

## OH SAY CAN YOU SEE A Perspective on the Current Crisis

Presented at the Books Not Bombs/Stop Iraq War Forum organized by students at Shippenburg University, Pennsylvania on March 5, 2003.

The unjust and inequitable ownership and control of vast amounts of the land and natural resource wealth of our planet is a root cause of the great majority of local-to-global conflicts and wars. Our current form of democratic governance is severely limited in its capacity to negotiate peaceful means of resolving resource inequities and disputes, whether over oil and other minerals or over land for housing and livelihoods.

Neither the market system as currently structured nor the force of military might have provided a democratic means to equitably share the gifts of nature. This fatal flaw of democracy can be most clearly seen upon review of some of the 3,000 major and 10,000 minor CIA covert operations during the past several decades. This Third World War - the war on the people of the third world - has slaughtered at least six million people in the third world since World War II, as determined by former CIA chief John Stockwell and others.<sup>1</sup>

Taking control of Iraq has been a long-running strategic design of the oligarchy that has come to rule the United States. An article headlined "Seizing Arab Oil" which appeared in Harper's magazine in 1975 outlined "how we could solve all our economic and political problems by taking over the Arab oil fields (and) bringing in Texans and Oklahomans to operate them."<sup>2</sup>

Similar stories appeared in other magazines and newspapers at the time. Today, there are 41 members of the Bush administration with direct links to the oil industry. Many of them have held high office in the military-industrial complex that President Dwight D. Eisenhower warned us about many years ago when he said:

In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.<sup>3</sup>

In the words of Dr. Michael Klare, professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College and author of *Resource Wars*, "Controlling Iraq is about oil as power, rather than oil as fuel. Control over the Persian Gulf translates into control over Europe, Japan, and China. It's having our hand on the spigot."<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Stephen Pelletiere, author of *Iraq and the International Oil System: Why America Went to War in the Persian Gulf*, was the CIA senior political analyst on Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war and a professor at the US Army War College in Carlisle, PA for 12 years (1988-2000). He made this statement during the Carlisle Peace College Forum on Iraq on October 19, 2002:

The only way, if we are saying to go into Iraq and change the regime, for us to change the regime is for us to stay in Iraq, and effectively take over the oil wells and to hand them back to the same companies - Exxon/Mobil, British Petroleum, Royal Dutch - which originally exploited the oil when the cartel ruled the Gulf. That is imperialism. That is a classic case of imperialism. You cannot put any other face on it. As soon as a country invades another country with the intention of acquiring the assets of that country to exploit for its own aggrandizement, that is imperialism. That is, I think, the only accurate way to look at what is happening there.

The US, in an incredibly rapid space of time, is going through a tremendous transformation in which we are ceasing to be a republic and are in the process of becoming an empire and no one seems to be aware of this transformation, at least you are not getting any of this from the media... The media is going through its own transition. It is behaving in a way I have never seen it. The administration is lying and the media is simply reporting what it is told. I see over and over again statements made by our media that are flat out lies, like the story of Iraq gassing its own people.

The vast build-up of US military forces in preparation for a unilateral preemptive "shock and awe" attack on Iraq is immoral and illegal. It demonstrates a truly shocking disregard for the steps that humanity has made since WWII to build global institutions based on law and peaceful resolution of conflicts. If this situation were a case of domestic abuse, the Bush administration would be guilty of making terrorist threats and issued a restraining order by the legal authorities. If home-grown terrorists based in Los Angeles had organized a hijacking of airliners to fly into the twin towers, would we have surrounded California with the full force of our military in order to launch an all out attack?

The current situation has nothing to do with saving the people of Iraq from a malevolent dictator, eliminating a source of terrorism in the world, or providing for the security of the United States. The current situation has everything to do with a small clique of cunning and super wealthy men with a focused group intent to grab geopolitical control of Eurasia and "full spectrum dominance"<sup>5</sup> of the globe. This clique of men is not the true representative of an enlightened democracy - rather they are truly the

representatives of the military-industrial complex and of several multi-national corporations. This moment - March 2003 - is their *carpe diem* - their time to seize rule of the world in a crescendo of voracious desire for wealth and power.

