

Between the Lines

Nuremberg Actions, P.O.Box 13, Boulder Creek CA 95006

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KING GEORGE SAYS: DEATH AND TAXES

by Jennifer Viereck

Over the last five months, the naked displays of opportunism in the Middle East have far outweighed those of 'naked aggression', in my mind. Iraq, however righteous the argument for Palestinian self-determination, has as clearly seized this issue for its own ends as it seized Kuwaiti ports, banks and oilfields. The sacking of Kuwait has been barbaric, and the targeting of Israeli civilians as a calculated technique to escalate Arab-Israeli violence is as cold-blooded as anything we've seen so far.

Ironically, Iraq is trying to function in the Middle East the same way United States does in the world at large. Each nation is trying to prop up its weakened ability to compete economically through military and political dominance.

THE END OF THE COLD WAR: AN UNCHECKED AMERICA

Here in the United States, the demonization of Hussein and the arguments about the relative threat of this war-ravaged and economically shaky country and the subsequent justifications for keeping an enormous U.S. military buildup sound strikingly similar to those put forth by the military-industrial complex about Russia at the close of World War II.

Now that Russia has admitted bankruptcy from the arms race and excused itself from the ring, U.S. exploitation and adventurism have reached unprecedented proportions.

With the dropping of the Iron Curtain, we may have seen the first step in raising of the Petro-Veil. Two years ago, this would have been impossible. With Iraq firmly leashed by the Soviet Union and Kuwait by the U.S., the bickering might have stayed at the table, or at worst been similar to Nasser's grab of the Suez canal in 1956.

Most Mideast experts agree that Arab outrage over Western colonialism, racism and a deeply insulting double standard will make it unsafe for Western people to walk Arab streets for generations to come. Professor Samil Farsoun of George Washington University describes the common Arab point of view, "The overwhelming sentiment is: With Kuwait against Iraq, but with Iraq against the United States. Resurgent American regional hegemony would benefit only a very thin elite stratum, and leave the region more fragmented than ever before."

The rush of the Bush administration into combat has been obscene, racing troops to Saudi Arabia against the express wish of the Arab League (and according to Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan, before he was asked by Saudi Arabia), establishing a military blockade to enforce the embargo against Iraq before the U.N. authorized such a plan, and gleefully starting the shelling before any kind of decent or diplomatic interval had taken place. Bush had clearly locked the U.S. into war before Congress reluctantly voted their support,

"Iraq's main claim on Kuwait is that 'historically' it was part of Iraq. While there is some truth to this, all borders are in dispute. If the Native Americans had armies and nuclear weapons, most of us might well be sitting in waters off one coast or another." David McReynolds, WRL



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many of them consenting only to a show of unanimity as a negotiating tool, rather than the concept of war as legitimate or appropriate. (Let's hope they learned something!)

In addition, a total blockade, as well as the use of military to enforce a blockade are both an act of war under international law. This was done well ahead of any Congressional vote, and could be grounds for impeachment.

A nation which originated in a revolt against the monarchy of one King George, is rushing to sacrifice its sons and daughters to defend a monarchy abroad, one which four years ago suspended its own Parliament and free press. When the current King George demands a war tax as he surely will, shall we start dumping oil barrels into the harbor?

A quote from a Top-Secret State Dept. paper, written in 1948 about U.S. goals in the post-war Pacific is as applicable today in the Mideast:

"We have 50% of the world's wealth but only 6.3% of its population...Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security...We should cease to talk about vague, and for the Far East, unreal objectives, such as human rights, the raising of living standards and democratization."

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APRIL IN JULY: THE BAGHDAD SETUP

Evidence has been put forth by Iraq since September 1990 of a deliberate setup of Saddam Hussein by the U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie. This has not been refuted, or even mentioned, by the State Dept. and Glaspie has seemingly disappeared from the earth. During a July 25th meeting with Saddam, she told him that she "had express instructions from the president to seek better relations with Iraq." Alexander Cockburn reports that in the transcripts "Saddam returns again and again to the price of oil, at one point saying that \$25 a barrel is "not a high price", to which Glaspie remarked, "We have many Americans who would like to see the price go above \$25 dollars because they come from oil producing states". Then she stated that the United States had "no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts, like your border disagreement with Kuwait" and that "James Baker has directed our official spokesman to emphasize this." In the following eight days before Iraq's invasion, other signals were sent out by Washington officials to reinforce that position.

