

THE THIRD WORLD WAR: POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE GULF WAR AND NEW WORLD ORDER

By Prof. ANDRE GUNDER FRANK

Immanuel Wallerstein writes that "Andre Gunder Frank has achieved the status of being a person of controversy". This means that his writings are widely discussed, passionately debated and hastily read.

The Macmillan edition in the introduction to Prof. Frank's "Critique and Anti-Critique" states: 'As an originator and main spokesperson of dependency theory, Andre Gunder Frank has participated in theoretical, ideological and political controversies about these and many other contemporary issues. His earlier pieces were written "to contribute to the Revolution ... to assimilate the Latin American Revolution and the inspiration it finds in the Cuban Revolution." In the face of growing conservatism and reaction in much of the world over the past 15 years, however, Frank has evolved from revolutionary hope and critique of reformism to an acceptance of reformism here and there as the lesser evil to reaction.'

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Introduction to Third World War

The Gulf War may be termed THIRD WORLD WAR in two senses of this title: First, this war aligned the rich North, the rich oil emirates or kingdoms, and some bribed regional oligarchies against a poor Third World country. In that sense, the Gulf War was a THIRD WORLD WAR by the North against the South. It was massively so perceived throughout the Third World South, not only in Arab and Muslim countries but also elsewhere in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Masses of people in the Third World manifested their opposition to this war and the North, even if it meant taking sides with the dictator Saddam Hussein, for whom little love was lost. Indeed, the popular expressions of racism and xenophobia in the North also were manifestations of this same perception that this was a war between "us" in the North and "them" in the Third World South.

The second sense of THIRD WORLD WAR is that the Gulf War may dangerously mark the brutal beginning of a THIRD WORLD WAR, following upon the First and Second World Wars. Not only was the tonnage of bombs dropped on Iraq of world war proportions. The Gulf War and the New World Order it was

meant to launch signify the renewed recourse by a worldwide "coalition of allies" to mass destruction of infrastructure and mass annihilation of human beings. The allies led by the United States chose to wage a major, destructive, brutal and unnecessary war and renounced dialogue and negotiation as their preferred instrument to settle a relatively minor international dispute. In so doing, moreover, they clearly signalled their threat to build the New World Order on repeated recourse to this same military force and annihilation against any other recalcitrant country or peoples - as long as they are poor, weak, and in the Third World South.

With the conclusion of the cold war, the Third World (Hot) War is not to be fought between East and West, or West and West, but between the North and the South. Since the Second World War, West-West wars have been obviated, and the East-West cold war has been fought out in regional hot wars in Korea, Vietnam, Angola, Nicaragua, and other parts of the Third World. Now, West-West cold conflicts are also to be transmuted, as in the Gulf War against Iraq, into the ever existing North-South conflict and into Third World War at the expense of Third World peoples on Third World

soil. Of course, the North-South gap and conflict itself is also becoming ever acuter. The Gulf War signals that in the New World Order the North reserves the right and threat to turn any Old World Order North-South cold conflict into a North-South hot war at the expense of Third-World people on Southern soil at any time of Northern choosing. Therefore, the world is threatened with THE THIRD WORLD WAR.

This essay examines the Gulf War and the New World Order in this global context. However, it also concentrates on the political economic motives, actions and their consequences of the major actors in the unfolding of this tragic drama. THE major actor in the Gulf War for a New World Order - certainly was President George Bush. However, he has never told the truth about his reasons, actions, or purposes in promoting and fighting the Gulf War. Indeed, George Bush deceived the American public and the world al-



A protest in New York questioning US motives

ready earlier on. To go no further, the dominant theme in his election campaign to the American presidency was READ MY LIPS! He promised the American people and in effect the world "NO NEW TAXES" and "A KINDER, GENTLER PRESIDENCY." Instead, what we got from President Bush is his New World Order War in the Gulf. Poor American people and Poor World! They did not listen when Bush's Democratic Party rival Michael Dukakis explicitly warned us all that George Bush was making false promises. The Bush campaign also featured promises to be "The Education President" at home and "To Take Care of the Environment." Once elected, President Bush first raised new taxes, which will have to rise further with recession and war. Then he neglected education and

the environment, which will also suffer more for the war.

