestinian dialogue, Palestinian-Israeli dialogue and, of late, dialogue within the Fatah movement itself. The latter, especially, is indicative of the nature of Moscow's involvement in the multi-layered conflicts at work in the region.

Even when Palestinian groups are finalizing their previous agreements in Cairo, top Palestinian officials continue to coordinate their actions with Moscow and with Bogdanov, personally.

Russia's credibility among Palestinian groups is boosted by similar credibility among ordinary Palestinians as well, especially as it emerged in January that they will be receiving the Russian Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine, scheduled to be available in the Occupied Territories in the near future.

Moreover, while Washington publicly declared that it will not roll back any of Trump's actions in favor of Israel,

Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, is pushing for an international peace conference on Palestine, to be held in the coming months.

The US now has no other option but to slowly retreat from its previous commitments to the peace process: in fact, the region as a whole. As is often the case, any American retreat means a potential opening for Russia, which is now laying claim to the role of peace broker, a seismic change that many Palestinians are already welcoming.

Ramzy Baroud is a journalist and the Editor of *The Palestine Chronicle*. He is the author of five books. His latest is "*These Chains Will Be Broken: Palestinian Stories of Struggle and Defiance in Israeli Prisons*" (Clarity Press, Atlanta). Dr. Baroud is a Non-resident Senior Research Fellow at the Center for Islam and Global Affairs (CIGA), Istanbul Zaim University (IZU). His website is www.ramzybaroud.net

NATO'S DEPRAVITY

Threatening Syria's First Lady Shows NATO's Depravity

By **Finian Cunningham**

Threatening Syria's First Lady – a national heroine – with prosecution for war crimes is NATO powers reaching into the gutter, Finian Cunningham writes.

March 19, 2021 "[Information Clearing House](#)" - - "[SCF](#)" -

This week marks the 10th anniversary since the United States and its NATO allies launched a devastating covert war of aggression for regime change in Syria. Ten years on, the Arab nation is struggling with war reconstruction, a struggle made all the more onerous because of economic sanctions imposed by the United States and the European Union.

Syria and allied forces from Russia, Iran, Iraq and Lebanon's Hezbollah won the war, defeating legions of mercenary terrorist fighters who were armed and infiltrated into Syria by NATO. Nearly half a million Syrians were killed and half the pre-war population of 23 million was displaced.

But tragically the war is not over yet. It has moved to new hybrid phase of economic warfare in the form of

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Western sanctions and blockade on Syria.

The barbarity of Western sanctions on Syria have necessitated the cover of distractive media narratives.

This explains the sensation of British media reports that Asma al-Assad, the wife of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, is being investigated by London's Metropolitan police for war crimes. Asma (45) was born in London, was educated there and holds British nationality. Although she has Syrian heritage.

Now British authorities are mulling stripping her of nationality and seeking her extradition over charges that she aided and abetted war crimes, including preposterously, the use of chemical weapons against civilians. There is practically no chance of a prosecution, but that's not the British aim. Rather it is all about smearing the Syrian leadership and distracting the world's attention from the real issues: which are the criminality of NATO's war on Syria and the ongoing economic warfare to destroy the nation into submission.

Irish peace activist and author Declan Hayes who has travelled extensively in Syria during the past decade commented: "Britain's legally ludicrous accusations against Asma al-Assad have a number of objectives in mind. They are there to delegitimize Syria's 2021 presidential elections; they are there to scare expatriate Syrians and British humanitarians; they are there to deflect from NATO's well documented war crimes; and they are there to deflect from the mercenary collusion of a cast of media, political and NGO characters in NATO's war crimes in Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen."

Asma married Bashar in 2000. Before the war erupted in March 2011, she was eulogized in Western media as the "desert rose" owing to her feminine beauty and quietly spoken graceful persona. The daughter of a cardiologist and having had a career in investment banking before she became Syria's First Lady, Asma al-Assad later showed herself to be no wilting flower. She refused to leave Damascus and go into comfortable exile with her children when the war was raging.

She remained loyally by her husband's side and took on the role of consoling the nation, often visiting families of slain soldiers and civilian victims of NATO's terror gangs.

No doubt the stress resulted in Asma suffering from breast cancer for which she was successfully treated in 2018.

President Assad and his wife stood by the Syrian nation when the jaws of defeat were looming during the early years of the war. When Russia intervened in support of its historic ally in October 2015, the tide of the war turned decisively against the NATO plan for regime change. Assad was singled out for regime change because of his anti-imperialist position against the U.S., Britain, France and Israel. His alliance with Russia, Iran and Lebanon's Hezbollah put a target on his back for destruction, as former French foreign minister Roland Dumas disclosed. Dumas revealed that the British government had war plans on Syria two years before the violence erupted in March 2011. In this context, the so-called "uprising" was a carefully orchestrated false flag.

The mysterious shootings of police and protesters in the southern city of Daraa – which served to smear the Assad government internationally – were the same modus operandi used by NATO covert forces which carried out the sniper murders in Kiev's Maidan Square triggering the February 2014 coup d'état in Ukraine.

Western media headlines this week marking the 10th anniversary since the beginning of NATO's war on Syria have been ghoulish and nauseating.

There is a sense of gloating over the misery and hunger that the nation is facing.

A headline in Associated Press labels Syria as the "Republic of Queues", reporting almost gleefully on how civilians are struggling with food and fuel shortages.

Nowhere in the media coverage is there a mention of how the American CIA and Britain's MI6 ran Operation Timber Sycamore to arm and direct mercenaries to terrorize Syrians. Absurdly, Western media still claim that Syria's war rose out of "pro-democracy

uprisings" which were crushed by a "ruthless Assad regime".

Barely acknowledged too is the fact that the United States, Britain and the European Union are strangling a war-torn nation with barbaric sanctions preventing reconstruction. The criminality of economic terrorism is the corollary of a failed criminal covert war of aggression.

The abominable reality of Western policy towards Syria has to be covered up. Threatening Syria's First Lady – a national heroine – with prosecution for war crimes is NATO powers reaching into the gutter.

Finian Cunningham has written extensively on international affairs, with articles published in several languages. He is a Master's graduate in Agricultural Chemistry and worked as a scientific editor for the Royal Society of Chemistry, Cambridge, England, before pursuing a career in newspaper journalism. He is also a musician and songwriter. For nearly 20 years, he worked as an editor and writer in major news media organisations, including The Mirror, Irish Times and Independent.

IRAQ WAR REFLECTION

Thoughts On The Iraq Invasion

By **Caitlin Johnstone**

March 22, 2021

It has now been eighteen years since the Iraq invasion, and I'm still not done raging about it. Nobody should be.

The reason it's so important to stay enraged about Iraq is because it's never been addressed or rectified in any real way whatsoever. All the corrupt mechanisms which led to the invasion are still in place and its consequences remain. It isn't something that happened *in the past*.

The Iraq invasion feels kind of like if your dad had stood up at the dinner table, cut off your sister's head in front of everyone, gone right back to eating and never suffered any consequences, and everyone just kind of forgot about it and carried on life like it never happened. The US-centralized empire is full of willful amnesiacs pretending they don't remember Iraq because it's currently politically convenient, and we must not let them do this.

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No institutional changes were made to ensure that the evils of the Iraq invasion wouldn't be repeated. It's one of those big, glaring problems people just decided to pretend is resolved, like racism.

