

OMNI NEWSLETTER, SPECIAL FOURTH OF JULY NUMBER ON NATIONALISM, IMPERIALISM, MILITARISM, Building a Culture of Peace, July 3, 2007

Compiled by Dick Bennett

These writings are intended to assist us in calling and writing letters to friends, to our Congressional delegates and other Cong. representatives, and to newspaper editors, to defend a government of, by, and for WE THE PEOPLE. They also offer a foundation for a book club and forums. (Send me what you know or want to say about US militarism for our biblios. and newsletters.) An inseparable subject is PATRIOTISM, to which I'll devote a special Newsletter later.

ZINN ON NATIONALISM (from Project Censored)

"Put Away the Flags" by HOWARD ZINN

On this July 4, 2007, we would do well to renounce nationalism and all its symbols: its flags, its pledges of allegiance, its anthems, its insistence in song that God must single out America to be blessed.

Is not nationalism -- that devotion to a flag, an anthem, a boundary so fierce it engenders mass murder -- one of the great evils of our time, along with racism, along with religious hatred?

These ways of thinking -- cultivated, nurtured, indoctrinated from childhood on -- have been useful to those in power, and deadly for those out of power.

National spirit can be benign in a country that is small and lacking both in military power and a hunger for expansion (Switzerland, Norway, Costa Rica and many more). But in a nation like ours -- huge, possessing thousands of weapons of mass destruction -- what might have been harmless pride becomes an arrogant nationalism dangerous to others and to ourselves.

Our citizenry has been brought up to see our nation as different from others, an exception in the world, uniquely moral, expanding into other lands in order to bring civilization, liberty, democracy.

That self-deception started early.

When the first English settlers moved into Indian land in Massachusetts Bay and were resisted, the violence escalated into war with the Pequot Indians.

The killing of Indians was seen as approved by God, the taking of land as commanded by the Bible. The Puritans cited one of the Psalms, which says: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee, the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the Earth for thy possession."

When the English set fire to a Pequot village and massacred men, women and children, the Puritan theologian Cotton Mather said: "It was supposed that no less than 600 Pequot souls were brought down to hell that day."

On the eve of the Mexican War, an American journalist declared it our "Manifest Destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence." After the invasion of Mexico began, The New York Herald announced: "We believe it is a part of our destiny to civilize that beautiful country." It was always supposedly for benign purposes that our country went to war.

We invaded Cuba in 1898 to liberate the Cubans, and went to war in the

Philippines shortly after, as President McKinley put it, "to civilize and Christianize" the Filipino people.

As our armies were committing massacres in the Philippines (at least 600,000 Filipinos died in a few years of conflict), Elihu Root, our secretary of war, was saying: "The American soldier is different from all other soldiers of all other countries since the war began. He is the advance guard of liberty and justice, of law and order, and of peace and happiness."

We see in Iraq that our soldiers are not different. They have, perhaps against their better nature, killed thousands of Iraq civilians. And some soldiers have shown themselves capable of brutality, of torture. Yet they are victims, too, of our government's lies.

How many times have we heard President Bush tell the troops that if they die, if they return without arms or legs, or blinded, it is for "liberty,"

for "democracy"?

One of the effects of nationalist thinking is a loss of a sense of proportion. The killing of 2,300 people at Pearl Harbor becomes the justification for killing 240,000 in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The killing of 3,000 people on Sept. 11 becomes the justification for killing tens of thousands of people in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And nationalism is given a special virulence when it is said to be blessed by Providence. Today we have a president, invading two countries in four years, who announced on the campaign trail in 2004 that God speaks through him.

We need to refute the idea that our nation is different from, morally superior to, the other imperial powers of world history.

We need to assert our allegiance to the human race, and not to any one nation.

Howard Zinn, a World War II bombardier, is the author of the best-selling "A People's History of the United States" (Perennial Classics, 2003, latest edition).

BRUCE GAGNON DESCRIBES USA AND HOW TO CHANGE IT SO WHAT DO WE DO NOW?



I often hear from people asking me, "What should we do about all this? How can we stop Bush?"

I would first say that we must move beyond blaming Bush. The fact of **U.S. empire** is bigger than Bush. Hopefully by now, all of us are clearer about how the Democrats have been, and are now, involved in enabling the whole U.S. military empire building plan. It is about **corporate domination**. Bush is just the front man for the big money. So to me that is step #1.

Step #2 is to openly acknowledge that as a nation, and we as citizens, benefit from this U.S. military and economic empire. By keeping our collective military boot on the necks of the people of the world we get control of a higher percentage of the world's resources. We, 5% of the global population in the U.S., use 25% of the global resource base. This reality creates serious moral questions that cannot be ignored.