President Bush made this war, and in order to make the war he gave us THE BIG LIE both about the war and about his NEW WORLD ORDER. Therefore, it takes some inquiry to unravel the immediate economic and more underlying geopolitical economic reasons; the economic buildup, political escalation, belligerent pursuit and the human and material damages; and the domestic and international costs of this Gulf War for New World Order. Finally, we may inquire into the resulting place of the United States in this New World Order. The purpose here is to contribute to the clarification and answer of these important questions.

Therefore, this essay concentrates on the actions and responsibility of the Bush Administration in the United States in the Gulf War. This essay consolidates, amplifies, documents and updates the

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author's four earlier writings and publications on the Gulf crisis and war, which are listed below. One of these earlier essays still included "a curse on both your houses" in its title, because then it still seemed important to stress and critique the responsibility of both sides to this conflict. However, more recently, it has become both absolutely and relatively more important to analyze and help expose the American Bush administration's much greater [i]responsibility in the tragic unfolding of events. In the meantime also, much more evidence on the same has also become publicly available. I draw on the relatively limited amount of this evidence made available abroad, primarily through the **International Herald Tribune** [IHT]. In any case, the actions of the United States and its allies carry much more weight and importance than those of any country or its leader in the Third World. Therefore, the analysis below concentrates on the world shaking actions and consequences of the major actors in this drama and on their respon-

sibilities in and significance for the "new world order".

False Western Pretexts for going to War in the Gulf

The violation of international law through the invasion and occupation of Kuwait by Iraq under the presidency of Saddam Hussein is beyond dispute. However, the allegation that the Gulf War was to protect the "principle" of world order, international law and the Charter of the United Nations from lawless might-is-right violation is a lie. Indeed, this pretext is the height of cynicism, especially by President Bush, but also by his Western allies and others who supported him in the United Nations.

Many similar aggressions and violations of both the UN Charter and UN resolutions have gone without any such response, or often even without any notice. Indonesia invaded and ravaged East

Timor and Irian Jaya with genocide without having the world take hardly any notice. Apartheid in South Africa, but less so its continual aggressions against its neighboring Front Line States in Southern Africa, led to embargoes by the UN and its members; but no one ever suggested going to war against South Africa. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan merited condemnation, and opposition, albeit of course not by the Security Council; but certainly no counter invasion of the Soviet Union. The Iraqi invasion of Iran received, but did not merit, de facto political and even military support by the same coalition of allies, which then waged war against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Indeed, among the very same states who allied themselves in a coalition to "liberate Kuwait" from aggression and occupation by Iraq several engaged in similar aggression and still today maintain their military occupation of others' territory: Israel invaded and still occupies the Golan Heights, West Bank, and the

Gaza Strip in violation of UN Resolution 242. Israel also invaded Lebanon and de facto still exercises military control over southern Lebanon. Syria invaded and still exercises military control over parts of northern Lebanon. Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974 and still occupies apart of it militarily. Morocco invaded and took over the Western Sahara. Only recently, the United States waged war on Nicaragua for a decade through the "contras," invaded and still occupies Grenada, and invaded and still exercises military occupation over Panama. Thus, the coalition allies included at least a half dozen states [not to mention France in Africa and the south Pacific and Britain in the South Atlantic] who themselves recently subjected other UN member states to military invasion and still occupy them or parts of their territory. This dirty half dozen clearly did not "defend Kuwait" to defend the international law that they were and still are breaking themselves. Like the other coalition members and demonstrably the mortal enemies Syria and the United States, they allied themselves with each other each for their own sordid realpolitik reasons. As the foreign minister of Australia, whose hands are not so clean either, explained, "the world is littered with examples of acquisition by force."

Significantly, however, hardly anyone except some Latin Americans – not even President Hussein and certainly not President Bush – has made the obvious linkage of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait with the American one of Panama. Only eight months before President Hussein invaded Kuwait, President Bush himself invaded Panama. The US foreign invasion of sovereign Panama cost 4,000 to 7,000 lives [far more than the simultaneous domestic violence in Romania], used armed brutalization of part of the population, caused wanton destruction of property for which no amends have ever been made. Moreover, Panama is still "governed" by a "president" and two "vice-presidents" solemnly installed by the United States on an American military base and under effective US military occupation and rule to this day!