There's this weird implicit default assumption among the political/media class that US government agencies have earned back the trust they lost with Iraq, despite their having made no changes whatsoever to prevent another Iraq-like horror from reoccurring, or even so much as apologizing. The reason nobody responsible for the Iraq invasion suffered any consequences for the great evil they inflicted upon the world is because the western empire had no intention of changing and has every intention of repeating such evils. The lies and killing continue unabated.

No changes were made after the Iraq invasion to keep the US government from deceiving Americans into war. No new laws were made, no policies changed; no one was even fired. And indeed, the government *did* deceive Americans into war again: the Libya and Syria interventions were both based on lies. It's happened since, and it will happen again unless the murderous US war machine is stopped.

Don't take life advice from people who are miserable. Don't take career advice from people whose careers aren't where you want to be. Don't take creative advice from people who don't create things. Don't take foreign policy advice from people who supported the Iraq invasion.

How true can President Biden's claim be that he regrets supporting the Iraq invasion if he appointed the guy who advised that decision as Secretary of State?

It's absolutely insane that every US presidential general election since the Iraq invasion has featured a mainstream candidate who actively supported it. The argument that the Iraq invasion was supported by most prominent politicians at the time is not a defense of those politicians, it's an indictment of mainstream American politics. The fact that politicians who not only supported the Iraq invasion but actively facilitated it are still becoming US presidential nominees proves the entire American political system is corrupt beyond the possibility of redemption.

Nobody who supported the Iraq invasion should be working in politics at all. They shouldn't be able to find employment anywhere more prominent or influential than a cash register. This should be true of politics, and it should be true of media as well.

There is no valid reason for the entire US-led world order not to have been completely dismantled after the invasion of Iraq. A world order which can create something as horrific as the unforgivable Iraq invasion (or the genocide in Yemen today for that matter) is not a world order that will lead the world in a good direction. The facts are in. The US-led world order must end.

So much establishment loyalism ultimately boils down to an entirely faith-based and unquestioned belief that the corrupt, depraved power establishment which facilitated the Iraq war completely evaporated as soon as George W Bush and Tony Blair left office. There is literally no reason to believe this besides it feeling more psychologically comfortable to believe it.

It's essential to keep in mind that western propaganda hasn't gotten less advanced since the Iraq invasion, it has gotten *more* advanced. The Russiagate psyop and the smear campaigns against Assange and Corbyn make this abundantly clear. You need to be *more* critical of western narratives than with Iraq, not less.

Manipulating public thought at mass scale is a science. Scientific fields don't magically become less sophisticated over time, they become more sophisticated. Every time they run a new mass-scale manipulation, whether it succeeds or fails, they learn from it. And they evolve.

We must remember that the mass media can create false narratives without even speaking them explicitly, just by giving a certain impression. After the Iraq invasion 70 percent of Americans still believed Saddam was responsible for 9/11, just because reporters and politicians kept mentioning the two in the same breath.

Supporting the Vietnam war was dumb. Supporting the Iraq invasion after being lied to about Vietnam was an order of magnitude dumber. Supporting any US war agendas after being lied to about Iraq is an order of magnitude even dumber than that.

The debate about whether America has the moral authority to intervene in other countries was settled once and for all eighteen years ago. Western mass media have spent the last eighteen years trying to slowly spin the narrative away from facts and reality, but the Iraq invasion invalidates them all.

Iraq should be a one-word debunk of all pro-regime change arguments. You should be able to just say "Iraq" and have whoever's pushing escalations and interventionism sit the fuck down and shut the fuck up. The fact that that isn't enough shows how insanely propagandized we are.

America shouldn't be in the Middle East at all, much less Iraq, and the US government is solely responsible for every American soldier who dies there.

When a known compulsive liar asks you to place your faith in him on a very important matter, you tell him to fuck off. When the western empire tells you to trust them that an evil government needs to be ousted, you take it with an Iraq-sized grain of salt.

Never let anyone shout you down for openly doubting US intelligence on foreign nations. Iraq means they don't get to do that anymore. Ever.

I promise I will always fight to remind the world about the Iraq invasion. I will always do everything I can to make sure that as many people as possible view all actions of the US-centralized power establishment through the lens of what they did to that country for as long as I draw breath.

I will always do everything I can to keep Iraq from being dismissed as an anomaly of history that could never happen again. Whenever the empire talks about Russia, China, Syria, Iran, Venezuela, North Korea, Yemen, or any other country, I will be talking about what they did to Iraq.

You don't get to butcher a million people and then say "Oh yeah, but that

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was a whole eighteen years ago. You can trust us now." That's not a thing. The world has no business taking US defense and intelligence agencies at their word about anything ever again.

I write about imperial warmongering not just because it is intrinsically evil, but because it is the clearest evidence I can point to that the people who are running things are too sociopathic to be left in charge. The power structure which raped Iraq should not exist. Period.

The way I see it we've got two options: find a way to drastically change the way we think and function as a species, or pray that the world will be saved by the same ruling elites who destroyed Iraq while making the poor poorer for the benefit of the extremely wealthy.

Updated March 23, 2021: - The bio for the author of this article has been corrected. My apologies for the error.

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IGNORANCE OR EXCUSE?

"We did not know... that there is an international law"

by Michel Raimbaud

April 2nd, 2021

In March 1991, Saddam Hussein's Iraq, which had just imploded under a coalition led by Washington, began its descent into hell. It would remain for a long time under close surveillance and embargo. Meanwhile, between a mirage of "glasnost" and a wave of "perestroika," Gorbachev's USSR, floundering in dreams of the West, was soon to sink and fall apart. America already saw itself as "the most powerful Empire the earth has brought forth" and readied itself to make those who did not understand it pay dearly. After pretending to seek a peaceful outcome that would spare Iraq humiliation, Mitterrand's France joined the anti-Saddam assault, gradually realizing how narrow its room for maneuver was *vis-à-vis* Baghdad. After a Gaullist backlash under Chirac, it would

fire its last rounds in March 2003 with Villepin's flamboyant but inconsequential speech to the Security Council, abandoning Iraq and continuing its slide towards Atlanticism.

It took thirty years for the mainstream of the nation of reason and human rights to deign to discover the gigantic lie that had obscured the destruction of Iraq and the excruciating torment inflicted on its people. The teary Colin Powell, famous for having sodomized the Security Council with his sinister vial, would wait long years to apologize vaguely on the pretext that he had been misinformed (sic). Some would emulate him later, many never. Faced with the scandal, many are now brandishing an easy excuse: "We did not know", they say, thus shirking their responsibility. To admit that they knew would be to admit that they were guilty or accomplices. According to the long documentary devoted to Iraq recently on France 2, Chevènement admitted to knowing since August 4, 1990 France had given its consent to Washington to be at his side against Saddam: the diplomatic saga of which the French were proud was therefore only a decoy.

The overwhelming toll of the Iraqi tragedy has been passed over in silence, despite a number of courageous voices and initiatives that have attempted to unmask the American enterprise inspired by Judeo-Protestant Zionism: a dismantled and destroyed state, its army and its police dissolved, one of the most modern countries in the Arab world sent back fifty years by raids and the use of prohibited weapons, humiliated by an iniquitous "food for oil". Without counting the pillage and torture, the prisons, the looting of the archaeological heritage. At the very least two million dead including 500,000 children, "the price of democracy" according to elder Albright ... And the unspeakable George Dubya Bush asking the historical question: Why do they hate us so much?

