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A Twenty-First Century Anti-War Perspective

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A TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY ANTI-WAR PERSPECTIVE

Abstract

At the close of World War II, nations around the world understood the threat to humanity that another major war and other acts of violence could pose to the entire world. It's for this reason that the U.N. Charter outlaws "the threat or use of force" as an underlying principle. Yet, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, one nation goes far beyond all others in violating this principle: The United States of America. From Latin America to Africa to Southeast Asia, and the Middle East, the amount of force used to project its power has been illegal and immoral. In a twenty-first century anti-war perspective, we must move beyond the confines of the state-corporate run "legacy of domination" and into a "legacy of freedom," as Murray Bookchin suggests, that challenges illegitimate power with a consciousness and sensibility that prevents further acts of aggression.

When writing the introduction to his national bestselling book, *Overthrow*, former Boston Globe foreign correspondent and New York Times bureau chief, Stephen Kinzer, commented on U.S. military aggression, saying that, "no nation in modern history has done this so often, in so many places so far from its own shores" (Kinzer, 2006).

The historical record is not a pleasant one. It is long and brutal. This record of U.S. military aggression can also be helpful in understanding an anti-war perspective.

Yet, some readers may view the previous sentences, and the ones to follow, with uneasiness or denial. It seems to me that there are two basic reasons for this. One reason is simply that applying the same standards to ourselves as we apply to others, namely the principle of universality, can be a threatening position to take.

For more elite sectors of society, applying this principle cuts away the foundation from which their power and privilege is built, as it reveals the hypocritical, and often times criminal, acts that sustain their elite position.

For other sectors of society, a type of subservience to power can reach deep into people's psyche. For some understanding as to how this develops, Erich Fromm's timeless work, *Escape from Freedom*, offers substantial insight. To summarize in brief, Fromm investigates the psychological relationships, stemming from socio-economic and political conditions, which keep people subservient to power in order to veil feelings of aloneness, hopelessness, powerlessness, insecurity, and despair. Since these feelings stem from the social, economic, and political make-up of societies with large concentrations of power, it is pervasive throughout broad sectors of society. Given the large concentrations of power and wealth in our own society, and the psychological impact that follows, to call into question certain presuppositions about one's own country is difficult if not nearly impossible for many. To be critical of our nation's policies could undermine the very power that can be used to veil deep-seated feelings of aloneness, hopelessness, powerlessness, insecurity, and despair. This could include rallying behind a strong leader and state with cries for patriotism or being tempted to protect a nation's wealth and power in the world even if it means acquiring and maintaining its position through violent and unjust means. Therefore, applying the principle of universality can be difficult for many. (Fromm, 1941)

The second reason why some will view this anti-war perspective with uneasiness or denial is because certain parts of the historical record can be obscured and forgotten.

The reason for this is all too familiar. George Orwell's preface to the first edition of his bestselling book, *Animal Farm*, offers an illustrative explanation. As is widely suggested, *Animal Farm* offers a critique of totalitarian societies, using the Soviet Union as the example, and how their doctrinal systems function. In his preface, though, Orwell explains how the propaganda systems of modern democracies, using England as his example, have similar results to that of totalitarian regimes. As he explains:

The sinister fact about literary censorship in England is that it is largely voluntary. Unpopular ideas can be silenced, and inconvenient facts kept dark, without the need for any official ban not because the Government intervened, but because of a general tacit agreement that 'it wouldn't do' to mention that particular fact . . . It is not exactly forbidden to say this, that, or the other, but it is 'not done' to say it, just

as in mid-Victorian times it was ‘not done’ to mention trousers in the presence of a lady.

Furthermore:

Anyone who challenges the prevailing orthodoxy finds himself silenced with surprising effectiveness. A genuinely unfashionable opinion is almost never given a fair hearing, either in the popular press or in the highbrow periodicals. (Orwell, 1945)

It is for this reason that certain parts of our own nation’s historical record are “kept dark,” that is, they are “unfashionable” and is just “not done to say it,” and therefore can become “silenced with surprising effectiveness,” as Orwell describes. Orwell’s preface becomes even more illustrative since, almost as if on cue, it was “silenced” from being published. It’s “unfashionable” for Western opinion to reveal its own propagandistic tendencies, yet it’s fashionable to reveal and focus on others’, especially that of our “enemies.”

In order to understand an anti-war perspective, it is necessary to review part of the “unfashionable” record of our nation’s military interventions. Since this is an essay and not a history book, I will only offer a glimpse of this record, since, unfortunately, it is a rather long and gruesome one.

1. Post-World War Era

In response to the massive atrocities that were experienced during World War I and II, the world powers established the U.N. Charter and a set of international laws, presumably in order to prevent future wars from occurring. Brian Urquhart, whose respected 41-year career in the U.N. began with its inception in 1945, describes the widely held view of the post-war world.

The hard-won lesson of both world wars was that competing national security systems or military alliances lead to an arms race, which in turn leads to a situation where even a relatively small international misunderstanding or dispute in a sensitive area can trigger a major war. That was the reason why the founders of the United Nations were so anxious to establish a system of collective security (Urquhart, 1989).

An international system built on the U.N. Charter and international law, Urquhart explains, “would make it possible to scale down national security systems” and offer “a far greater degree of stability and security in the world” (Urquhart, 1989).

The central problem that arises though is the national interest tendencies that stem from nation-states and economic elite who formulate policy. Priority is given to their own power interests above international peace and security, and, as one can tell from the ever-growing environmental crisis and threats of nuclear catastrophe, above humanity as well.

These nation-state tendencies have been a detriment to the international system that was envisioned in the U.N. Charter. As Urquhart explains, the call for sensible international guidelines is now “often regarded as naïve or even subversive” to nation-states that wish to compete for a type of global hegemony (Urquhart, 1989).

For those of us who wish to live in a more peaceful and stable world, we should seriously contemplate the ramifications of our own nation’s actions. Otherwise, as Urquhart warns:

Will it take another world disaster to reinforce the lessons we have already learned in two world wars? If so, the outlook is grim, for we have created the weapons for a terminal disaster. We cannot afford another world war to convince us of what we know already. There is only one serious alternative – to make international institutions work properly. (Urquhart, 1989)

Although some international institutions are questionable—namely, those that have been created for the benefit of certain national interests at the expense of others (NATO, IMF, WTO, World Bank, etc.)—what is not in question are the basic principles of the U.N. Charter and international law, which is the only “serious alternative” to prevent nation-states from destroying each other.