THE U.S. & ITS ALLIES: THE MAGNIFICENT 28

Kuwait, having already made so much money on its oil that its main income at this point is from investing profits in Europe and the U.S., has an interest in keeping oil prices moderate so as not to further trigger recession in the west. Iraq clearly stated at the July OPEC meeting that every dollar off a barrel was a loss of \$1 billion a year to Iraq. But Kuwait was intractable over overproduction and overdrilling of jointly owned oil fields, over the wishes of other OPEC nations such as Saudi Arabia and Iran.

In addition, the behavior of the other Allies seems equally revolting. Britain apparently has lobbied Kuwaiti exiles for lucrative re-building contracts. This will put them at odds with Bechtel Corp., which has similar aspirations. In the early days of this century, when Britain and France were plundering the Mideast and rearranging borders to suit themselves, it was grandly referred to as Imperialism. Now that they are flying on U.S. apronstrings, the word is not used, but the motives are as clearly transparent.

Egypt apparently sold out for \$7 billion in debt forgiveness. Israel now wants \$13 billion over the next five years, for sitting tight under SCUD missile attacks, and sales of weapons to Saudi Arabia are proposed at \$20 billion, setting a new world record. I can only wonder whether back when we were selling weapons to Iraq and the Shah of Iran, we ever thought we'd be looking down their barrels. Apparently James Baker agreed to sell or give away everything but his mother, in order to line up support for the U.N. vote justifying the use of force (and no one's spoken with her).

THE OIL COMPANIES: THE TRUE MEANING OF CRUDE

In addition, the behavior of the oil companies has been particularly depraved, and makes the idea of sacrificing America's youth for their continued strangle hold on the world's resources even more repugnant. Within days of the invasion of Kuwait, prices at the gas pump were rising, while it would have taken weeks for higher prices at the crude level to work their way up the refinement chain. In addition, Thomas Karier reports in In These Times that "According to

industry reports, oil-company profits were only mixed during the third quarter compared to one year earlier...The reason that reported profits fell for some companies is because they told their accountants to use 'current costs' instead of the more realistic 'historical cost' method when calculating profits.

The current-cost method is based on the convenient fiction that the cost of a gallon of gas sold in Spokane is determined by the price paid for crude that morning in Abu Dhabi. This allows oil companies to artificially inflate their actual production costs during periods of rising crude prices...

Shell reported a 16% drop in net income, but on a historical-cost basis, its actual profits jumped 95% from \$1.04 billion to \$2.03 billion. Similarly, British Petroleum's reported drop of 48% would have turned into a respectable gain of 357% under the more realistic historical method."

WHO ARE THE REAL HOSTAGES OF THE OIL WAR?

★ The young GIs who joined the military as the only way to further their educations and job skills, victims of what many refer to as the 'economic draft', and now find themselves facing young Iraqis through the crosshairs of gun sights;

★ The Palestinians who have survived a brutal military occupation for 23 years with one U.N. resolution after another, have watched Israel occupy the lands of four Arab nations with full U.S. bankrolling, and are now with bitter hearts trapped under 24 hour curfew with very few gas masks to go around;

★ The Iraqi civilians, most of whom do not support Saddam Hussein but would die to the last man defending their homeland, who are now crammed in bunkers if they are lucky, no doubt dying by the thousands, as there are too few doctors and insufficient power, medicines and even water to treat the wounded;

★ The Israeli civilians who, although better equipped to deal with attack, are nonetheless pawns in a vicious game;

★ The American destitute huddled in doorways, the undernourished children, the elderly, the untreated insane, the sick and terminally ill, the illiterate from grossly inadequate schools. As Marine resister Erik Larsen said in Washington D.C. on Dec. 8th, "There are no peace plans to solve the Palestinian issue...There are no peace-plans for the streets of Washington D.C., Roxbury Boston or East Oakland, California."

★ The gay and lesbian members of the military who have been told that those who survive will be tossed out without honors after the war is over;

★ The American taxpayers who, despite enormous efforts both before and after the shooting started will be settled with both the moral and economic bill of this horrible tragedy for a very long time to come;

★ And ultimately, it is the 43,000 children who are dying every day of easily preventable things-hunger, diarrhea and measles- while the world spends a trillion a year on the machinery of war. ●



FREE AND BLACK IN AMERICA

How about the War at Home, George? Detroit might be a good place to start. Seven out of ten children entering the first grade will not graduate from high school, one third of all residents have left since 1967, and 15,000 abandoned buildings graced the city's streets. And a black male living in Detroit runs a greater risk of being killed than an American soldier did during World War II.