The same exact scenario is happening again for Syria, which entered into its eleventh year of war in mid-March 2021. Except that the Syrian state, strong in its resilience and its alliances (Russia and Iran), has not been destroyed, even if the country is ravaged, its economy ruined and its

people suffocated and starved by the embargo and the sanctions, with the end of its ordeal not in sight. Refusing to recognize its "unthinkable defeat" and "the unthinkable victory of Bashar al-Assad," America has preferred, as Obama's adviser Robert Malley blithely predicted in 2016, to move on to a second stage of aggression, the actual military war well and truly lost, giving way to an endless economic war, a "proxy" war with the support of the flag wavers of the western-oriented "international community.

As foreseen, the tenth mid-March "anniversary" of the start of events in Syria unleashed an unprecedented and at first glance incomprehensible hysteria in the dreary bog of the mainstream press, which puts politicians, the media, and those whose job is to think, in the same bed. The stupidity of this fit of furious madness testifies to the moral degeneration of the country of Descartes and of human rights, a kind of Covid of intelligence. These are simply the neoconservative French-style intellectuals who are mobilizing, chanting their string of pious lies and insanities, where pretty words jostle, like democracy, international law, human rights, justice, pluralism, political solution. Furious at their defeat, and having nothing plausible to claim or propose, like the moderate terrorists and the self-styled revolutionaries, they support, they condemn with an air of outraged virtue "the rogue state" in Syria, the "Bashar regime", the "genocidal" gang, the "massacring tyrant", perfectly illustrating this "zero degree of political thought" (and intelligence) that is neoconservatism – this Lady Emptyhead with whom they are infatuated. We even see the idea advanced that, in order to permanently defeat the Islamic State in Syria, it is necessary to "stabilize" the rebels, who have destroyed their country and licked themselves of the martyrdom of their compatriots.

What Iraq has undergone for thirty years, Syria is living for the eleventh consecutive year (more than the two world wars combined), a glittering silence and total denial perfecting the ordeal of a martyred people. If it

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continues to die slowly, it is not to “pay the price of a necessary democratization”, it is neither a “failed spring” nor a civil war, as one strives to say in the countries of the Axis of Good. Among the “experts” who pontificate, I dare to hope that there are no professors of international law, because they would surely know that, like Iraq in its time, Syria was and is still the victim of international aggression.

During the Nuremberg (and Tokyo) trials of 1946, this crime of aggression, based on the free and conscious will to threaten or break the peace, was classified as a “crime against peace” and qualified as an “international crime *par excellence*”, one of the major violations of international law alongside genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is inscribed by the Nuremberg Tribunal at the top of the list, along with the following formula: “To start a war of aggression is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime,” the only difference from other war crimes being that it contains within itself all the accumulated Evil of all the others. This is “the crime *par excellence*.”

Codified by the United Nations General Assembly, resolution 95/1946, it belongs to international criminal law and falls under the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice in The Hague (with regard to the responsibility and criminalization of States). Assumed by the Treaty of Rome of July 1998, establishing the ICC, it also comes under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (for the personal responsibility of state officials).

Will we have to meet in thirty years to “discover” the toll of the wars in Syria, whether military and visible or economic and invisible? When the hour arrives to be held accountable and to render justice, it will in any case be necessary to remind with pure honesty the hundred governments that are participating to this day in this naked aggression, of the gravity of their criminal enterprise. And we will first denounce the three Western countries, permanent members of the Security Council, who claim to uphold International Law and to be its guardians, while they are its top violators.

To enhance his peaceful retirement, Dubya Bush chose, it seems, to paint ridiculous little sheep, without ever being touched by the idea that he should have on his conscience millions of dead, wounded, crippled, handicapped children, not to mention the destruction of several countries. Others, like Blair or Obama, even derive an enviable income from the story of their exploits, by giving handsomely paid lectures, where their ravages and crimes are implicitly considered collateral effects of a pious work: no reference to the dead, to the destruction for which they are responsible, to the fate of ruined or dismembered States ...

They are well dressed, well groomed, well fed, covered with diplomas, they pose as “masters of the world”: they speak the law, make the law, decide on the war, write the story of their exploits seen through a warped pair of spectacles. In short, Westerners or devotees of the West – “Occidentalists” – are the elites of the “civilized world”, the essence of the only humanity that matters to their unseeing eyes. They believe themselves to be invulnerable and untouchable. They have no remorse or shame. They are even proud of their actions, of their records, of their support for these terrorists, whether recycled or not, who “get the job done.” Their regrettable sin, which they cannot get rid of since they see it as the new version of the detestable and outmoded “white man’s burden”, is the mania for delivering moral lessons and deciding for others what countries “that do not belong to our world” must do, even if no one has asked them. Obviously, if there was still a hint of wisdom in the West, one would wonder how people whose sense of governance and international law is so erratic at home can decide the fate of their more or less distant neighbors.

All the more reason for political or military leaders, intellectuals and the media, who have decided, organized, supported or justified a crime (or many) of international aggression, to know that they are and will remain, whatever they do or do not do, responsible for the crime of international aggression, or for their support or complicity, and that they will be held to account, without

statute of limitations . Justice has many flaws, but it is tenacious.

English Translation: Paul Larudee

Originally published at [RT France](#).

Michel Raimbaud is a former diplomat and essayist. He has several published books, notably *Tempête sur le Grand Moyen-Orient* (2nd edition 2017) and *Les guerres de Syrie* (2019).

This article was posted on Friday, April 2nd, 2021

U.S. CRIMINALITY IN YEMEN

Yemen’s Blood Is on US Hands, and Still the US Lies About the War

by **William Boardman**

March 24th, 2021

Six years ago, on March 26, 2015, the US green-lighted and provided logistical support for the Saudi bombing of Yemen that continues on a daily basis. The US/Saudi war, which includes as allies the several members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, is an undeclared war, illegal under international law, and an endless crime against humanity. The US and the Saudis have dropped cluster bombs on Yemen since 2009. Yemen has no air force and no significant air defenses. Two years ago, even the US Congress voted to end US involvement in the war, but President Trump vetoed the resolution.

In 1937 the Nazis, in support of Franco in Spain, bombed the defenseless northern Spanish town of Guernica, massacring hundreds of civilians gathered in the town on market day. Pablo Picasso’s painting *Guernica*, a shriek of protest against the slaughter, is one of the world’s best known anti-war works of art. Yemen has had more than 2000 days of Guernicas at the hands of the US and Saudis, but no Picasso.

On February 4, 2021, President Biden got a whole lot of good press when he announced that the US would be “stepping up our diplomacy to end the war in Yemen.” Biden also promised that the US would be “ending all American support for offensive operations in the war in Yemen.” Biden gave no specific details. The six-year bombing continues. The six-year naval blockade of Yemen continues.

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The humanitarian crisis continues, with the threat of famine looming. In effect, Biden has participated in war crimes since January 20, with no policy in sight to end the killing.

On March 1, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken acknowledged that:

The humanitarian crisis taking place in Yemen is the largest and most urgent in the world. Twenty million people, including millions of children, desperately need help. The United States is committed to doing our part, both to provide aid and to help address the obstacles standing in the way of humanitarian access.

That sounds a whole lot better than it is. Blinken did not acknowledge the US role in the air war on Yemen. Blinken did not acknowledge the US role in the naval blockade preventing food and fuel from reaching those 20 million Yemenis. Those obstacles to humanitarian access remain unchanged. The US has the power to remove either one unilaterally, just as it unilaterally chose to impose them. Blinken called on “all parties” to allow unhindered import and distribution of food and fuel, as if the US played no role in blocking both.