On the other hand, we may wish to call into question the very legitimacy of nation-state-corporate rule, and seek different modes of organization that challenge centralized power and illegitimate authority that pose a threat to democracy, freedom, and even our existence. I will return to this point later.

2. Inadmissibility of the Threat or Use of Force

There is a basic principle that underlies all international law—a principle that, if violated, is the most egregious crime that a nation can commit. This principle is articulated in the U.N. Charter.

All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. (Charter, 1945)

Furthermore,

All members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered (Charter, 1945).

Violations of this basic principle are regarded as “acts of aggression,” which is no slight crime. United States judge, Justice Jackson, explains the basis of this principle outlawing the use and threat of force in his opening statement at the Nuremberg Trials.

The common sense of men after the first World War demanded, however, that the law's condemnation of war reach deeper, and that the law condemn not merely uncivilized ways of waging war, but also the waging in any way of uncivilized wars of aggression (Jackson, 1945).

Justice Jackson goes on to explain how international conventions have repeatedly recognized "wars of aggression" as such a breach of the "common sense of men" that it "constitutes an international crime against the human species" (Jackson, 1945).

In fact, Jackson continues, it was the Nazi's "plot and the act of aggression which we charge to be crimes" (Jackson, 1945).

Of course, centralized power and nation-states will always attempt to justify their use of force. It is, therefore, necessary to clarify this principle, as the U.N. Charter does. There are two basic exceptions to the inadmissibility of force, and both involve the approval and action of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The reason, Urquhart explains, is because the "idea of a collegial Security Council dealing with problems of peace and security for the common good, rather than on the basis of individual national interest" can alleviate "competing national security systems" and allow for a more stable "collective security," so as to not forget that "hard-won lesson" from the world wars (Urquhart, 1989).

The ability to use force would be allowed if there was unanimous consent in the UNSC that abided by the U.N. Charter's principles for discretion, or if a nation faces imminent bombardment, in which case the right to self-defense is permissible until the U.N.S.C. can act.

As the U.N. Charter explains,

In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its members confer in the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf. (Charter, 1945)

Furthermore, as the Charter dictates, force can only be used as a last resort when all peaceful means have been exhausted.

These basic ideas and principles are rather sensible, straightforward, and uncontroversial. The immediate task is to apply these standards to our own country, so as to be sure that our own actions are those that move toward a more peaceful and free world rather than a more unstable and destructive world.

3. The Nicaraguan Example

On September 11, 2001, a major terrorist crime occurred here in the United States. According to the United States government, Al Qaeda, a terrorist organization, carried out these crimes, not any particular nation. .

In the event of an international crime such as this, there is a legal and sensible way of dealing with the situation: This would be to use an array of peaceful means to isolate, capture, and hold the criminals accountable for their horrendous crimes. This is the standard approach taken in the event of any crime that occurs either domestically or internationally. The number one rule of what not to do, as dictated in the U.N. Charter, is to fight crime, in this case terrorism, with more crime and terrorism, or even worse, aggression, which can lead “to a situation where even a relatively small international misunderstanding or dispute in a sensitive area can trigger a major war,” as Urquhart explained (Urquhart, 1989).

An illustrative example of how to use the legal international processes, even in a far worse case of international terrorism and aggression, as well as in the face of the United States, is the Nicaraguan case.

During the 1980’s, the focal point of U.S. foreign policy was in Latin America, particularly Nicaragua. The reason was because a democratic movement within Nicaragua had elected a government, the Sandinistas, who were focused on improving social conditions through social programs (education, programs for the poor, health, etc.). Apparently, this was unacceptable for the United States, which, ever since the Monroe Doctrine¹, has assumed a special right to control the entire hemisphere (now extending far beyond) for its own national interests.

Since the policies of the Sandinistas were arranged in such a way that would funnel money toward social programs instead of into elite Western pockets, and, furthermore, could offer other nations an example of how to organize a democratic movement to achieve those ends, the Reagan Administration felt it was necessary to support a criminal opposition group, the Contras, and carry out a major war within Nicaragua to attempt to destabilize the democratically elected Sandinista government.

While discussing the role of U.S. support for the Contras, a Defense Department official explained:

Those 2000 hard-core guys could keep some pressure on the Nicaraguan government, force them to use their economic resources for the military, and prevent them from solving their economic problems – and that’s a plus . . . Anything that puts pressure on the Sandinista regime, calls attention to its lack of democracy, and prevents the Sandinistas from solving their economic problems is a plus. (Chomsky, 2002)

The head of intelligence for the U.S.-backed Contras, Horacio Arce, was rather candid when he defected in the late 1980’s. As he explained:

We attacked a lot of schools, health centers, and those sorts of things. We have tried to make it so that the Nicaraguan government cannot provide social services for the peasants, cannot develop its project ... that's the idea. (Chomsky, 2002)

Leading scholar and intellectual, Noam Chomsky, sums up the operation by saying, "In Nicaragua, the U.S. proxy forces left a trail of murder, torture, rape, mutilation, kidnapping and destruction, but were impeded because civilians had an army to defend them." (Chomsky, 2002)

Even in the face of U.S. acts of aggression and terrorism—possibly the worst pair of crimes a nation can commit under international law—Nicaragua's reaction was not to find a way to bomb or go to war with the United States. Rather, it sought to use the international security system established in the U.N. Charter.

Nicaragua brought its case to the International Court of Justice, which decided that:

The United States of America, by training, arming, equipping, financing and supplying the contra forces or otherwise encouraging, supporting and aiding military and paramilitary activities in and against Nicaragua, has acted, against the Republic of Nicaragua, in breach of its obligation under customary international law not to intervene in the affairs of another state. (ICJ, 1986)

The court goes on to point out specific attacks that prove the United States breached "its obligation under customary international law not to use force against another state," as well as violating "the sovereignty of another state," and had acted "contrary to general principles of humanitarian law." (ICJ, 1986)

The court ordered the United States "to cease and to refrain" from these crimes and pay massive reparations. Yet, since the U.S. is the world's superpower with special privileges, it exempts itself from international court rulings, so, therefore, the U.S. simply boycotted the proceedings and did not recognize the court's verdict. Not only that, but the U.S. actually increased its support for the crimes shortly thereafter (not to mention similar acts in other Latin American countries) as if to flaunt its iron fist in the face of the international community.

Still, Nicaragua did not pursue the bombing of Washington or other parts of the United States. Its next step was to approach the U.N. Security Council. The U.N.S.C. upheld the World Court's ruling, but, since the U.S. wields a unique amount of power, it vetoed the U.N.S.C. resolution calling on all states to respect international law.