We don't know about his chances in the Mideast, but they are certainly disproportionate. Twelve percent of the American population is African-American, but the percentage is almost double that in the armed services, 23%. How many of them make it to officer status? Seven per cent.

There is a growing movement to refuse service among young African-American men since Bush vetoed a recent scholarship bill. This is viewed as furthering the 'economic draft', whereby the only place to turn for advanced education for many lower-income people is the military. ●

DEAD U.S. ADVISORS: \$21 MIL. EACH

During the first days of the Oil War, Congress quietly turned loose the \$42.5 million in aid to El Salvador that was held back in October due to lack of progress in the killing of the Jesuit priests and their co-workers. The excuse is seen to be the shooting of two U.S. Military advisors who's helicopter crashed in Eastern El Salvador. FMLN spokespersons have said that two members were responsible for the killings, and will be tried by the rebels themselves.

The family of Ben Linder must find the government's prompt and self-serving response particularly revolting. Ben was a 27 year old civilian engineer tortured and shot at point blank range in Nicaragua after being disabled by hand grenades in a deliberate ambush by Contras. His crime was in trying to bring electricity to rural mountain towns so that the could refrigerate inoculations for children and hold adult literacy classes at night.

Meanwhile, according to the UN's annual report, death squad killings have increased in El Salvador by 170% since 1989. Killings by the FMLN were down by 60%. Army killings of civilians had decreased by 17%, but forced disappearances had symmetrically increased by the same amount. ●

George Wald on the subject of Vietnam: The Vietnamese will win because they have a secret weapon. Their willingness to die is greater than our willingness to kill.

WAR TAX RESISTERS BEWARE

Clever Congresspersons casting about for away to do away with \$50 billion dollars of budget deficit have discovered that Americans owe \$70 billion in back taxes, dating back to 1983. It appears that collection efforts are going to be aggressively stepped up in the near future.

Is it a complete coincidence that this comes at a time when thousands of Americans are openly discussing war tax resistance as one way to avoid complicity in the Oil War? ●



Norb Drouhard's one-man anti-nuclear Peace Camp in Moscow

ONE MAN AGAINST NUCLEAR WAR

Long-time peace elder Norb Drouhard writes us from Russia:

"[I] was in Leningrad newspapers each of the four days of the Peace Wave Action, August 6-10, also local and national TV. [I] brought thousands of signed petitions to Moscow and was again on national TV with fellow WWII pilot who was double-leg amputee hero. He is presenting the anti-nuclear weapons petitions to the Supreme Soviet. [We] collected thousands more in three week Kazakhstan Peace Walk to the closed down Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site. (Last nuclear test Oct. 19, 1989 after major Kazak protest-these people have really suffered repeated radiation leaks.) I am now camped in my tent on streetside lawn of U.S. Ambassador Metcalf's house under huge banner in both Russian and American: "USSR STOPPED TESTING. WHEN WILL WE?" It is really wonderfully exciting to have all this support and it is certainly my most pleasurable vigil in the past five years...[I] have collected 10,000 Soviet anti-nuclear signatures to take to the U.N. in January to join petitions from 66 countries." ●

JANUARY SUCCESS AT TEST SITE

Over capacity crowds showed up for the international United Nations conference, sponsored jointly by American Peace Test and Greenpeace. The following day between three and four thousand protesters braved winter weather at the Nevada Test Site, where over 750 were arrested while protesting nuclear testing and reclaiming lands stolen from the Western Shoshone tribe. The weather was beautiful and the sense of unity and empowerment so great that many have referred to the day as a profound spiritual experience.

The 10th annual Lenten Desert Experience will be held at the Test Site this year from March 7-10. (Nevada Desert Experience, POB 4487, Las Vegas NV 89127. 702-646-4814)

On April 3-8, American Peace Test will hold the annual Peace Camp and nonviolent direct action to stop nuclear testing, honor native land rights and protest the U.S. Oil War. (APT, PO Box 26725, Las Vegas NV 89126. 702-386-9834) ●

TRACK RECORD:

February 1st, 1991 is the 1331st consecutive day of protest at the Concord Naval Weapons station. The Navy continues a high level of activity as it continues to arm the Oil War. Three of Concord's six nuclear-capable munitions ships are in the Gulf region now. Thirty-nine 'death trains' have been recorded, with about 160 Type A weapons boxcars (missiles, bombs), 25 Type B (fuses, propellants) various cars marked Inert or Dangerous (bullets, landmines) and empty boxcars returning to the fold. Trucks and flat cars are still being seen with large numbers of missiles and 16" shells.