Blinken wasn't done inventing a reality to fit US policy. He pledged support for “the well-being of the Yemeni people” but singled out the Houthis for pressure, even though the Houthis represent a large proportion of the Yemeni people. He called on the Houthis “to cease their cross-border attacks,” even though those attacks are a response to the US/Saudi undeclared war. And then he offered an analysis that would be hilarious if it weren't so grotesque:

... the Saudis and the Republic of Yemen Government are committed and eager to find a solution to the conflict. We call on the Houthis to match this commitment. A necessary first step is to stop their offensive against Marib, a city where a million internally displaced people live, and to join the Saudis and the government in Yemen in making constructive moves toward peace.

The Saudis are so eager to find a solution to the conflict that they maintain their air war and naval

blockade, effectively waging war by starvation – a crime against humanity. The “Republic of Yemen Government” is a fiction and a joke. Yemeni president Mansour Hadi, who is 75, was vice president of Yemen from 1994 to 2011, under the late authoritarian president Ali Abdullah Saleh. When Arab Spring protests erupted against Saleh, he stepped aside in favor of Hadi, who was “elected” president in 2012 with no opposition – a “democratic” result imposed by an international cabal. When you read media referring to his “internationally recognized government,” that's the fiction they're hiding. Hadi's term as president ended in 2014, the international cabal extended it for a year, and that's pretty much the extent of his legitimacy. That and US/Saudi firepower. By any rational calculation, Hadi is not a legitimate president. He also has no legitimate alternative. No wonder Hadi doesn't feel safe in Yemen and remains in exile in Riyadh. The population in southern Yemen under the “government's” control has recently attacked the government palace in Aden in protest against the government's failure to provide sustenance and stability. A recent bomb attack aimed at a Hadi government minister reflects the reality that southern Yemen has long had a separatist movement quite independent of the Houthis in the north, in effect a second civil war. The most constructive move the Hadi government could make toward peace is to abdicate.

Marib City, the capital of Marib Governorate, is roughly 100 miles northeast of Yemen's capital in Sanaa. Marib City was established after the 1984 discovery of oil deposits in the region. Covering 6,720 square miles in central Yemen, the Marib Governorate is somewhat smaller than New Jersey. Marib contains much of Yemen's oil, gas, and electric resources. Marib is the last governorate under the control of the Hadi government, but it has been under increasing attack by the Houthis since early 2020. Before that, Marib was relatively remote from the fighting in Yemen, providing refuge for a million or more Yemenis fleeing the fighting elsewhere. Marib City had a population of about 40,000 when the civil war broke out in 2014. Now the city has an estimated 1.5 million people.

The Houthi offensive against Marib has intensified since January 2021. Their offensive has continued in spite of having no air support. For the US Secretary of State to call for the Houthis to stop their offensive is an indication that it's going their way. By March 8, Houthi forces had breached the northern gates of Marib City. Hadi government forces are supported by the Saudi coalition and local tribes, as well as elements of Al Qaeda and ISIS. (Al Qaeda also fights independently against occupying forces of the United Arab Emirates along the Gulf of Aden coastline.)

Famine has arrived in pockets of Yemen.

Saudi ships blocking fuel aren't helping.

This was CNN's headline on March 11, for a story reporting with reasonable accuracy on the very real, years-old humanitarian crisis that the US/Saudi war has brought on the region's poorest country. CNN quotes a “food insecurity” analysis by the world electronics trade association IPC that predicts that more than 16 million Yemenis (of a total population of about 30 million) are “likely to experience high levels of acute food insecurity” in the first half of 2021. “Out of these, an estimated 11 million people will likely be in Crisis, 5 million in Emergency, and the number of those in Catastrophe will likely increase to 47,000.”

Yemen is an atrocity from almost any perspective. Three US presidents – Obama, Trump, and now Biden – have lied about Yemen while taking the US into an endless nexus of war crimes and crimes against humanity. And for what? To support a Yemeni government that is a fraud? To support a Saudi ally that thought it could win a quick, dirty air war at little or no cost? This abomination, pun intended, never should have happened. So why did it? The formulaic answer in much of the media is usually some variation on this propagandistic patter from Reuters:

A Saudi Arabia-led military coalition intervened in Yemen in 2015 after the Iran-allied Houthi group ousted the country's government from the capital Sanaa.

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This essentially false version of reality in Yemen appears in news media across a wide spectrum, from Al Jazeera to ABC News to [this version by CNN](#):

Saudi Arabia has been targeting Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen since 2015, with the support of the US and other Western allies. It had hoped to stem the Houthis' spread of power and influence in the country by backing the internationally-recognized government under President Abdu Rabu Mansour Hadi.

The core falsehood in most versions is "the Iran-allied" or "Iran-backed" Houthis. The grain of truth in that characterization is far outweighed by the history on the ground. The Houthis live in Yemen. They are the only combatant force that lives in Yemen, other than elements of the Hadi government and assorted insurrectionists. Yemen is in the midst of a civil war that has flared over decades. The war that is destroying Yemen is waged entirely by outside countries, primarily the US and the Saudi coalition.

The Houthis, who are mostly Shia Muslims, have lived in northwest Yemen for generations and centuries. They fought a civil war against President Saleh and lost. They have long been an oppressed minority in Yemen. When the Hadi government perpetuated the oppression of the Houthis, they rebelled once again. This time, challenging an unpopular and divided government, they were more successful. In 2014 they captured Sanaa, Yemen's capital, and captured Hadi himself. Then they released him and he fled first to Aden, then to Saudi Arabia, where he is a puppet figurehead.

Before it could become clear what kind of governance the Houthis would provide for their part of Yemen, the US and the Saudi coalition attacked the country. Their publicly stated motivation has always included the imaginary threat from Iran. But the Houthis have a long and independent history that does not rely on Iran for its coherence and force. Iranian support for the Houthis in 2014 was never



shown to be significant. The US/Saudi war had had the perverse effect of incentivizing Iranian support for the Houthis, but there's no evidence that support comes anywhere close to the strength of the US and Saudi coalition forces directed at the Houthis. The US and the Saudi coalition are waging an aggressive war against a country that did none of them any harm. Iran is providing support for an ally unjustly under siege.

The war in Yemen has been brutal on all sides, according to reports by more or less neutral observers. But only the US and the Saudi coalition are invaders, only they are committing international war crimes. The Houthis, as well as all the other sides fighting in Yemen, have also committed war crimes, but on a far lesser scale. Yemeni forces are not the ones waging war by starvation and disease.

Ultimately, the Houthis are the home team, along with other Yemeni factions. The Houthis have nowhere else to go. The only military solution to the Houthis is extermination, genocide, the very course the US and Saudis have been on for years, with the winking hypocrisy of most of the world.

In April 2015, with the Saudis' saturation bombing already in its third week, the United Nations Security Council unanimously (14-0) passed Resolution 2216, which "Demands End to Yemen Violence." The Resolution begins with an obscene misrepresentation of reality:

Imposing sanctions on individuals it said were undermining the stability of Yemen, the Security Council today demanded that all parties in the embattled country, in particular the Houthis, immediately and unconditionally end violence and refrain from further

unilateral actions that threatened the political transition.

That is the official lie that has publicly defined the war on Yemen since 2015. The UN sees no terror bombing by foreign countries. The UN sees no invasion by foreign troops. The UN sees no terrorist groups in a country that has had little stability for decades. The UN cites only the Houthis for their sins, as if it were somehow the Houthis' fault that, having no air force and no air defenses, they weren't getting out of the way of the cluster bombs dropped on their weddings and their funerals.