Even still, Nicaragua continued to abide by the international legal processes. After the World Court and the U.N.S.C., Nicaragua approached the U.N. General Assembly to once again ask the U.S. to respect the World Court's verdict. The U.N. General Assembly resolution was adopted, with only three states voting against it: The United States of America, Israel, and El Salvador. These "no" votes should need no comment. Since the

U.S. vetoed the U.N.S.C. resolution, the General Assembly had no way of enforcing their decision. Yet, to this day, Nicaragua has not replied to these egregious crimes committed against them without reparations by bombing or going to war with the United States.

Nicaragua is not the only case, but is illustrative of how a nation can staunchly stick to the legal processes envisioned in the U.N. Charter amidst even continual bombardment, terrorism, and aggression. The United States, on the other hand, cannot say the same for itself even under considerably less threats, especially considering its amount of power and influence in the world to actually legally enforce international rulings.

The Nicaraguan example also illustrates how the inequitable distribution of power in the international system protects the powerful from being held accountable for their illegal actions. This is the predicament for an international system made up of nation-states that continuously compete to hold more power over others. This tendency is inherent within hierarchical social, economic, and political structures, that is, societies and an international system with concentrated power and wealth.

The importance, though, of the basic principles I have outlined, and the violations thereof, is to allow concerned citizens everywhere to understand and resist policies that violate principles of peace and security. It also allows us to seriously contemplate how to change society so “the common sense of men,” to use Justice Jackson’s phrase, prevails over acts of aggression. In short, a society in which our social, economic, and political systems are inherently peaceful and humane instead of destructive and insane.

4. Fighting Terror with Terror

Following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, the U.S. quickly decided that it would retaliate with acts of aggression against nations that did not attack the United States, but were blamed with “harboring terrorists” or having “Weapons of Mass Destruction” (WMD).

By reacting with violence and aggression, the U.S. scrapped every use of legal and peaceful means to isolate, capture, and hold accountable the criminals responsible for the terrorist attacks. More peaceful means, as designated under the U.N. Charter, were available and could have alleviated more terrorism and even increased the chances of capturing those responsible.

First, peaceful means would have certainly alleviated international terrorism by preventing acts of aggression on another state in the first place, which is the worst crime a nation can commit precisely because of its devastating effects on civilian populations. For example, in Iraq, aggression since 2003 has left over one million people dead and millions more as refugees without adequate resourcesⁱⁱ. Therefore, instead of preventing and stopping terrorism following the deaths of approximately 3,000 people on September 11, 2001, the U.S. chose to multiply the deaths by over 300 times, and that’s just counting Iraq.

Secondly, following the September 11 attacks, the jihadist movements faced sharp splits and divisions over the attacks that were tearing them apart before the U.S. invaded Afghanistan and Iraq, which, in fact, unified the movements as leading experts on the topic have explained. Fawaz Gerges, a leading scholar on jihadist movements, explains these divisions in his widely acclaimed book, *The Far Enemy*.

The fact remains that religious nationalists—a huge block within the jihadist movement—vehemently rejected Al Qaeda’s strategy and methods and broke with their transnationalist counterparts for good. Religious nationalists opposed both the globalizations and expansion of jihad outside of Afghanistan and the waging of war on Western nations (Gerges, 2005).

Furthermore,

Old simmering and hidden disagreements among militant jihadis burst into the open with a vengeance. For the first time, jihadis publicly criticized one another and engaged in a heated debate and public relations campaign to sway Muslim public opinion in their favor . . . the media war among jihadis is important in that it sheds light on their states of mind and the nuanced differences in their tactics regarding the use of force, terrorism, and political strategies” (Gerges, 2005).

The rest of the world, especially the powerful western nations, was overwhelmingly opposed to the September 11 attacks. It then follows that the United States, especially considering its amount of power and influence in the world, could have isolated the militant Al Qaeda faction of the jihadist movement and garnered support for a domestic or international tribunal to punish the terrorists responsible, thereby abiding by the U.N. Charter, of which the U.S. is a signatory. For further steps, a country must meet with the U.N.S.C. This would have been the legal and more peaceful way of reacting to the September 11 attacks, but the United States, well aware of these facts, decided to use aggression instead, which unified the jihadist movement, and calls into question the real motives of such violent acts.

Real motives could include what leading statesman and strategic analyst, Zbigniew Brzezinski, who served as National Security Advisor under President Jimmy Carter, described as providing America with:

[M]ajor strategic and economic interests in the Middle East that are dictated by the region’s vast energy supplies. Not only does America benefit economically from the relatively low costs of Middle Eastern oil, also America’s security role in the region gives it indirect but *politically critical leverage* on the European and Asian economies that are also dependent on energy exports from the region. (Brzezinski, 2004, emphasis added)

This opinion would fit the documentary record, which shows us that most of U.S. foreign policy following World War II has been focused on the Middle East precisely because of

its strategic importance for concentrated power and wealth as every superpower heretofore has realized.

5. Aggression Justifies Aggression

The use and justification of aggression in response to terrorism, “harboring terrorists,” or WMD, is also quite alarming for the United States itself. Using this U.S. logic, numerous nations would be able to justify wars of aggression and terrorism against the United States. Putting aside the fact that the U.S. has the most powerful weapons of mass destruction in the world, and a military budget that is double the rest of the world combined (which, according to aggressive U.S. logic, would mean the world would be justified in bombing the United States for their WMD production and massive military that could threaten international peace at any moment), nations around the world have faced U.S. terror many times over.

Nicaragua would, of course, be justified since the U.S. used terrorism and aggression even in the face of the International Court of Justice and United Nations resolutions calling on the U.S. to abide by international law. El Salvador, Colombia, Honduras, Guatemala, Brazil, Argentina, Panama and other Latin American countries would be justified as their similar histories and even current events of U.S.-backed death squads and military dictators, leaving a wake of pillage and destruction, reveal.

A rather ironic example is Chile. In a similar tale to that of Nicaragua, a democratic movement within Chile had elected Salvador Allende as president in 1970 with a platform that took a more independent course, and focused on social programs to help change the deep injustices that stem from its colonial history. This was, as in the Nicaraguan case, apparently unacceptable to the United States.