Step #3 is to recognize that we are addicted to war and to violence. The very weaving together of our nation was predicated on violence when we began the extermination of the Native populations and introduced the institution of slavery. A veteran of George Washington's Army, in 1779, said, "I really felt guilty as I applied the torch to huts that were homes of content until we ravagers came spreading desolation everywhere....Our mission here is ostensibly to destroy but may it not transpire, that we pillagers are carelessly sowing the seed of Empire." The soldier wrote this as Washington's Army set out to remove the Iroquois civilization from New York state so that the U.S. government could expand its borders westward toward the Mississippi River. The creation of the American empire was underway.

Our history since then has been endless war. Two-Time Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient Major General Smedley D. Butler, U.S. Marine Corps, told the story in his book *War is a Racket*. Butler recalls in his book, "I spent 33 years and 4 months in active military service....And during that period I spent most of my time as a high-class muscle man for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers. In short, I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism....Thus I helped make Mexico and especially Tampico safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street....I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1902-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras right for American fruit companies in 1903. In China in 1927, I helped see to it that Standard Oil went on its way unmolested."

Step # 4 We have to begin to change how we think about our country. We have to learn to understand what oligarchy means. I'll save you the trouble of having to look up the definition - ***A government in which power is in the hands of a few***. When you have lost your democracy then what do the citizens do? They must fight (non-violently) to take it back. This of course means direct action and sometimes civil disobedience. Virtually everything good in our nation (abolition of slavery movement, women's suffrage, civil rights movement, anti-war movements, etc) have come from people stepping up when they were needed. Calling for impeachment by the Congress becomes imperative today. Are you in or out?

Step #5 Forget the "every man for himself" mythology. We are all brainwashed in this country to believe in the rugged individualism story. But movement for change can only happen in community - working with others. So forget the ego centric notion that "one great man" is going to come save us. It's going to take a village - in fact all the villages. Just like an addict goes to a group to seek help for addiction, knowing they can't do it themselves, so we must form community to work for the needed change if we are to protect our children's future.

Step # 6 What about my job? Another smothering myth in America is success. Keep your nose clean and don't rock the boat. Don't get involved in politics, especially calling for a revolution of values (like Martin Luther King Jr. did) or you will get labeled and then you can forget about owning that castle on the hill you've always dreamed of. In a way we become controlled by our own subservience to the success mythology. We keep ourselves in line because success and upward mobility become more important than protecting free speech, clean water, clean air, and ending an out of control government bent on world domination. Free our minds, free our bodies and we free the nation.

Step #7 Learn to work well with others. Sure we all want to be stars. But in the end we have to learn to set aside our egos if we want to be able to work with others to bring about the needed changes. Cindy Sheehan should not be hammered just for telling the truth about the Democrats playing footsie with Bush on the war.

Step # 8 It's the money. How can I do this peace work when I have to work full-time just to pay the mortgage? I'd like to help but I've got bills to pay! Maybe we can begin to look at the consumerist life we

lead and see that our addiction to the rat race keeps us from being fully engaged in the most important issue of our time - which is protecting the future generations. How can we begin to explore cooperative living arrangements, by building community, that free us up economically to be able to get more involved?

Step # 9 Learn to read again. Many of us don't read enough. We spend our time in front of the TV, which is a primary tool that the power structure uses to brainwash us. We've got to become independent thinkers again and teach our kids to think for themselves. Reading and talking to others is a key. [Read more history](#). All the answers and lessons can be found there.

Step #10 Learn to trust again and have fun. Some of the nicest people in the world are doing political work. Meet them and become friends with them and your life will change for the better.

These are just a few of my ideas. I'd like to ask you if you could send me your ideas about what we should do to get out from behind the eight-ball. Send me your ideas and I will post some of them on [my blog](#). By sharing our thoughts with one another just maybe we can speed up the needed changes. Write me at globalnet@mindspring.com

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William Blum
 Anti-Empire Report, March 5, 2007
<http://killinghope.org/aer43.htm>

BOOKS

US ECONOMIC IMPERIALISM

Author of *Confessions of an Economic Hitman*, Perkins' new book is *The Secret History of the American Empire*. His interview by Amy Goodman June 5 is excellent.