First, foremost and most immediately we must stop this maniacal and diabolical war in the heart of Eurasia. We must first, foremost and most immediately stop this war because we know that, in the words of Starhawk, "gorilla chest-beating does not constitute diplomacy, having the world's largest collection of phallic projectile weapons does not constitute moral authority, and invasion and penetration are not acts of liberation."

We must support and strengthen international law and the mechanisms to enforce it. International law is the just and civilized way for human beings to deal with individuals who are guilty of crimes against humanity. We here in the United States must turn our fast growing forces for peace and justice on earth towards the reinstatement of the United States in the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty to stop nuclear proliferation. North Korea would not be acting as it is if we had not pulled out of the ABM Treaty and put them on the Axis of Evil list. We need to sign on to the International Criminal Court, the Kyoto Treaty to curb climate change, the Treaty to Ban Land Mines, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on Equal Rights for Women.

The use and enforcement of these institutions of global governance will move us far along the path towards the abolition of war and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction worldwide including the elimination of weapons of mass destruction from the homeland of the superpower called the United States of America. The strength and good will of the other superpower - we, the citizens of the world - can bring these goals to fruition.

We hereby pledge our patriotic duty, "our lives, fortunes and sacred honor" NOT to a Pax Americana but to a Pax Gaia - an order of peace and justice on earth whereby the wealth of the world will shift away from the production of weapons of mass slaughter and towards the healing of the planet and the people. We, the people of the world, will now build a new global order to shift the wealth of the world out of the control of the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other private bank accounts of the less than 300 multi-billionaires who now have as much wealth as three billion people.

We need to take a giant step forward to a new form of democracy. We, the people of the world, must now direct the wealth of the world towards the building of local-to-global economic democracies in order to meet the needs for food, shelter, healthcare, and education for all. This is not a pale, pallid plea for charitable contributions to the begging bowls of the poor. This is a pronouncement upon a criminally unjust system of global exploitation and a prescription for the curing of the worldwide crisis of person/planet pain.

The task before us is that of building a global order based on the full honoring of our common humanity with profound recognition and respect for the dignity of each and every child, woman and man.

A new democratic mandate, which we might call "earth rights democracy," recognizes that the gifts of nature - the land, oil, minerals, other natural resources and a substantial amount of the monetary value accruing to their use - rightly belong to the people of the world as a whole. The earth is our birthright and our common heritage. What we make from our mental and physical labor can rightfully be held as individual property but the profit of the earth should be shared by all and for all.

The cure for economic and war crimes against humanity is to declare once again, yes, RIGHT NOW, a new order of the ages, *novus ordo seclorum*, to form a more perfect union of people and planet fully awakened to the realization that though we are many, we are in truth one humanity, *ephuribus unum*, out of many one.

**O say can you see**<sup>6</sup>, our common humanity, sprung from the earth our mother and seeded from the sun, we are in truth, children of the universe, and no less than the trees and the stars,<sup>7</sup> you and I have the equal right to be here now and to claim this planet and its land and resources as our full, fair and natural birthright.

The current crisis is now the time to pledge allegiance to the earth, and all the life which it supports, One Planet, in our care, irreplaceable, with sustenance and respect for all.<sup>8</sup>

Right now this pledge means **NO WAR ON IRAQ!**

<sup>1</sup> John Stockwell, former CIA Station Chief in Angola in 1976 working for then Director of the CIA, George Bush, spent 13 years in the Agency. This information is from his speech available on video by email to fdorrel@hotmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Robert Dreyfuss, "The Thirty-Year Itch," *Mother Jones*, March/April, 2003, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> "Military-Industrial Complex Speech," Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1961 (Public Papers of the Presidents, 1035-1040), Robert Dreyfuss, op.cit., 41.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Klare, *Resource Wars*.

<sup>5</sup> Suggest Google search for "full spectrum dominance" as dimension of current US foreign policy.

<sup>6</sup> From The Star-Spangled Banner, a poem by Francis Scott Key dating to the War of 1812 between the US and Great Britain. Sung with the melody of a popular 1700 era English tune which celebrated wine, women and song, Congress declared it the US National Anthem in 1931.

<sup>7</sup> Phrases from the *Desiderata*.

<sup>8</sup> From artwork by Janina Lamb, artist; Lamb & Lion Studio (cards, posters, prints bumper stickers) Box 298, Tamworth, NH 03886 USA, Tel: 603-323-7539 Fax: 603-323-8842.