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This article was posted on Wednesday, March 24th, 2021

"Feminism is the struggle to end sexist oppression. Therefore, it is necessarily a struggle to eradicate the ideology of domination that permeates Western culture on various levels, as well as a commitment to reorganizing society so that the self-development of people can take precedence over imperialism, economic expansion, and material desires."

— Bell Hooks, [Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center](#)



US ATROCITIES IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Remembering US-funded state terror in Central America

Amid a year of important anniversaries, a forgotten massacre in El Salvador reminds us of the danger state-sanctioned terror.

By **Clinton Fernandes**

Nov 22, 2019

But the killings by US-trained and armed death squads began at the start of the decade, with the murder of archbishop Oscar Romero in 1980.

The death squads operated in Latin America for a reason: the Catholic Church under the influence of Pope John XXIII had begun trying to reclaim the radical pacifist message of the gospel. Bishops, priests, nuns and lay persons began devoting

arriving under the Humanitarian and Special Humanitarian Program were related to the death squads.

Father Bruno Morotti, a Salesian priest who worked mostly in Melbourne's south-east between 1988 and 1995, met a man at the Springvale migrant hostel who admitted responsibility for the murder of Archbishop Romero before coming to Australia, as detailed by Professor Des Cahill in his obituary for Morotti around a decade ago.

Despite the much greater publicity given to human rights violations in the Soviet Bloc, from 1960 to 1990 the “numbers of political prisoners, torture victims, and executions of nonviolent political dissenters in Latin America vastly exceeded those in the Soviet Union and its East European satellites”, as John Coatsworth writes in the *Cambridge History of the Cold War*.

As observed in *Proceso*, the journal of Central American University, if Václav Havel or other Czechoslovakian dissidents had been in El Salvador,

“they would have woken up one sinister morning, lying on the patio of a university campus with their heads destroyed by the bullets of an elite army battalion”.

Another Latin American journalist, Julio Godoy, remarked that Eastern Europeans were “luckier than Central Americans”. He said “the main explanation for the fearless character” of the students in Prague was that “the Czechoslovak Army doesn't shoot to kill”.

There has always been difficulty in trying to grant these crimes greater exposure. Father Ignacio Martín-Baró, one of the slain Jesuits, was an eminent social psychologist. A few weeks after the assassinations of November 16, the American Psychological Association had a conference in Boston and a session was devoted to father Martín-Baró.

The Boston Globe, at the time the paper with the best Central America coverage in the country, covered the conference.

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(Image: EPA/Rodrigo Sura)

Last weekend, on November 16, marked the 30th anniversary of the assassination of six leading Latin American intellectuals in El Salvador.

You probably won't hear much about it when other 30-year-old events are also being commemorated — such as the Democracy Movement in China, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia, and political upheavals in Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

But El Salvador offers important insights into the real character of international relations and the politics of memory.

The six intellectuals were Jesuit priests, murdered on the campus of the Central American University in San Salvador, along with their housekeeper Elba Ramos and her teenage daughter Celia Marisela Ramos. The assassins belonged to the elite Atlacatl Battalion, trained and armed by the United States.

themselves to the oppressed, supporting what the Pope called the “preferential option for the poor”.

Sometimes known as “liberation theology”, these ideas were anathema to Latin American elites and to the United States government, whose own preferential option was to make the region's resources available for the American economy in the manner desired by American corporations.

Accordingly, the US went to war against the Catholic Church in Latin America in the 1980s, training local militaries at the School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia. Today called “The Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation”, it boasted, that liberation theology was “defeated with the assistance of the US Army”.

There is, as well, an Australian angle to these events: 10,000 refugees came here from El Salvador in the 1980s. Most had a genuine fear of persecution but it was credibly reported that a minority of those

**AND IN BOLIVIA***How the global media tried to manufacture consent on Bolivia*

By Jesse Ward

31 March 2021



Bolivian President Luis Arce with former President Evo Morales (image by Brazil De Fato via Flickr)

To understand what is going on in Bolivia, one must return to 2019, when then-President Evo Morales was forced to step down amid a surge in extremist violence in the wake of the country's elections.

Morales served as the country's first Indigenous President from 2006 to 2019, under the promise to bring power to marginalised groups through a socialist agenda. One of his first moves as President was to nationalise Bolivia's oil and gas industries with the aim to renegotiate contracts with foreign energy companies and transferring the wealth generated from these resources back to the Bolivian people.

He redistributed 134 million acres of land from state and private ownership to Indigenous families who had been forced to work as slaves and redirected revenue generated from the country's commodity boom to schools, hospitals and infrastructure.

These redirected funds from the energy sector had a transformative impact on the country, with 4,500 educational facilities being built across Bolivia and an increase in personal household income while the minimum wage was increased several times through his tenure.

Morales also started widely popular programs to uplift Bolivians such as the Bono Juancito Pinto, which gave \$200 Bolivianos a year directly to young children to enrol in primary education. He also implemented a universal monthly pension for people 60 years and above, as well as cash bonuses for

women to incentivise them to regularly visit health care facilities during pregnancy and the first two years after childbirth.

During Morales' leadership, the World Bank and IMF acknowledged that the country's poverty rate had been more than halved and GDP grew an average of 4.8% from 2004 to 2017.

While Morales was leading the country through these successes, the country's right-wing faction was supported by the U.S., as well as receiving support from the Organisation of American States (OAS). For decades, the OAS has been propping up right-wing leaders across Latin America to overthrow democratically-elected left-wing movements, and in the case of Bolivia, this is no exception.

This brings us to 2019, where Morales' win in the country's elections had been called into question by the OAS and other extreme right-wing figures, namely Luis Fernando Camacho. Camacho, a powerful multi-millionaire who had been named in the Panama Papers, was an ultra-conservative Christian fundamentalist who had come from a family of corporate elites who had long profited from Bolivia's natural gas sector.

Leading up to the 2019 election, Camacho had met with leaders from right-wing governments in the region to discuss how they could collectively plan to destabilise Morales. Once the OAS alleged that the election had been fraudulent, Camacho began to foment a violent sentiment against Morales and led protests in the streets.

Despite the OAS's claims of election fraud being debunked by the Center of Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), the damage had been done. The U.S State Department, former President Donald Trump and Senator Marco Rubio all turned to Twitter to help fan the flames of the protestors in the streets decrying election fraud.

The protests in the streets quickly turned violent, with right-wing gangs ransacking the home of President Morales and attacks being made on numerous elected politicians from the left-wing Movement for Socialism Party (MAS). One female socialist mayor was

publicly tortured by a mob in the streets, while other top officials homes were burned down.



Western media branded Camacho as a 'civic leader who had become a major figure in the opposition' and widely ignored the horrifically violent nature of the protests he was leading.

When the OAS-backed opposition candidate to Morales, Carlos Mesa, was asked by Reuters what their intentions were, he claimed that it was to:

'... promote a clear, activist, mobilised, peaceful and democratic action with the absolute clear objective of Evo Morales leaving the government.'

Under duress to avoid more bloodshed, Morales resigned, underlining that his:

"... responsibility as an indigenous president of all Bolivians is to prevent the coup-mongers from persecuting my trade unionist brothers and sisters, abusing and kidnapping their families, burning the homes of governors, of legislators, of city councillors... to prevent them from continuing to harass and persecute my indigenous brothers and sisters and the leaders and authorities [of MAS]."

In the hours following this, Luis Fernando Camacho stormed Bolivia's abandoned Presidential Palace and staged a video with a Bible in one hand and the Bolivian flag in the other, vowing to purge the country of its Native heritage and "return God to the burned Palace".