IMPERIALISM (books from Dick's bibliographies nos. 23-25)

#25 IMPERIALISM

--Johnson, Chalmers. *Nemesis: The Last Days of the American Republic*. Interv. By Amy Goodman 2-27. U.S. imperial overreach is destroying U.S. constitutional government. Rev. *In These Times* (March 2007). "The Bush administration shocked the international community with its aggressive militarism, its belief in unitary executive power, its use of torture and its good-versus-evil understanding of global affairs." "Johnson's most distinctive contribution to the debate about U.S. empire is his documentation of America's vast network of overseas military bases...."

--Kagan, Robert. *Dangerous Nation: America's Place in the World from Its Earliest Days to the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*. Knopf, 2007. Shows how the U.S. was always a player, and often a ruthless one, in the great game of nations.

--Scahill, Jeremy. *Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army*. Blackwater, founded by the right-wing Christian, Eric Prince, trains and deploys mercenaries around the world for the Bush Admin. This enables Bush to have not only more than 700 regular military bases globally, but many more through this private army. See author's "Bush's Shadow Army," *Nation* (April 2, 2007).

#24 IMPERIALISM

---Two Marine Generals Against US Imperialism

In *David M. Shoup: A Warrior Against War* by Howard Jablon (Rowman & Littlefield, 2005) we learn that

Shoup began to develop anti-imperialist sympathies during his early tour as a Marine in China in the 1920s. Former Marine Commandant General David Shoup was an opponent of the Vietnam war and a supporter of VVAW. We all know about General Smedley Butler and his "War Is a Racket" writings. For those of you who may have missed it, there was a book published about General Butler: *Maverick Marine: General Smedley D. Butler and the Contradictions of American Military History* by Hans Schmidt (U P of Kentucky, 1987).

--Foster, John Bellamy. *Naked Imperialism: The U. S. Pursuit of Global Dominance*. Monthly Review P, 2006. The book examines the "transformation in U.S. global policy and ideology, showing the political and economic roots of the new militarism and its consequences," and shows "how U.S.-led global capitalism is preparing the way for a new age of barbarism and demonstrates the necessity for resistance and solidarity on a global scale."

--*Pox Americana: Exposing the American Empire*. Edited by Bellamy Foster and Robert W. McChesney, Monthly Review Press, 2006. Review by Richard S. Drake, Little Rock Free Press -June, 2006. Foster and McChesney have brought together the writings of some of the best thinkers in the world today, who have examined America and its place in the world, and have provided some sharp critical analysis. In the preface, they provide the reader with an excellent definition of American imperialism: "The primary goals of U.S. imperialism have always been to open up investment opportunities to U.S. corporations and to allow such corporations to gain preferential access to crucial natural resources."

--Kinzer, Stephen. *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*. Times Books, 2006. Rev. Laura Washington, "Overthrow, Over, and Over." *In These Times* (July 2006). Kinzer's "chronicle of America's role in interventions into 14 sovereign nations posits failure and avarice as our lasting progeny." Rev. by Robert Sherrill in *Texas Observer*, "America's 100 Years of Overthrow": "George Bush and Dick Cheney may get your vote as the worst, the dumbest, the most venal, and the most dangerous bunglers in foreign affairs in U.S. history. But this book will show you that their equals have appeared before. Author Stephen Kinzer's [Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change From Hawaii to Iraq](#) (Times Books, 2006) is an infuriating recitation of our government's military bullying over the past 110 years -- a century of interventions around the world that resulted in the overthrow of 14 governments -- in Hawaii, Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Vietnam, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, Panama, Chile, Iran, Grenada, Afghanistan, and ... Iraq." <http://www.alternet.org/audits/39416/> Also rev. *The Nation* (7-17/24), and *Monthly Rev.* (January 2007).. [Also see many books by Noam Chomsky and William Blum's *Rogue State* and *Killing Hope*.]

--Howard Zinn, *A Power Governments Cannot Suppress*. City Lights Books, 2006.

--WHY THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD DISLIKE OUR ADMINISTRATIONS. These books were reviewed together in *Peacework* (July-August 2006): *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* by Stephen Kinzer; *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* by Odd Arne Westad; *America Against the World: How We Are Different and Why We Are Disliked* by Andrew Kohut and Bruce Stokes; and *Friendly Fire: Losing Friends and Making Enemies in the Anti-American Century* by Julia Sweig.

--*For Blood and Empire*, Anti-Flag's new album about the imperialist Project for a New American Century (PNAC), part of the youth movement against US aggressions.

--*Superpower on Crusade*. Rienner Pub., 2006. Exposes origins and implementation of Bush admin.' foreign policies.

--*Pirates of the Caribbean: Access of Hope* by Tariq Ali. Alternatives to US military and economic domination in Latin America. E.g., Venezuela's Chavez spends oil money for people (free education and medical care).