A total of 37 arrests were made, including Victor Vasquez, Dorothy Brownold, Abraham Zwickel, Woody Schwartz, Larry Harper, Paul Gardener, Steve Frein and Steve Brady. Around 1400 arrests have been made at CNWS since June 10, 1987.

On Dec. 2, 1990 Bay Area Pax Christi led about 50 people in a prayer service at the tracks, both in remembrance of four church women killed and raped in El Salvador ten years ago, and in protest of the Mideast buildup. Participants walked to the base and poured sand, oil and their own blood in front of the main office. Nine were arrested as they knelt in prayer, including John Dear, Father Bill O'Donnell, Davida Coady and others.

One alarming incident took place on Dec. 13 when a loaded weapons truck deliberately struck protesters at the Water-front Gate. Russ Jorgensen was struck but unhurt. Charges are being pressed against the driver. Nuremberg Actions has attempted to meet with Base Commander Owens to discuss safety, but has so far been unsuccessful.

With the outbreak of war, tensions have risen greatly, as people are unable to cope with fear and anger. Nocturnal incidents of breaking vehicle windows and destruction of the vigil site occur, as do heckling and even death threats, by phone and in person. A counter-protest of war supporters has started adjacent to the vigil. Nuremberg Actions has tried to defuse tensions by focusing on the common concern of the safety of U.S. troops, with signs, flags and yellow ribbons.

Nonviolence has prevailed so far, with war-supporters even intervening on behalf of Nuremberger Paul Gardener when he was being hassled by two angry young men.

Former N.A. videographer Mark Coplan, his wife Ania and their son David were here for a visit from Nicaragua. They had many tales to tell of harder times than ever before, as the U.S. fails to keep economic commitments. ●

NUMBERS TO KNOW

Mideast Crisis & Referral Service, PeaceNet 415-923-0700
White House Comment Line 202-456-1111, FAX 202-456-2461

Address: 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Washington DC, 20500
New California Senator John Seymour 202-224-3121
Free Phone Petition against Oil War 1-800-772-GULF

For help with draft or service resistance:
National Resistance Committee, POB 42488, San Francisco CA
94142 Edward Hasbrouck, 415-824-8562

WHERE TO BE, WHEN TO BE THERE:

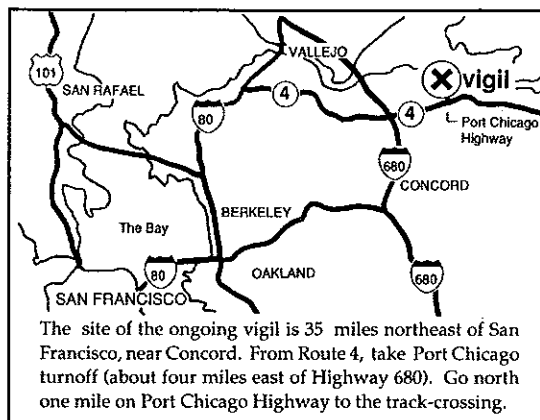
2/14--- Redwood Friends, Sonoma County, War Tax Resisters.
Special Valentine's Day Event planned--call S. Appleby
for updated details at 415-868-1359.

Nonviolence discussion group with David Hartsough.

2/17--10:00 am Buddhist Morning of Meditation.

Rides leave Berkeley Zen Center at 9:15, 1933 Russell St.

We are encouraging all interested persons to visit the vigil on Thursday mornings between 8:30 and 12:30. Orientation and nonviolent blockade training will be available. People wishing training at other times should call Victor Vasquez at 415-825-8335.



You can order copies of The Oil War Primer postpaid for \$3.50. For larger orders, the cost is \$3.00 after the first five books. Call number below directly about bulk orders.

___ Please send me more information about Nuremberg Actions.

___ Please send me the monthly newsletter Between the Lines.

I enclose a donation of \$10 ___ Other \$ ___ to cover costs.

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This newsletter is the mostly monthly publication of Nuremberg Actions, and is sent to N.A. supporters who request it. Additional donations make it possible to distribute it more widely for educational purposes.

The goal of the newsletter is to support citizens' rights in calling for just, sustainable non-exploitive policies from government and business alike, through nonviolent, creative and responsible means. Submissions accepted to 20th of month. Editor and Publisher: Jennifer Viereck

N.A. PO BOX 13 BOULDER CREEK CA 95006 (408) 338-9416