While Morales fled to Mexico for his life, Opposition Party member Jeanine Anez declared herself the Interim President, sealing the fact that this overthrow was an effective coup. Anez was another extreme right-wing, Christian fundamentalist who as soon
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as she took power promised legal immunity to security forces who had violently massacred protestors that were against the coup.

Many members of Bolivia's security state who acted as leaders in the coup had been trained by the FBI and the notorious School of America's, an institution that has for decades trained the most brutal death squads and torturers that have stained Latin American history.

Human rights institutions remained silent on the violence in the wake of these events, with Human Rights Watch Director Kenneth Roth supporting the coup and defending Jeanine Anez, declaring that she was actually '*defending democracy*' against "election fraud". He continued to whitewash the horrific events that ensued the coup, labelling them as being a '*transitional moment*' for Bolivia, while painting Morales as an out-of-touch "strongman".

Similarly in Western media, Anez was given accolades for being a '*women's rights activist*' and even received a glorified cover on *Forbes* with the headline reading '*power is feminine*'. This misrepresentation gave cover to the reality of Anez's actions which saw a brutal crackdown on the Indigenous population, trade unions, and domestic and international journalists.

Members of the media were being threatened with persecution, with Anez's Communications Minister claiming that journalists involved in "sedition" were being compiled on a list of "troublesome members of the media."

Fast forward to 2021 and things in Bolivia are looking up again. On 18 October 2020 the Movement Towards Socialism Party, founded by Evo Morales, won in a dramatic landslide victory. Patricia Arce, the Mayor who was publicly tortured during the U.S.-endorsed coup of 2019 is now a Senator-Elect from the Indigenous-led MAS party.

Luis Arce, Bolivia's newly elected president, was the Minister of Economy and Public Finance under Morales, and is a member of the Movement for Socialism party.

Under his leadership, Jeanine Anez has been arrested on charges of terrorism and sedition, the same charges her Government once sought to jail Evo Morales for.

In a recent *Washington Post* editorial, the publication is labelling these arrests as a '*lawless course*' that:

'... threatens further chaos, if not civil war and outright dictatorship [in Bolivia].'



Other Western media outlets such as the *Financial Times*, *Reuters*, and CNN, have been downplaying the coup that installed Jeanine Anez by quoting the Director of Human Rights Watch's America's division, who asserts that the arrests against Anez do not contain any evidence that she committed the crimes of terrorism and that they are based on political motives.

What is also left out in the Western media's narrative on Bolivia is that the OAS's claim of election fraud that led to the violent coup was entirely incorrect. This is also coupled with the under-reporting of the atrocities that occurred under Anez's leadership and the U.S.'s involvement, with many media stories focusing on the arrests being due to the "alleged coup" solely.

The U.S has a long and dark history of implementing violent regime change across Latin America in countries including Guatemala, Chile, Panama, Nicaragua and Argentina to name a few. During these times, the Western media

plays a key role in reporting on these events to the world.

In the case of Bolivia, it is abundantly clear that the media and key human rights institutions are in line with the worldview of the U.S.'s hawkish foreign policy.

It is all too common that nefarious actors in these events such as Jeanine Anez and Luis Fernando Camacho are wrongfully labelled as the "opposition" looking to "liberate" the people from dictatorship, when in fact it is entirely the opposite scenario.

Leaders such as Evo Morales and Luis Arce are painted as dictators while their track record proves that they are individuals who are committed to the people of their country and look to install an agenda that uplifts its population, taking back the control of their resources from foreign entities for the benefit of Bolivians.

It is no wonder that we live in a time where trust in the media is alarmingly low. We've watched on as the corporate media for decades has pushed false narratives that have led countries into war, whitewashed atrocities and given a platform to individuals who have perpetuated rhetoric that stokes violence and misinformation.

Right now, we are watching this unfold across Western media in the context of Bolivia. As the MAS party looks to take back control of its country, the media is trying to paint Morales and the MAS party as a lawless, out-of-control force while also downplaying Anez's actions and the role the U.S. played in fomenting the events in 2019.

Jesse Ward is a communications professional who has a particular interest in media, international relations and politics. You can follow Jesse on Twitter [@ilw93](https://twitter.com/ilw93).

**U.S. CRIMINAL SANCTIONS***The Banality of Evil on Sanctions*

By Jacob G. Hornberger

March 25, 2021 "[Information Clearing House](#)" - -

The banality of evil within the mainstream press when it comes to actions carried out by the U.S. national-security establishment never ceases to amaze me. The latest example appears in the *New York Times* in an investigative piece that absolutely stunned me. The piece consists of a video that details an extensive investigation into a ship that was suspected of violating the system of economic sanctions that the U.S. government and the UN have imposed on North Korea.

The video was put together by what the *Times* calls its “Visual Investigative Team.” The video, according to the *Times*, “examines the maze of connections behind secret oil deliveries to North Korea, in defiance of international sanctions.” There are five staff members who were assigned this task. They say that they “spent months reviewing ship-tracking data, corporate records and satellite imagery to uncover one way North Korea evades strict international sanctions.” They didn’t say how much their investigation cost but my hunch is at least a few million dollars.

To which I ask: Who cares? Or to put it another way: Why shouldn’t North Korea evade those “strict international sanctions”? What’s wrong with doing so? Why should their attempts to evade the sanctions be investigated and reported on by the U.S. mainstream press?

I can’t help but think that those types of questions never enter the minds of the people serving on that investigative team. Their assumption is undoubtedly that since the U.S. and UN imposed the sanctions, they must be legitimate and, therefore, that it is illegitimate for North Korea to be violating them.

After all, that investigative team could have instead spent their time, efforts, and money studying the horrific effects of the sanctions on the people of North Korea. For example, an extensive study of the deaths from starvation would have

been edifying. So would an examination of how the sanctions have contributed, in combination with North Korea’s socialist economic system, to the economic impoverishment of the North Korean people.

There is another important point to consider about what the *Times* has done with its investigation: Its research into how North Korea evades the sanctions could assist the U.S. national-security state to clamp down on such evasive efforts. Clamping down would, of course, help to bring about more deaths and more suffering among the North Korean people.

The mindset of those investigators is obviously mired in the notion that the U.S. and UN are the “good guys” and North Korea is the “bad guy.” The “good guy” has imposed the sanctions. The “bad guy” is evading the sanctions. So they do an extensive investigation into how the “bad guy” is evading the “good guy”’s sanctions. If the investigation helps the “good guy” to enforce his sanctions, so be it. After all, he’s the “good guy.”

That’s been the mindset of most of the mainstream press ever since the U.S. government was converted to a national-security state after World War II, with the ostensible mission of preventing the United States from being enveloped by what U.S. officials said was an international communist conspiracy that was supposedly based in Moscow, Russia. (Yes, *that* Russia — the same Russia with which U.S. officials and the mainstream press are still so obsessed today.)

North Korea was supposedly part of that supposed international communist conspiracy. That’s why the U.S. and UN intervened in the Korean civil war in the early 1950s. The idea was that if North Korea were permitted to win the war, the Reds would soon be taking control of the United States.

It’s also why the CIA had such an easy time recruiting assets within the U.S. mainstream press as part of its secret Operation Mockingbird. Publishers, editors, and reporters considered it a big honor to be serving the CIA as a trusted asset in the global war on communism.

The mainstream mindset is the same when it comes to Cuba. The U.S. government has maintained a strict economic embargo on that country since 1959. In combination with Cuba’s socialist system, the embargo has squeezed the lifeblood out of the Cuban people.