--Gerson, Joseph. *Empire and the Bomb: How the United States Uses*

Nuclear Weapons to Dominate the World. Pluto, 2006. Rev. *Peacework* (Nov. 2006). Bush has learned no lessons from his own or from US past. "Instead, he insists that the crisis with Pyongyang be resolved on the terms that he dictates," and even threatens nuclear war. "This crisis is not an aberration. Rather, it is systemic produce of sixty years of US nuclear arrogance."

--Grandin, Greg. *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism*. Metropolitan, 2006. Rev. *The Nation* (Nov. 27, 2006). "...the latest pub. in Metropolitan's indispensable American Empire Project." Sample contents: By 1930 the US had sent warships into LA ports at least 6000 times. "Grandin is especially good on the odious 'public diplomacy' of Reagan/Bush I/Bush II, a giant step in the degradation of American democracy." Also rev. *Monthly Rev.* (Jan. 2007).

--Fisk, Robert. *The Great War for Civilization: The Conquest of the Middle East*. Fisk is the great reporter for London's *The Independent*. See his lecture presented weekend of Dec. 16 at the Muslim Public Affairs Council's Annual Convention, shown by Amy Goodman Wed. 12-20 on "Democracy Now." www.democracynow.org

IMPERIALISM AND THE THIRD WORLD

Bengelsdorf, Carollee, et al., eds. *The Selected Writings of Eqbal Ahmad*. Columbia UP, 2006. Rev. *Monthly Review* (Feb. 2007): "the most articulate, analytical, and passionate voice from the third world since Franz Fanon" and perhaps "the most astute political thinker the Islamic world produced in the twentieth century."

#23 U. S. IMPERIALISM (see: Corporation, Empire, Terrorism)

---A chief cause of US imperialism is the delusion among the majority of the public that US interventions are good because the US is good. For a thorough debunking of US international benignity read William Blum's 2 books.

---Foster, John Bellamy. *Naked Imperialism: America's Pursuit of Global Dominance*. Monthly Review P, 2005. Examines the political and economic roots of U. S. militarism and its consequences. Shows how U. S.-led global capitalism is preparing the way for a new age of barbarism and demonstrates the necessity for resistance (from MRP's catalog).

---Rabe, Stephen. *U.S. Intervention in British Guiana: A Cold War Story*. U of NC P, 2005. Teaches that regime change can turn disastrously into ethnic warfare. A story the CIA tried to keep secret.

ATTACKING CUBA

---PENTAGON TREASONABLE MILITARISM

Psy War on Cuba: The Declassified History of US Anti-Castro Propaganda by Jon Elliston and *Body of Secrets* by James Bamford. These 2 books were reviewed in *Peacework* (July-August 2006). They "reveal that the US military approved a plan to attack US cities, citizens, and military bases—and blame it on Cuba." Following the failure of the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1962, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff approved plans to attack the US and blame Cuba, the plan code named Operation Northwoods and titled "Justification for US Military Intervention in Cuba."

MILITARISM

MILITARISM, THE DISASTROUS POWER OF THE PENTAGON/CORPORATE/WHITE HOUSE COMPLEX

[Dick: That the Pentagon would send a Marine Lt. General to Fayetteville to promote the Iraq War was reprehensible but even worse was the UofA organization that invited him to J. William Fulbright's home town, since the Pentagon-White House-Corporate-Mainstream Media is the most powerful propaganda organization in the history of humankind. Obviously UA's Political Animals Club had not read J. W. Fulbright's *The Pentagon Propaganda Machine*. .]

--Carroll, James. *House of War: The Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power*. "One cannot understand the impact of the Pentagon on U.S. foreign policy over the past sixty years without reading *House of War*." Lawrence Korb. "Through the sixty-year story of the Pentagon, Carroll draws a clear and deadly arc from the bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to the vengeance-ridden policies of today." Howard Zinn. Rev. Susan Douglas, "Regime Change and Its Discontents." *In These Times* (July 2006). Kinzer (above: Imperialism) and Carroll "make the more sweeping case that the militarization of the United States had corrupted our moral statures and our ability to conduct foreign policy."

The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War. 2005. Author: Andrew J. Bacevich. [During the latter half of the 20th century the United States slipped, almost imperceptibly, into a general state of belief that all its major challenges could be met, and all its largest problems solved, by going to war. [\[more\]](#)

Rev. by Anatol Lieven: "A key justification of the Bush administration's purported strategy of 'democratising' the Middle East is the argument that democracies are pacific, and that Muslim democracies will therefore eventually settle down peacefully under the benign hegemony of the US. Yet, as Andrew Bacevich points out in one of the most acute analyses of America to have appeared in recent years, the United States itself is in many ways a militaristic country, and becoming more so." (opening of a long review)

Higgs, Robert. *Resurgence of the Warfare State: The Crisis Since 9/11*. Independent Institute, 2005. On U.S. government's ill-judged "war on terrorism": quick enactment of the USA Patriot Act, federal takeover of airport security, massive increases in war spending, and carnage abroad by leaders unaccountable for their costly and deadly mistakes.