On September 11, 1973, the U.S. backed a military coup that overthrew Allende and brought to power a right-wing military dictator, General Augusto Pinochet. As Colin Powell summed it up, “it is not a part of American history that we are proud of.” (Kinzer, 2006)

Just imagine if on September 11, 2001, a foreign nation overthrew the U.S. government, imposed a military dictatorship, opened up the country to foreign economic exploitation, and went on a rampage of rape, torture, mutilation, and mass murder that left tens of thousands dead or injured. In brief, that was what happened in Chile beginning on September 11, 1973. In 1990, a *Chilean National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation* documented 3,428 cases of torture, rape, killing, kidnapping, and disappearanceⁱⁱⁱ, later followed by the *National Commission on Political Imprisonment and Torture* documenting 27,255 testimonies with a complementary report documenting 1,204 additional cases^{iv}. There have also been very detailed reports from leading human rights organizations and many books that provide further evidence on the crimes.

Using U.S. logic, Chile would have been more than justified in aggressively attacking the United States.

Latin American countries would also be justified, using U.S. logic, in carrying out wars against the United States since the terrorists and dictators that wreak havoc on the region are trained within U.S. borders. An infamous training center, formerly known as the School of the Americas (SOA), now named the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC), is located in Fort Benning, Georgia. This school, funded by the U.S. government, has trained tens of thousands of Latin American soldiers that would become military strongmen like Pinochet or mercenaries in death squads throughout the region. A recent example can be found in the 2009 military coup in Honduras, which was led by General Romeo Vasquez, a graduate of SOA.^v

The list of countries that could aggressively attack the U.S. according to U.S. doctrine wouldn't stop with Latin America. Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic could as well, for attempted assassinations, international terrorist attacks, overthrowing democratically elected presidents, imposing military dictators, and the like.

Britain, in fact, using U.S. logic, could have bombed the U.S. because of U.S.-based support for the Irish Republican Army (IRA), which was responsible for terrorist attacks while fighting British forces in Northern Ireland.^{vi}

South Africa, Angola, and Mozambique could have as well, since the U.S. was the main backer of South African Apartheid even when the rest of the world, and, in fact, the majority of the U.S. population, opposed apartheid. The U.S. gave military and diplomatic support to the apartheid-regime that carried with it military incursions into Angola and Mozambique as the U.S. used South Africa as a base for its interests in the region.^{vii}

Somalia could also have bombed the United States, using U.S. logic, since the U.S. has a lengthy history of aggression and terrorism against them that continues today. In 1993, the U.S. attacked and killed between 6,000 to 10,000 Somalis—causing an incident known in the U.S. as “Black Hawk Down,” which is hailed here as a heroic mistake, but recognized in Somalia and elsewhere as a grave act of terrorism and aggression.^{viii} Today, we are supposed to be concerned with Somali pirates taking over a U.S. military vessel off their coast, as if the U.S. would do nothing if Somali military vessels were off a U.S. coast.

In 1998, Sudan also faced a major terrorist attack by the United States. Falsely claiming that El-Shifa, Sudan's largest pharmaceutical plant, was manufacturing chemical weapons—an unsubstantiated claim, now conceded as such^{ix}—the U.S. bombed the facility destroying about half of Sudan's pharmaceutical supply. The misery and death from the attack is nearly impossible to calculate. The attack was explicitly regarded as a horrific terrorist atrocity in Sudan and elsewhere.^x

U.S. aggression also infamously killed millions of people in Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam, which shouldn't need much comment. As then National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger, exclaimed about one bombing campaign in the Vietnam War:

They dropped a million pounds of bombs ... a million pounds of bombs ... Goddamn, that must have been a good strike. ... That shock treatment [is] cracking them ... I tell you the thing to do is pour it in there every place we can ... just bomb the hell out of them.” (Kissinger, 1972)

A pleasant idea for a war criminal!

In Indonesia, the U.S. ousted President Sukarno, the first president of the country, who helped the country win its independence. In his place, the U.S. instituted General Suharto, a military dictator, in 1967. For the next 32 years, the U.S. would give diplomatic and military support to Suharto to facilitate the East Timor Genocide, which was one of the worst genocides of the twentieth Century, leaving 500,000 to 1 million people dead and a culture decimated. The target of the genocide, and of importance to the U.S., was to kill off the peasant base of the Indonesian Communist Party. Today, under President Obama, the U.S. is considering renewing its ties with the Indonesian military with more aid. Currently, a leading investigative journalist in East Timor, Allan Nairn, who was also an outspoken critic against the genocide, is leading opposition to this aid, the Indonesian military, and its continued crimes, as he is threatened with prison over an article he wrote highlighting some of the abuses.^{xi}

All of these and other examples are a matter of public record, and readily accessible. I encourage all of who are unfamiliar with this “unfashionable” record to acquaint yourself with it in order to better understand your own country.

The record is long and gruesome. This list could go on, but it should be more than clear at this point that the arguments given for war by the U.S. have fallen right on its face, and, in fact, threaten even that of the U.S. itself. If those of us within the U.S. disagree with bombing the United States for having WMD, harboring terrorists, and committing acts of terrorism and aggression, then we also disagree with the bombing of Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Iran, and any other nation, whose crimes, by the way, are not even comparable. Any argument that favors wars of aggression such as these is complete and utter hypocrisy that vacates any concept of morality that “constitutes an international crime against the human species,” as Jackson described. Such acts are illegal and immoral. Those responsible should face just prosecution at the International Criminal Court, and people of conscience should act by organizing and building broad based coalitions in order to sustain a movement to end these injustices and crimes.

6. Arguments for War Mirror Arguments for Terrorism

Indeed, the arguments for war emanating from the United States against others mirror the arguments for terrorism against the United States. U.S. aggression and repression in the region, the terrorists say, justifies terrorism against the United States.

The leading expert on suicide terrorism, Robert Pape, who has closely analyzed cases of suicide terrorism from 1980 through 2003, describes the logic behind Al Qaeda’s terrorists. Among other things, Pape documents terrorist recruitment techniques. As Pape

explains, recruiters speak “to an earthly motive: revenge for Western military atrocities in Iraq and Afghanistan.” As an example, Pape quotes a recruiter, Adam Gadahn.

I know [Western combat forces] killed and maimed civilians in their strikes because I’ve seen it with my own eyes ... I’ve carried the victims in my arms: women, children, toddlers, babies in their mother’s wombs ... When we bomb their cities and civilians like they bomb ours, or destroy their infrastructure and means of transportation like they destroy ours they should blame no one but themselves. Because they are the ones who started this dirty war and they are the ones who will end it by pulling out of our region and keeping their hands out of our affairs (Pape, 2006).