Yet, how often have we seen the mainstream press over the past several decades objecting to the evil and immorality of that embargo? Rarely. The assumption has simply been that the “good guy” has the legitimate authority to impose an embargo on the “bad guy.” Even when some in the mainstream press now call for ending the embargo, more often than not it’s because they “haven’t worked” rather than the fact that they are evil and immoral.

And why is Cuba considered to be the “bad guy.” Because it is ruled by a communist regime. In the eyes of the U.S. national-security establishment, that automatically makes it the “bad guy” and, therefore, subject to sanctions and embargoes that kill and impoverish its citizens. For that matter, it also means that the “good guy” wields the authority to assassinate people serving in the regime of the “bad guy.” Of course, a dark irony in all this is how the mainstream press praises these “bad guys” for developing and maintaining such socialist programs as government-provided old-age retirement benefits (i.e., Social Security), government-provided healthcare (i.e. Medicare and Medicaid), and government-provided education for children (i.e., public schooling).

The fact is that from a moral, legal, and constitutional perspective, the U.S. government and the UN have no legitimate authority to impose sanctions or embargoes on North Korea, Cuba, or anyone else. For that matter, the U.S. government and the UN never had the legitimate authority to involve themselves in the Korean War and kill millions of Koreans in the process. The U.S. government also never had the legitimate authority to assassinate any Cuban official, including Cuba’s leader Fidel Castro.

Moreover, North Korea has the
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legitimate authority to use nuclear weapons to deter or defend against another U.S. military attack on their country, especially given the willingness of U.S. officials to use nuclear weapons on populated cities. Under what authority do the U.S. government and the UN deny people the right of self-defense? Let's not forget, after all, that the United States is still formally at war with North Korea given that no peace treaty was ever signed to end the Korean War. Let's also not forget that the U.S. war is illegal under our form of government, given that Congress has never declared war on North Korea, as the Constitution requires.

These are the types of points that unfortunately the mainstream press rarely raises. They just assume that the U.S. government and the UN must be in the right and that their targeted regimes must be in the wrong. They are unable to break out of that pro-national-security state mindset, which is why they waste their time, efforts, and money in studying how people are violating sanctions rather than pursuing the moral high ground by investigating and reporting on the horrific consequences of sanctions, with the aim of bringing them to an end.

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CHINA STRATEGY

China Aces Western Hypocrisy

by **Finian Cunningham**

March 30th, 2021

There's a new dawn evident: China is not putting up with what it sees as hypocritical Western interference in its sovereign affairs. Sanctions are being met with rapid counter-sanctions, and Chinese officials are vociferously pointing out Western double standards.

There was a time when the United States and its allies could browbeat

others with condemnations. Not any more. China's colossal global economic power and growing international influence has been a game-changer in the old Western practice of imperialist arrogance.

The shock came at the Alaska summit earlier this month between US top diplomat Antony Blinken and his Chinese counterparts. Blinken was expecting to lecture China over alleged human rights violations. Then Yang Jiechi, Beijing's foreign policy chief, took Blinken to task over a range of past and current human rights issues afflicting the United States. Washington was left reeling from the lashes.

Western habits die hard, though. Following the fiasco in Alaska, the United States, Canada, Britain and the European Union coordinated sanctions on Chinese officials over provocative allegations of genocide against the Uyghur population in Xinjiang. Australia and New Zealand, which are part of the US-led Five Eyes intelligence network, also supported the raft of sanctions.

Again China caused shock when it quickly hit back with its own counter-sanctions against each of these Western states. The Americans and their allies were aghast that anyone would have the temerity to stand up to them.

Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau bemoaned: "China's sanctions are an attack on transparency and freedom of expression – values at the heart of our democracy."

Let's unpack the contentions a bit. First of all, Western claims about genocide in China's northwestern region of Xinjiang are dubious and smack of political grandstanding in order to give Washington and its allies a pretext to interfere in China's internal affairs.

The latest Western sanctions are based on a report by a shady Washington-based think-tank Newlines Institute of Strategic Policy. Its report claiming "genocide" against the Uyghur Muslim ethnic minority in Xinjiang has the hallmarks of a propaganda screed, not remotely the work of independent scholarly research. Both China and independent journalists at the respected US-based Grayzone have dismissed the claims as fabrication and distortion.

For the United States and other Western governments to level sanctions against China citing the above "report" is highly provocative. It also betrays the real objective, which is to undermine Beijing. This is a top geopolitical priority for Washington. Under the Biden administration, Washington has relearned the value of "diplomacy" – that is the advantage of corraling allies into a hostile front, rather than Trump's America First go-it-alone policy.

Granted, China does have problems with its Xinjiang region. As Australia's premier think-tank Lowy Institute noted: "Ethnic unrest and terrorism in Xinjiang has been an ongoing concern for Chinese authorities for decades."

Due to the two-decade-old US-led war in Afghanistan there has been a serious problem for the Chinese authorities from radicalization of the Uyghur population. Thousands of fighters from Xinjiang have trained with the Taliban in Afghanistan and have taken their "global jihad" to Syria and other Central Asian countries. It is their stated objective to return to Xinjiang and liberate it as a caliphate of East Turkestan separate from China.

Indeed, the American government has acknowledged previously that several Uyghur militants were detained at its notorious Guantanamo detention center.

The United States and its NATO and other allies, Australia and New Zealand, have all created the disaster that is Afghanistan. The war has scarred generations of Afghans and radicalized terrorist networks across the Middle East and Central Asia, which are a major concern for China's security.

Beijing's counterinsurgency policies have succeeded in tamping down extremism among its Uyghur people. The population has grown to around 12 million, nearly half the region's total. This and general economic advances are cited by Beijing as evidence refuting Western claims of "genocide". China says it runs vocational training centers and not "concentration camps", as Western governments maintain. Beijing has reportedly agreed to an

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open visit by United Nations officials to verify conditions.

Western hypocrisy towards China is astounding. Its claims about China committing genocide and forced labor are projections of its own past and current violations against indigenous people and ethnic minorities. The United States, Britain, Canada, Australia have vile histories stained from colonialist extermination and slavery.

But specifically with regard to the Uyghur, the Western duplicity is awesome. The mass killing, torture and destruction meted out in Afghanistan by Western troops have fueled the radicalization in China's Xinjiang, which borders Afghanistan. The Americans, British and Australians in particular have huge blood on their hands.

An official report into unlawful killings by Australian special forces found that dozens of Afghan civilians, including children, were murdered in cold blood. When China's foreign ministry highlighted the killings, the Australian premier Scott Morrison recoiled to decry Beijing's remarks as "offensive" and "repugnant". Morrison demanded China issue an apology for daring to point out the war crimes committed in Afghanistan by Australian troops.

It is absurd and ironic that Western states which destroyed Afghanistan with war crimes and crimes against humanity have the brass neck to censure China over non-existent crimes in its own region of Xinjiang. And especially regarding China's internal affairs with its Uyghur people, some of whom have been radicalized by terrorism stemming from Western mass-murder in Afghanistan.

China is, however, not letting this Western hypocrisy pass. Beijing is hitting back to point out who the real culprits are. Its vast global economic power and increasing trade partnerships with over 100 nations through the Belt and Road Initiative all combine to give China's words a *tour de force* that the Western states cannot handle. Hence, they are falling over in shock when China hits back.

The United States thinks it can line up a coalition of nations against China.

But Europe, Britain, Canada and Australia – all of whom depend on China's growth and goodwill – can expect to pay a heavy price for being Uncle Sam's lapdogs.

