

Repression Past and Yet to Come

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SP - James Cooke - If one listens closely to those directing U.S. foreign policy, accusations, infighting, and panic are clearly audible. If one listens closer still, bursting seams can be heard. The U.S. corporate-ruled elite are in a crisis they can't escape from; what this means for the public is easily discernable, if one only listens.

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[The Coming Repression](#)

James Cooke

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The bickering between the policy-makers has a solid foundation. By now, it should be clear that the heyday of U.S. economic domination has run its course. The upper-classes no longer enjoy the spectacular productive advantages they had for the first fifty years after WWII; however, no one in power ever goes down without a fight. The continued outburst of U.S. militarism is merely a reflection of a decadent elite, hell-bent on maintaining the status quo. At this point, keeping things orderly requires turning the world upside town.

Take into consideration the recent insubordination of at least eight U.S. military Generals. The most vocal of the rebels is Gen. John Batiste, who commanded the Army's 1st Infantry Division in Iraq. No one has been more critical or public in their denunciations of Donald Rumsfeld, who is accused of poor strategy, not having a "plan for the peace", not authorizing enough troops, and not listening to the Generals sound advice (keep in mind that all the Generals accept the atrocious "war on terror" propaganda, as well as the legitimacy of the Iraq War in the first place). A particularly revealing criticism from Batiste is that "America is not mobilized for war"; this statement, more than any other, reveals the true scope of the emerging crisis.

The General was rightfully shocked upon returning from Iraq? where both the Reserves and National Guard are extended to their limit in massive operations? to find the majority of

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Americans busying themselves with leisure activities and petty distractions. What did the General expect to see? One can only guess. Being "mobilized for war" does imply many things however. It means that the country supports the war not only morally, but enthusiastically. It implies that Americans are willing to continue warfare by using all of society's resources, while sacrificing in other areas of social life. It assumes that the population expects more war to come, and is prepared to send oneself, or one's children to die. It begs to be asked: why, after three wars (counting Lebanon), and more war to come, are Americans not in a state of "war preparedness"? This enormous contradiction has been brewing since Afghanistan was invaded, with each new war bringing the discrepancy closer to resolution via explosion.

The disparity between the General's realistic military advice and Bush's seemingly naive war-policy has a logical foundation. Unlike the military, who view operations from a number-crunching, get-the-job-done perspective, Bush & Co. understand the social consequences of warfare. War in America is now, more than ever, a dirty word only to be used as a last resort. The history of civilization has shown that unpopular wars lead to civil unrest, revolt, and revolution. The White House knows this, and cannot rely upon brute force to coax the masses into fighting. In an attempt to please their corporate superiors, while not stirring up American society too much, the White House PR folks decided upon the catchy "War on Terror" as a solution.

Bush has only been successful in waging wars because he ignored his Generals, and kept the public in the dark. U.S. citizens do not understand the international significance of the continued aggression, nor the level of carnage carried out in their name. Americans see the "war on terror" for what it is? a joke; much like the highly-touted war on drugs, war on poverty, or whatever large issue the government tries to tackle through theatrics, but ignores in reality. To the dismay of the Generals, Americans are desensitized to such jargon, and are unable to bridge the connection between the "war on terror", and an actual war. This propaganda success of Bush's is beginning to turn into a problem? the Middle East has been harder to dominate than previously thought, what was to be a simple "shock and awe" procedure now requires a broad, traditional war, meaning, actual acceptance of reality from U.S. citizens.

To emphasize the political character of military decisions in regards to "mobilization", a quick look into the realm of Bush's lackeys, the Democrats, is in order. The Democrats, seeing no way to criticize Republican policy, since they agree with it, can only bicker about "tactics". In almost every case these tactics involve a more aggressive "war on terror", but with less troops. The Democrats tout technology and "rapid deploy forces" (special forces, commandos, etc) as a cure to the gigantic blunder that is the Middle East. These amazing cure-alls, if ever put into practice, might have a temporary pacifying effect on the U.S. public, but would not change anything as far as death, destruction, and outrage in the Middle East is concerned. More technology simply means more indiscriminate killing, combined with less accountability. Thus,

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The Democrats are flaunting the interests of the corporate elite, with a populist twist.

In a desperate attempt to 'mobilize' the U.S. for war, Republicans, Democrats and the ever-flattering media have gone to lengths few would have expected. To help sustain the feeling of fear needed to maintain such aggressive policies, fake terror plots continue to gain enormous media attention, even though evidence has shown the plans to be either completely without merit, or the work of government agents involved in the grossest forms of entrapment. The media has continued to stand by in total complicity. Like 9/11 before them, every bit of new evidence of an alleged terrorist plot seems only to support the skeptics. As of now, the recent London Terror Plot fits the same bill: no bombs have been found, and many of the 'suspects' were completely unable to perform the act, since they either had no airline tickets or passports. After every such 'discovery?', politicians and the media automatically glorify the successes of restricting civil liberties and global war; Bush quickly interpreted the charade as a 'stark reminder that this nation is at war with Islamic fascists.'