As I said, the arguments for war mirror the arguments for terrorism. Since terrorists attacked the U.S. or a supposed threat lingers, the U.S. says, we must respond by bombing “their cities and civilians like they bomb ours,” and destroying “their infrastructure and means of transportation like they destroy ours,” which inevitably kill “women, children, toddlers, [and] babies in their mother’s wombs.”

7. Real Grievances

The grievances in the Middle East are very real, which is why recruitment can be so effective. These grievances did not start with the current wars, however. The U.S. has a long record of aggression in the Middle East.

In the post-world war era, coming out as the world’s superpower, the U.S. recognized that it must take control of what numerous administrations refer to as the region with the most “strategic importance,” that is, the Middle East.

As Joyce Battle from the *National Security Archive* explains when reviewing U.S. declassified documents on the Middle East,

An earlier episode occurred early in the Cold War, during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, when the U.S. was expanding efforts to incorporate the region into a global anti-Soviet alliance. It wanted *to protect and preserve Western control of Middle Eastern oil resources*. It was *concerned about the implications for U.S. interests* of the diminished post-World War II abilities of Britain and France to project Western Power and influence in the area, and by enormous increase in anti-Western feeling that had been generated by the establishment of Israel” (Battle, 2002, emphasis added).

The U.S. would replace Europe as the source of power and control in the region. It’s because of the strategic asset of Middle Eastern energy resources for world power and control that the majority of U.S. foreign policy post-WWII has focused on the region.

In order to take and maintain control in the region, as in other parts of the world, the U.S. has had to prevent democracy by either supporting dictatorships or faux-democratic

regimes that tailor to U.S. interests. It is for this reason that the U.S. has either backed or currently backs brutal dictatorships or regimes in Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Afghanistan, Israel, and others.

8. Iran

In 1953, following the democratic election of President Mossadegh in Iran, the U.S. backed a military coup that overthrew Mossadegh and brought to power the Shah, a brutal dictator who would be one of the United States' biggest allies in the region for the next 26 years. As historian James A. Bill writes:

There is little doubt that petroleum considerations were involved in the American decision to assist in the overthrow of the Mossadegh government . . . Although many have argued for America's disinterest in Iranian oil, given the conditions of glut that prevailed, Middle Eastern history demonstrates that the United States had always sought such access, glut or no glut. . . . Concerns about communism [more accurately, independent nationalism,] and the availability of petroleum were interlocked. Together, they drove America to a policy of direct intervention. (Kinzer, 2006)

Independent nationalism, an ideology the U.S. loves to have for itself, is unacceptable in the Middle East since it hinders U.S. capability to control its energy resources. In Iran or elsewhere in the Middle East, if people want to exercise their right to democratically elect a president or assert its nationalist power it's called communism or radical Arab nationalism by heads of state and the American media.^{xii} Accordingly, they must be stomped out with indirect or direct intervention.

Today, of course, we are supposed to believe that the U.S. cares about democracy in Iran even as the U.S. is openly threatening to use force against Iran—in violation of the U.N. Charter and a recent U.N.S.C. resolution—or, as far as anyone knows, abiding by the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which allows for the enrichment of uranium. So, we must forget about the few decades the U.S. supported the Shah to prevent democracy, and forget about how the U.S. is acting in violation of the U.N. Charter by threatening force, in order to believe the U.S. supports democracy in Iran. Yet, even if we do forget, then the arguments being made against Iran still don't match up.

The issue of enriching uranium is serious, especially since it can quickly transition into weapons production. The issue is not solely exclusive to Iran. Furthermore, since the U.S. has the most powerful nuclear arsenal in the world, has just spent \$5 billion to upgrade it amidst denouncing Iran, is making nuclear deals with Hanoi, Vietnam to enrich their uranium,^{xiii} is the only country in the world to have used nuclear weapons in war, has supported the development of nuclear weapons in extremely militant non-NPT signing states (India, Pakistan, and Israel), and is openly threatening to attack Iran along with Israel, does Iran, therefore, have the right to bomb the United States and Israel? The answer would be a resounding “no, of course not” in the United States, Israel, and elsewhere.

One shouldn't underestimate the extreme danger caused by proliferating nuclear weapons in India, Pakistan, and Israel. None of these three nations have signed the NPT, and the nuclear combination of the three could spell disaster not just for the region, but also for the entire world. India and Pakistan have come close to nuclear war a couple of times and continuously have an uneasy relationship, while Israel is threatening Iran with nuclear weapons.^{xiv}

On top of that, the U.S. has also opposed every U.N. resolution calling for a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East,^{xv} presumably so India, Pakistan, and Israel—strategic partners in the region—can have them. If the U.S. didn't want Iran or other nations to have nuclear weapons, then simply agree to a nuclear weapons free zone as, in fact, Iran has.

We are then left with one conclusion to draw from such a threatening stance toward Iran: the U.S., unconcerned with the consequences of its actions except when it concerns its power interests, wants to continue to impose its power in order to more effectively control Iran and the region as it has done in the past. The actions are illegal and unjust, and should be prevented before more death and destruction is wrought on Iran, the region, and the world.

9. Iraq

In Iraq, the U.S. supported another dictator: Saddam Hussein. It may seem very hypocritical, and it is, but during the 1980s, the strongest U.S. ally in the region was Saddam Hussein. The U.S. gave diplomatic and military support, including chemical weapons, to Hussein as he committed ethnic cleansing against the Kurdish population in Iraq, and attacked Iran during the Iran-Iraq War.^{xvi}

Since it now serves U.S. interests to demonize Hussein, we are now supposed to look at the mass graves and his atrocities in disgust, but in the 1980s when he was committing the worst of his crimes, the U.S. not only supported what he was doing, but also barely uttered a peep about what was going on. To add to the hypocrisy, major government officials instrumental in supporting Hussein during the 1980s in the Reagan and George H.W. Bush Administrations would later be the same officials to topple Hussein in the George W. Bush administration (e.g., Dick Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld).

At the beginning of the 1990s, Hussein began overstepping his boundaries as he invaded Kuwait. The reason for the invasion was presumably to gain greater access and control of Kuwait's oil fields. The U.S. also decided to invade Kuwait, presumably for the same reason, adding invasion on top of invasion, with the rationalization that the U.S. now cared about Hussein's aggression and atrocities—something that didn't stop the U.S. from supporting Hussein as he annihilated the Kurds and invaded Iran during the 1980s. This 1991 invasion of Kuwait is known as the Persian Gulf War. Apparently only the U.S. can use force to protect its "vital resources."