The American Military Today, ed. by Tod Ensign

<http://www.thenewpress.com/books/americasmil.htm>

America's Military Today provides an eye-opening survey of the way the modern US armed forces enlist, train, and deploy their all-volunteer force. Long-standing soldiers' rights attorney Tod Ensign brings together a range of expert commentators to examine key issues. The book also includes a selection of astonishing testimony from soldiers on active duty in Iraq providing a harrowing picture of daily life at the sharp end of the armed services. Tod Ensign is an attorney and the director of Citizen Soldier, a not-for-profit GI and veterans' rights advocacy project. He is the author of *Military Life: The Insider's Guide*, a co-author of *GI Guinea Pigs: How the Pentagon Exposed Our Troops to Hazards Deadlier than War*, and a contributor to *Collateral Damage*, *Medal of Dishonor*, *Against the Vietnam War*, and *BioTerror: Manufacturing Wars the American Way*.

Piven, Frances Fox. *The War at Home: The Domestic Costs of Bush's Militarism*. New P, 2004. Impact of Iraq war on domestic policy.

“Hijacking Catastrophe,” video .

RESISTING MILITARISM

--*A Mind Is a Terrible Thing to Waste: A Guide to the Demilitarization of America's Youth and Students.* The “Demil Guide” may be viewed at:

http://www.wagingpeace.org/menu/programs/youth-outreach/demilguide/demil_guide_2005_web.pdf

BUSH PREPARES FOR MARTIAL LAW

Bush Order Gives Himself Power to Control the Entire Federal Govt. (from Tom Markham)

I wonder if 2008 will be too late. I wonder if we will have elections at all. One of the other emails I received mentioned this news item:

In a presidential directive (I.e., executive order) that Bush quietly released on May 9, he gives himself the power to control the entire federal government -- not just the executive branch -- in the event of national emergency. Among many other things, he makes himself responsible for "orderly succession" and "appropriate transition of leadership." The document also contains some classified parts. You can read about this at

http://progressive.org/mag_wx051807

They've been getting ready for this for a long time. Reagan had some similar ideas back in [1984](#) (I think that date is just coincidental); he set up enough prison camps (still lying empty and ready) to hold a few million people. But that wasn't enough. In 2003, Bush's people set up a 10-year plan called "[Endgame](#)" which further details how the prison camps will be used. In 2006 they awarded Halliburton a [\\$385 million contract](#) to build more detention camps. The ostensible reason for most of the prison camps is in anticipation of a massive influx of Mexican illegal refugees, but they've already shown (with Guantanamo) that they can turn one facility to another use when convenient. There was also some stuff about [forced labor](#) in the detention camps. This is all over a year old, but it takes new life in view of Bush's recent "presidential directive."

Where do you stand on the [paranoia scale](#)? Do you think we can fix this thing with business as usual, with electoral politics? Or do you think it's too late for that? Or do you, like me, try to function on both levels? None of us can be sure what will happen. The consensus trance of the newspapers and television and radio is so soothing -- it doesn't mention what we know, that Bush has lied over and over and over. It's so easy, so pleasant, to forget that fact.

And on the other extreme, I have to keep reminding myself not to be overcome by **fear**, because that kind of fear breeds [authoritarianism](#), which is precisely the root of the problem. There is a tendency to panic when one realizes that one may be facing problems much bigger than one anticipated or expected or even dreamed of. But that gush of adrenalin dates back to our pre-technology origins, when the best response to an unanticipated problem involved a lot of rapid use of one's legs. A more useful response to our modern predicament is to treat it like a chess game -- use your mind, not your body, to think this through. We're down a bishop or maybe even a rook, but the game isn't over yet. Keep calm, steady your breathing, and think.

So, what can we do about this kind of problem? The **authoritarians** control the newspapers and television, but they don't yet have the internet, nor have they stopped word-of-mouth. Talk to your neighbors. Spread the message of freedom, diversity, nonconformity, tolerance, love, and hope; that is the antidote to authoritarianism. If this message makes sense to you, forward it to other people.

SEE OMNI'S NEWSLETTERS ON IMPEACHING BUSH AND CHENEY

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