• First published in [Sputnik](#)

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This article was posted on Tuesday, March 30th, 2021

THIS IS NOT POETRY

V. Putin Ain't No Corn Pop

By James Howard Kunstler

I wasn't being a wise guy. I was alone with him in his office, that's how it came about," Biden continued. "It was when President Bush had said, 'I've looked in his eyes and saw his soul.' I said, 'I looked in your eyes, and I don't think you have a soul.' He looked back and he said, 'We understand each other.' "

— ABC News, Joe Biden with George Stephanopoulos on V. Putin of Russia

March 22, 2021 "[Information Clearing House](#)" - - "[Clusterfuck Nation](#)" -

Somehow, I don't think Joe Biden understood what he thought Vladimir Putin understood about what they mutually understood. If I had to guess, I'd say that Mr. Putin understood Joe Biden to be the most pathetic blustering schlemiel he'd ever encountered on the international scene. But that must have been before Mr. B was installed in the White House by powers and persons unseen because it's evident now that his handlers do not allow him to talk to foreign leaders, not even on the phone. Ms. Harris does that.

The alleged president went on to tell Mr. Stephanopoulos that Mr. Putin was "a killer" who would "soon pay a price" for interfering in the 2020 election. In turn, Mr. Putin promptly called the Russian ambassador back home "for consultations," which is generally what happens when one country makes warlike noises to another country.

Mr. Putin added a tantalizing taunt days later, saying. "I've just thought of this now. I want to propose to President Biden to continue our discussion, but on the condition that we do it basically live, as it's called. Without any delays and directly in an open, direct discussion. It seems to me that would be interesting for the people of Russia and for the people of the United States. I don't want to put this off for long. I want to go to the taiga this weekend to relax a little," Mr. Putin went on. "So, we could do it tomorrow or Monday. We are ready at any time convenient for the American side."

Do you suppose Vladimir Putin is having some sport with Mr. Biden, this lightweight even among US politicians, with brain-rot to boot? Pretty soon, the president's handlers will have to forbid him to open his pie-hole in public altogether. No more one-on-one interviews even with slow-pitch party shills like Mr. Stephanopoulos. They'll just wheel him into the rose garden periodically like a cigar store Indian for proof-of-life demonstrations and leave the management of the nation... to others.

And how's that going after a couple of months?

Apparently, economic collapse is not enough for the party in charge of things now. They're strangely compelled to seek every possible opportunity to insult the public's intelligence while destroying what's left of American

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culture. Case in point out of Nancy Pelosi’s Congress: HR1, the so-called “For the People Act,” institutionalizing ballot fraud in US elections. The law would make permanent the Covid-19 emergency mail-in voting system, over-riding whatever each state’s election law says — which makes the act appear patently unconstitutional — plus permitting same-day motor-voter registration of any live body, citizen or not, plus removing all voter ID requirements, and much more to ensure the country is never again threatened by a fair election.

Next up: HR5, the so-called “Equality Act,” institutionalizing the notion that categories of “male” and “female” are mere cultural constructs and must in no way be allowed to order any cultural activity from school to work to leisure. The bill was initially conceived to harden into law President Obama’s EO expanding the Department of Education’s Title IX rules on school sports — which eventuated in “trans women” disrupting girls’ sports. Now, men pretending to be women (and vice-versa) will be allowed to disrupt everything else in American life, especially the civil courts, with frivolous lawsuits.

Also in the pipeline: HR6, the so-called “American Dream and Promise Act,” and its Senate companion, S264, the plain “Dream Act,” that will grant permanent residency and then citizenship to currently “undocumented” people who snuck into the USA as children. The dreams and promises have already been delivered, even before the final passage of any new act, with an unprecedented flood of unaccompanied migrant children crashing the border, as well as a surge of adults fleeing Mexico and Central America. Apparently, the thinking in Washington these days is that we don’t have enough poor people in America, that their lives are not difficult enough. The message couldn’t be clearer to millions outside the United States: *by all means, cross the border and we will do nothing about it.* And so, with the border reduced to just another cultural construct, Mr. Biden himself took the extraordinary action of telling them on TV, “Don’t Come!” I guess that’ll do the trick.

Do you have any idea how pissed-off a clear majority of the American public will be after a few more months of this?

James Howard Kunstler is an American author, social critic, public speaker, and blogger. He is best known for his books *The Geography of Nowhere*, a history of American suburbia and urban development, *The Long Emergency*, and *Too Much Magic*.

THIS IS POETRY

GALLIPOLI

I remember the day it stands clear in my mind
We stood down to Dun Laoighaire to wave you goodbye
Your ma was quietly weeping, there was a tear in my eye
As they sent you to Gallipoli to die.

You looked so young as you stood there with a glint in your eye
and you sang rebel songs as the streamers flew high
Your ma turned away and I heard her sigh
For you are sailing to Gallipoli to die

You were all that we had, your mammy and me,
when you marched head erect you were proud as could be
And it killed your poor ma, and it slowly killed me
when you were blown to kingdom come on the shores of Gallipoli.

We got only the one letter and we knew right away
It said deepest regrets your son was bold and he was brave
you were only 18 yet your mammy and I
let you go to Gallipoli to die

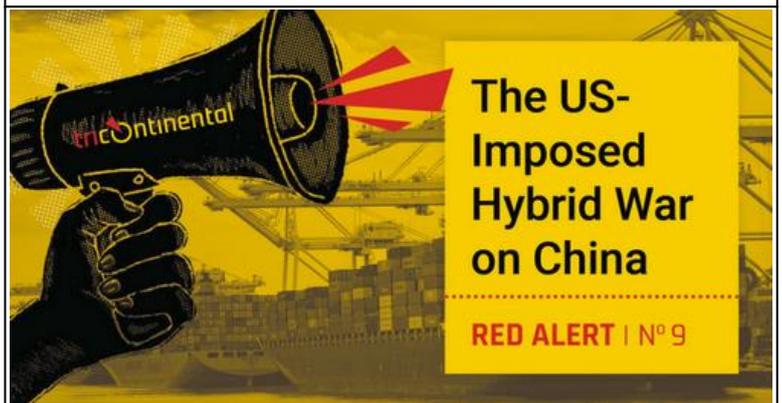
You were all that we had, your mammy and me,
when you marched head erect you were proud as could be
And it killed your poor ma, and it slowly killed me
when you were blown to kingdom come on the shores of Gallipoli.

You fought for the wrong country, you died for the wrong cause.
and your ma often said that it was Ireland's great loss
all those fine young men who marched to foreign shores to fight the war
when the greatest war of all was at home

You were all that we had, your mammy and me,
when you marched head erect you were proud as could be
And it killed your poor ma, and it slowly killed me
when you were blown to kingdom come on the shores of Gallipoli.

You were all that we had, your mammy and me,
when you marched head erect you were proud as could be
And it killed your poor ma, and it slowly killed me
when you were blown to kingdom come on the shores of Gallipoli.

The Fureys





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Many a "told you so moment" can be found in this *Bulletin* issue. But will today's powers, aided by their modern generation of amoral Tellers and damned foolery, listen?

Binoy Kampmark was a Commonwealth Scholar at Selwyn College, Cambridge. He lectures at RMIT University, Melbourne. Email: bkampmark@gmail.com

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The attending reporter didn't mention him or the session. Instead it reported on a paper about how male facial expressions attract women.

All this is in sharp contrast to publicity given to the fragile tyrannies of Eastern Europe. Says a lot about the politics of memory.

"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](#)

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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*.

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.

Pastor Martin Neimoller, 1937