In March of 1991, an uprising within Iraq was in a position to topple Hussein, but the U.S. looked the other way as Hussein cracked down on the rebellions. The U.S. then opposed another uprising in 1995. Both uprisings are discussed in Milan Rai's book *War Plan Iraq* in 2002.

There were two kind of coup that could have occurred in March 1991: a regime-stabilizing coup from within, such as the one derailed by the uprising; or a possibly regime-changing coup allied with the uprising ... The first kind of coup was prevented by the rebellion that the United States incited inadvertently. The second kind of coup was prevented by Washington's refusal to support the uprisings, or to give its support to the Iraqi opposition. (Rai, 2002)

Furthermore:

Not content with betraying the 1991 uprisings, the US also pulled the plug on another uprising/coup attempt in 1995. This initiative had at its centre the Iraqi National Congress (INC), [and] a coalition of Iraqi opposition groups led by Ahmed Chalabi ...” (Rai, 2002)

As a result of the war and its aftermath, approximately 158,000 Iraqis and 400 U.S. soldiers were killed^{xvii}. “The Americans, it transpired, dropped nearly as many tons of bombs each day as were dropped on Germany and Japan daily during the Second World War,” notes investigative journalist Robert Fisk (Fisk, 2006). True to the immorality of the war, bombs were dropped on retreating soldiers, fleeing refugees, and civilian infrastructure within Iraq.^{xviii}

Continuing throughout the 1990s the United States imposed severe sanctions on Iraq that, among other things, barred food and medicine in violation of international humanitarian law. The effects were devastating: Per capita income dropped from \$3510 in 1989 to \$450 in 1996, there was severe food insecurity for the population, 20% of the population living in chronic poverty, infant mortality rates more than doubled from 1989 to 1999, per capita share of drinkable water decreased by more than half from 1990 to 2000, health services were destroyed, a few hundred thousand children died (a conservative estimate – it could be closer to 750,000 children deaths), and somewhere between 800,000 to 1.5 million civilian deaths.^{xix} This was not a pleasant situation, to say the least, and, according to the UN Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs in Iraq, Denis Halliday, the sanctions amounted to “genocide.”^{xx}

In 1998, the U.S. attacked Iraq with the justification that Iraq had or was developing WMD—a justification that would come up again in 2003. Yet, according to inspectors, the U.S. was not supporting and, in fact, was blocking U.N. inspections from occurring.

Major Scott Ritter, former Chief for the Concealment Investigations Unit for the U.N. Special Commission in Iraq, testified in front of the U.S. Senate in 1998 saying:

First of all, let me start by saying that the United States has been the foremost supporter of the Special Commission and as such has been the nation which has encouraged the Special Commission in setting forth on missions of discovery in Iraq to expose Iraq's retained capabilities. Having established such a policy, however, the United States has on repeated occasions put pressure on the executive chairman of the Special Commission and put pressure on member states of the Security Council to withhold support and to encourage the executive chairman to stop, postpone or cancel inspections of discovery inside Iraq. (Ritter, 1998)

The brutality against Iraq, including the Iraq War beginning in 2003, has devastated the country. The current war, as stated earlier, has killed approximately one million Iraqis. As investigative journalist, Nir Rosen, describes:

We've destroyed Iraq and we've destroyed the region, and Americans need to know this. This isn't Rwanda where we can just sit back and watch the Hutus and Tutsis kill each other, and be like wow this is terrible should we do something? We destroyed Iraq. There was no civil war in Iraq until we got there. And there was no civil war in Iraq, until we took certain steps to pit Sunnis against Shias. And now it is just too late. But, we need to know we are responsible for what's happening in Iraq today. I don't think Americans are aware of this. We've managed to make Saddam Hussein look good even to Shias at this point. And what we've managed to do is not only destabilize Iraq, but destabilize Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Iran. This is going to spread for decades, the region won't recover from this, I think for decades. And Americans are responsible.^{xxi} (Rosen, 2006)

Today, with media attention focused on Afghanistan and away from Iraq, U.S. military presence in Iraq has been able to continue. Without U.S. citizens demanding a just reconstruction of Iraq, the possibilities for a full withdraw of U.S. military presence, the opportunity for Iraqis to democratically decide for themselves on how their country should be developed, and massive reparations to Iraq looks bleak. Citizens must act to repair the region through peaceful means or else we have no one to blame for further destruction but ourselves.

10. Turkey, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Afghanistan

Since the Middle East is of primary concern today and in the record of post-world war U.S. foreign policy, it is only fair to offer a glimpse at some of the other nations that the U.S. has or is involved with militarily to give further insight into understanding this anti-war perspective in the twenty-first century.

Throughout the 1980s, but drastically increasing in the 1990s, the United States gave extraordinary amounts of military aid to Turkey. The military aid went toward massacring the Kurdish population, resulting in the deaths of tens of thousands of people, destruction of thousands of villages, and created millions of refugees. This wiped out the hope of an autonomous democratic movement that was arising among the Kurdish population in Turkey.^{xxii}

In Pakistan, the U.S. supported two dictators: General Zia-ul-Haq and General Pervez Musharraf. As mentioned earlier, the U.S. also supplied nuclear weapons to Pakistan. Today, the United States, only increasing under President Obama, carries out intense air raid attacks using un-manned drones, which has been denounced by people around the world for killing civilians. The U.N. recently urged the United States to stop its drone attacks, but, with continued criminality, the U.S. bombs on.

In Saudi Arabia and Egypt, the U.S. continues to back brutal dictators: King Abdullah and President Mubarak, respectively. When asked by BBC if Obama considers Mubarak, in power since 1981, to be an “authoritarian ruler,” Obama replied, “No, I tend not to use labels for folks,” other than the label that he is a “stalwart ally” as well as a “force for stability, and good in the region.” Presumably, the same goes for King Abdullah. They are forces for “good” instead of forces for “evil” because they play along in U.S. hegemony without “unnecessary demagoging of the issue,” Obama explained. (Obama, 2009)

Afghanistan has another history of U.S. military intervention. Throughout the 1980s, when the Soviets militarily occupied Afghanistan, the U.S. supported many of the same terrorists it now claims to be fighting, who committed gruesome terrorist attacks that devastated the country^{xxiii}. I say “claims to be fighting” because, as Malalai Joya, a women’s rights leader in Afghanistan, points out in her book *A Woman Among Warlords*:

While the United States bombed from the sky, the CIA and Special Forces had already arrived in the northern provinces of Afghanistan to hand out millions of dollars in cash and weapons to Northern Alliance commanders. They were the same extremists whose militias had pillaged Afghanistan during the civil war ... The Western media tried at the time to portray these warlords as ‘anti-Taliban resistance forces and liberators of Afghanistan,’ but in fact Afghan people believed that they were no better than the Taliban (Joya, 2009).