The terror alert couldn't have come at a better time for those experiencing three political disasters? Iraq, the war in Lebanon, and the defeat of Joseph Lieberman by a virtually unknown anti-war challenger (Ted Lamont). The British authorities revealed that the U.S. demanded the plot be 'exposed' a week in advance, no doubt to turn public attention away from the harsh spectacle of losing wars and the defeat of a prominent pro-war Senator. The spectacle was made complete by Dick Cheney's lecturing the people of Connecticut? in light of the Lieberman defeat? on the necessity of war, while Bush made it a point to inform the public that it was Hezbollah who suffered defeat in Lebanon, in defiance of all reliable testimony.

The war in Lebanon is a case-in-point example of the intensified desperateness of the ruling classes. The media and politicians were caught in a frenzy denouncing the 'terrorist group' Hezbollah (a political and military organization with seats in parliament and broad public support), who they blamed for forcing Israel's hand in destroying the entire country of Lebanon. While the massacre was taking place, and with the U.S. sadistically opposing a stop to the slaughter, the media uncritically echoed the vague, Orwellian 'sustained peace' rationalization put forth by nearly every politician; Condoleezza Rice was given the unpleasant task of selling this sound-bite abroad, and lost all credibility when she justified the war as 'the birth pangs of a new Middle East?'. Perhaps the pinnacle of outrageousness came from 'progressive Democrat' Howard Dean, who denounced the Iraqi Prime Minister by calling him an 'anti-Semite?', merely because he condemned Israel's obvious war crimes, though in much more delicate language. In government new lows are being achieved daily.

What must be emphasized is that this tragic-comic state of affairs will continue to be a

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foundation for further war and atrocity? the ridiculousness of fake terror plots, not to mention the silly ?war on terror? in general, are the last bulwarks the government has against its citizens; all other tactics in waging aggressive war have been used and exposed.

Fortunately, the U.S. public? like the people of Iraq? has proven harder to pacify than expected. Politicians are finding it difficult to maintain their careers while doing the dirtiest propaganda work expected of them (see Joseph Lieberman); after popular journalists write a war-mongering piece, they are flooded with accusatory letters. The repeated attempts of the media to boil blood have been met with vicious outrage, directed at the authors, rather than the ?terrorists?. Proof of the rising consciousness of Americans was gauged in a poll by Ohio University; according to the study, more than a third of the American public (rightly) suspects that federal officials assisted in the 9/11 attack, or took no action in stopping them in order to wage war in the Middle East. This shocking statistic reveals the utter distrust Americans have of their government, making the new terror scares all the more redundant.

The end result is that government and the media have been irreconcilably distanced from public opinion. The Democrats are reduced to using the ?support our troops? and ?stay the course? rationalizations for war, while the Republicans appear all the crazier and fascistic in their fear-conjuring. Public opinion has been suffocated and spit-on. If further repressive laws are passed in light of the latest terror threat, as they seem likely to be, it will show the shallowness of U.S. democracy; if such police-state policies are passed based solely on fear, and with absolutely zero evidence, democratic rule will have been severely destroyed?what vestiges are left after 9/11 anyway.

As the gulf widens between truth and fiction in everyday political life, those exposing the lies of government appear increasingly radical, while those who advance the government?s deceptions ? or stand by complacently (the Democrats) ? look all the more conservative. Society is being quickly polarized. The witty humor of John Stewart?s The Daily Show can now be correctly deemed a threat to the existing government; Stephen Colbert?s ?routine? at the White House Correspondents Dinner was a damning critique of Bush?s falsifications. As events rapidly unfold, and the lies of government increase to keep pace, exposing them grows into an intolerable menace. We can expect the already frightening attacks on the press and dissident groups to increase? and that just for beginners. The internet cannot continue to coexist alongside such a diseased and bloated government. The proposed ?two-tiered? system of internet use may be instrumental in destroying much of the threatening material available today, though less subtle methods of mass censorship seem all but inevitable. In order for such a crisis-ridden elite to sustain themselves, truth must be abolished; it is this fact that lies behind the recent attack on civil liberties, and is the same process that has marked the deterioration of freedoms in every repressive regime in history.

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The inconvenient truth is that the U.S. elite cannot give up the wealth of Iraq; too much investment has been made, and doing so would only open the door for foreign competitors to seize the void, outdoing U.S. corporations in securing massive oil profits and markets? leaving Iraq would be tantamount to abandoning America?s position as the sole global superpower. Iran is of course on the to-do list as well. To execute and maintain this bi-partisan strategy, extensive repression will be necessary. One shouldn?t underestimate the savvy nature of those in power; they understand perfectly well the importance of the masses in their policy-making. They also realize how they?ve failed in ?mobilizing? the U.S. population thus far; this doesn?t mean they will simply concede. Any number of extraordinary plots or imminent disasters could play out, perhaps fulfilling the need for ?a new Pearl Harbor?, as envisioned by the Neo-Cons in the Project for a New American Century. The last disaster was only good for three wars. Although speculating about catastrophe is never practical, in this case it seems appropriate, especially since our government?s magic hat is empty? they?ve only one card left to play.

The wide gulf between truth and fiction in our society is a clear reflection of the interests of the super-wealthy who finance the media?s fabrications, in distinction to the working-class people expected to sacrifice themselves to the war machine. The slowly-mounting inequities in society are reaching a boiling point, prompting reaction and distraction from politicians, who by pursuing their own interests, are hastening the conflagration. When a rat is backed into a corner it will fight ferociously for survival; the corporate giants of the U.S., unable to maintain hegemony through ?normal? business practices, are using the only tools they have at their disposal.