In 2001, the U.S. committed another act of aggression by invading Afghanistan without obtaining authorization from the U.N.S.C. on grounds that Afghanistan, without any evidence given by the United States as international law dictates, would not turn over suspected terrorists. This is something the U.S. doesn’t do itself when, for example, Latin American countries request the U.S. hand over terrorists it has trained and supported seeking safe haven within the United States. War crimes following the invasion include the massacre at Dasht-e Leili, where a few thousand prisoners were murdered. The casualties and aggression keeps rising and increasing in rate over nine years later, amounting to the longest war in U.S. history.

11. Israel

For over 30 years there has been an international consensus on a peaceful settlement of the Israel-Palestine Conflict – almost. There have been two nations that have routinely

voted against or vetoed the peace settlement proposal at the United Nations – The United States of America and Israel.

The international consensus on a peaceful settlement to the conflict is largely based off of two basic principles of international law: The right to self-determination and the inadmissibility of acquiring territory by war. The right to self-determination means that no one would be able to deny Palestinians their right to create a sovereign nation, which is a right that cannot be questioned in the case of Israel. The inadmissibility of acquiring territory by war means that Israel must withdraw its troops, settlements, checkpoints, wall, and relinquish its control over Palestinian territory, to its pre-June 1967 war borders. In return for abiding by these principles, Israelis and Palestinians shall agree to live in peace and respect each other's sovereignty.

When discussing the legality of Israel's wall in the West Bank, which dwarfs the Berlin Wall, the International Court of Justice reiterated the international consensus, finding the inadmissibility of acquiring territory by war too basic to call into question. Furthermore, the ICJ points out how the acts by Israel in Occupied Palestinian Territory constitute a "flagrant violation" of international law and warned states "not to render aid or assistance in maintaining the situation created by such construction." (ICJ, 2004)

All of this is unmentionable in respected circles in the United States. For the United States, Israel is a strategic military outpost that can help control the Middle East, for reasons already discussed. It is for this reason that the United States sends Israel more military aid than they give any other country in the world. Israel then uses this aid to demolish Palestinian homes in the West Bank, invade Gaza, and enforce an illegal blockade on Gaza (an act of war under international law) that stops all supplies needed for a decent standard of living from entering, while sustaining a special privilege of having nuclear weapons to threaten other countries with, to name just a few examples.

U.S. aid and diplomatic support that allows Israeli acts of aggression only furthers instability and violence on all sides of the conflict, and the entire region, with a very likely possibility of erasing the Palestinians from existence.

As Chomsky summarized at the end of his book entitled *Middle East Illusions*:

Honesty would leave us with a dilemma: the easy escape is conventional hypocrisy (as the word is defined in the Gospels). The other option is harder to pursue, but imperative if the world is to be spared still worse disasters. (Chomsky, 2003)

12. Conclusion

The "other option" to that of "conventional hypocrisy" is to apply the same standards to ourselves as we apply to others. A fair place to begin is to have our country abide by basic principles of international law that outlaw the use of force.

Furthermore, we must understand this “unfashionable” history of U.S. militarism, and commit what we can to a struggle through social movement for peace and freedom. I believe we can transcend, or at least begin to transcend, destructive concentrated, unaccountable, and unjustifiable power and authority in order to build a consciousness and sensibility that goes beyond our “legacy of domination,” as Murray Bookchin has succinctly described, to that of:

The legacy of freedom that lives in the daydreams of humanity, in the great ideals and movements ... that have welled up in all great eras of social transition (Bookchin, 2005).

In order to “be spared [of] still worse disasters” and move toward humanity’s “legacy of freedom” we need changes “so far-reaching in character that humanity will totally transform its social relations and its very conception of life” supported by social, economic, and political institutions based off of participatory values of mutual aid and democracy with citizen control over “the material means of life – land, factories, transport, and the like” and over public affairs and policy. (Bookchin, 2005)

The day may come when we realize we can no longer subordinate ourselves to destructive unaccountable power. Unfortunately, if we are to even hope for a better future for the world, let alone to avoid a terminal disaster, this day may not come soon enough.

Today, leading liberal icons such as Stephen Colbert and Jon Stewart appealed to millions of people as they rallied in Washington D.C. for “moderation” in a time of fanaticism. Although the message was apolitical and not constructive in my opinion, it bears some truth. We do indeed need a type of “moderation,” where moderate and moral voices come to the fore to strive for peace, social justice, and quite simply, humane standards of living.

How to get from here to there, as with any form of social change, is a process of transition and progression. Many strategies and tactics go into shaping any social movement. In his recent book *Hopes and Prospects*, Noam Chomsky believes the most exciting and promising signs for hope in the twenty-first century can be found in Latin America, where indigenous, peasant, and women’s movements are forming popular democracies and moving toward independent development. One of the most dedicated scholars on the Israel-Palestine Conflict, Norman Finkelstein, has gone on tour speaking of how to end the conflict noting that the best hope lies in non-violent resistance and civil disobedience, which has taken the form of a Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions Campaign (BDS) to stop the occupation, and marches and flotilla expeditions to end the blockade of Gaza. Israeli journalist, Amira Hass, believes in the use of investigative journalism to challenge centers of power. Cindy Sheehan, a brave mother who had a son killed in Iraq, has talked and organized on ending U.S. wars by non-violent civil disobedience. WikiLeaks has used modern technology in order to reveal hidden workings of world governments in corruption, deceit, and war that could have dramatic effects on reshaping power. Organizations such as Code Pink or Global Exchange

include domestic activism as well as international social justice in countries throughout the world. Other groups and individuals work on humanitarian assistance or protection of human rights. Many more work on local grass-roots organizations. Although this is a very incomplete list, the point is there is a lot one can do and much work to be done to achieve social change in the aim for peace and freedom. A multi-faceted and diverse civil society with committed individuals working on a range of different issues and activities can make a strong and healthy movement. At the same time, individuals and groups must become organized and act cohesively according to the moral, ethical, and democratic ideals that are to be obtained. Currently, it seems to me that there is a lack of cohesiveness domestically and internationally, yet many groups work on similar issues. I think many individuals and groups can agree on the basic principles that have been discussed here. Once organized groups begin supporting and coordinating with each other progress can be made.

The choice is up to all of us, but as long as concentrated power and wealth exist with their "legacy of domination," supported and rationalized intellectually with a propaganda system so efficient that "unpopular ideas can be silenced, and inconvenient facts kept dark, without the need for any official ban," as Orwell explained, we can be quite sure that the interests of the powerful and privileged will be "most peculiarly attended to," while the interests of citizens they preside over and victims of their wrath are entirely neglected and "sacrificed to it," as Adam Smith observed. (Smith, 1776)

A twenty-first Century anti-war perspective that addresses the most pressing issues of our world today and incorporates a democratic culture where war and aggression is no longer tolerated will have many difficulties to overcome in the coming years. Yet, it shouldn't be forgotten that without social movements in the past with aims toward peace and freedom, we would not have overcome monarchy, chattel slavery, and segregation or gained labor rights or even the bill of rights. We must continue to take on the difficult task of struggling with power in order to attain a more humane world.

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Notes

ⁱ In the seventh annual State of the Union Address on December 2, 1823, President James Monroe declared European powers could not continue to colonize in the hemisphere in return for U.S. non-interference with European power on other continents. The doctrine would be used to assert U.S. power and control in the hemisphere without competition from foreign powers.

ⁱⁱ British based *Opinion Research Business*, consistent with findings by Johns Hopkins University and *The Lancet*, confirm that over 1,000,000 Iraqis have been killed since the 2003 invasion. (McElwee, Patrick. "A Million Iraqi Dead? The U.S. Press Buries the Evidence." *Extra!* January 2008.)

ⁱⁱⁱ See The United States Institute of Peace for this report.

^{iv} Ibid.

^v For information on the School of the Americas, one can refer to School of the Americas Watch.

^{vi} As the Associated Press reported, “From the 1970s to 1990s, U.S.-based groups — chiefly Irish Northern Aid — funneled hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to IRA-related causes in Northern Ireland” (Dodds, Paisley. “Official: U.S. Not Funding Nireland Dissident Groups.” 10/14/10. Associated Press.)

^{vii} See *State Terrorism and the United States: From Counterinsurgency to the War on Terrorism* by Frederick H. Gareau (Clarity Press, 2004).

^{viii} Maynes, Charles. *Foreign Policy*. Spring 1995.

^{ix} See *United States Terrorism in the Sudan: The Bombing of Al-Shifa and its Strategic Role in U.S.-Sudan Relations* by Nafeez Mosaddeq Ahmed.

^x *Ibid.*

^{xi} One can visit Allain Nairn’s website at www.allainnairn.com.

^{xii} See, for example, *Containing Arab Nationalism: The Eisenhower Doctrine and the Middle East* by Salim Yaqub.

^{xiii} Much of the press reported the \$5 billion increase in the U.S. nuclear weapons program. As far as supporting Vietnam’s nuclear weapons program, Jay Solomon from the Wall Street Journal reported (U.S., Hanoi in Nuclear Talks, 8/3/10) “The Obama administration is in advanced negotiations to share nuclear fuel and technology with Vietnam in a deal that would allow Hanoi to enrich its own uranium—terms that critics on Capitol Hill say would undercut the more stringent demands the U.S. has been making of its partners in the Middle East.”

^{xiv} An illuminating article by Zia Mian in *Foreign Policy In Focus* entitled “Pushing South Asia Toward the Brink” offers compelling information. As Mian writes, “India is one of perhaps only three countries still making material for new nuclear weapons. The others are Pakistan and Israel (with North Korea threatening to resume production). India is building a fast-breeder reactor that is expected to begin operation in 2010 and is outside International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. It could increase three- to five-fold India’s current capacity to make plutonium for nuclear weapons.”

Furthermore, “The U.S. silence on India’s nuclear weapons and missile programs is all the more telling, given that it was the Clinton administration that proposed United Nations Security Council resolution 1172. In 1998, this unanimous Security Council resolution called on India and Pakistan to “immediately stop their nuclear weapon development programs, to refrain from the deployment of nuclear weapons, to cease development of ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons, and any further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.” The Bush administration ignored it. It seems the Obama administration will too.”

^{xv} See, for example, citations (Chomsky, 2002) and (Rai, 2002).

^{xvi} Battle, Joyce. “Shaking Hands with Saddam Hussein: The U.S. Tilts toward Iraq, 1980-1984,” The National Security Archive: 2/25/03.

^{xvii} The deaths among Iraqis here are from Beth Daponte’s research on casualties in the first Persian Gulf War, which has stood up time and again to peer reviews, and is partly discussed in this article by the Post-Gazette: Kelly, Jack. “Estimates of Death in First War Still in Dispute,” Post-Gazette: 2/16/03.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/nation/20030216casualty0216p5.asp>, For U.S. casualties, I rounded a standard number given, which can be witnessed in this USA Today article: Cauchon, Dennis. “Why U.S. Casualties Were Low,” USA Today: 4/20/03. http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/iraq/2003-04-20-cover-usat_x.htm

^{xviii} Robert Fisk’s informative book *The Great War for Civilisation: The Conquest of the Middle East* offers a detailed personal account of not only the Persian Gulf War, but of major Middle Eastern conflicts of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

^{xix} See the UNICEF Overview Report from July 2003 under “2003 IRQ: Iraq Watching Briefs” by Sen, B. It can be found at www.unicef.org. Also see *Morbidity and Mortality among Iraqi Children from 1990 through 1998: Assessing the Impact of the Gulf War and Economic Sanctions* by Richard Garfield, as well as former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark’s *International Commission of Inquiry on Economic Sanctions* in 1996.

^{xx} See Denis J. Halliday’s article entitled *The Deadly and Illegal Consequences of Economic Sanctions on the People of Iraq*, which can be found at The Watson Institute for International Studies.

^{xxi} It should be noted that in the case of the Rwandan genocide, as well as in the much bloodier conflict with the war in the Congo, the U.S. did much more than “just sit back and watch” as Rosen describes. I would direct people to Edward Herman’s book *The Politics of Genocide* where, among other cases, he documents U.S. support for forces carrying out the Rwandan Genocide as well as crimes in the Congo.

^{xxii} Noam Chomsky and Robert Fisk have given detailed documentation of U.S.-Turkish crimes during this period on numerous occasions.

^{xxiii} Many people have documented this, but a recent book by Tom Engelhart entitled *the American Way of War: How Bush's Wars Became Obama's* can offer valuable insight.