President Bush's "Just Cause" for his invasion of Panama with 27,000 troops to catch one drug trafficker was a cynical lie. So much that a year later in Panama

the drug trade remains business as usual (IHT April 20-21, 1991), and in the United States President Bush's Justice Department has been unable to unearth a single shred of documentary evidence to use in court against General Noriega. Indeed, he may never get to court, not the least because Noriega himself probably has evidence on George Bush since their days of friendly collaboration not so long ago. The real reasons for President Bush's invasion of Panama have still not been revealed. Noriega's defense lawyer now claims that the real issue in the US-Noriega falling out was not the reported drug-dealing but Noriega's late 1980s refusal, despite CIA threats, to help the CIA backed contras invade Nicaragua (IHT May 17, 1991). Another reason for the invasion may have been the need to replace the no longer usable bogey of the Soviet evil empire with a new one in the personalized form of a narco-terrorist in the Isthmus – until a better bogey became available in the Gulf. However, more material incentives have also been suggested: In the short run, to forestall a deal with Japan, which was a threat because of Panama's accession to a majority on the Canal Commission on January 1, 1990. There is also increasing evidence that a longer run reason for the U.S. invasion and continued occupation of Panama is to maintain control over the Canal by forestalling the execution of the Carter-Torrijos Treaty. It stipulates the American handover of all of the Canal and its "Zone" to Panama on January 1, 2000. What limit then is there to cynicism when President Bush can now appeal to God, morality, and international law to condemn President Hussein's invasion and occupation of Kuwait, when he himself did and still does the same in Panama?

Unfortunately, lying cynicism is not limited to Presidents Hussein or Bush and their immediate supporters. No Security Council resolutions were passed, or even proposed, to protect President Bush's new world order from his own violation of the sovereignty of Panama. On the contrary, President Bush received only acquiescence or even outright support for his violation of international law and human right in Panama. So had President Reagan when he invaded and occupied sovereign Grenada [which also

is still administered by the United States]. Indeed, the entire European Community, not to mention the United States, also already supported Prime Minister Thatcher when she escalated her war against Argentina and its military junta [notwithstanding that she literally torpedoed on the ocean all efforts in Lima to defuse the situation and prevent war in the South Atlantic, and that she threatened to nuke the Argentine city of Cordoba]. The Malvinas/Falkland War was the first major war of all the West against a single Third World country. The latter received no support of any kind from any other country in the North, and only moral support regardless of political ideology from its regional partners in Latin America. Therefore, it cannot be credible that today the same old Western NATO allies – and now the ex-Warsaw Pact foes and new allies to boot – appeal to God and justice from their high moral horses to condemn another violation of international law and to band together to wage war against a Third World country for the same. There must be other – even more cynical? – reasons at work.

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Immediate Economic Reasons for going to War

Foreign Oil

The most obvious economic reason for the war has been oil. The real price of oil had again declined, especially with the renewed decline of the dollar in which oil is priced. Iraq had some legitimate demands, both on its own behalf against Kuwait and on behalf of other Arab states and oil producers. In pressing these demands by resort to invasion, Saddam Hussein threatened some other oil interests, clients of the United States, and the success of its "divide et impera" policy.

President Hussein invaded Kuwait for political economic reasons: to shore up his political capital at home and in the region in the face of increased debts from the Iraq-Iran War and declining earnings from oil revenues with which to settle these debts. Time (August 20) observed that "the uneven distribution of wealth-producing resources – the gap between

haves and have-nots – is fuelling a regional crisis, a struggle with severe implications for the entire world's standard of living." The same issue of Time Magazine also quoted an advisor to President Bush: "this has been an easy call. Even a dolt understands the principle. We need the oil. It's nice to talk about standing up for freedom, but Kuwait and Saudi Arabia are not exactly democracies, and if their principal export were oranges... we would have closed Washington down for August. There is nothing to waver about here." Later, placards carried in street demonstrations around the world expressed the same still more simply – NO BLOOD FOR OIL.

That world renowned moral authority, Richard Nixon, aptly summed up both the recessionary and the oil reason, and to boot he managed to do so under the title "Bush Has it Right: America's Commitment in the Gulf Is Moral." Nixon wrote:

"When Senator Bob Dole said we were in the Gulf for oil and Secretary of State James Baker said we were there for jobs,

they were criticized for justifying our actions on purely selfish grounds. We should not apologize for defending our vital economic interests. Had America not intervened, an international outlaw would today control more than 40 percent of the world's oil... [However] it will not be just a war about oil. It will not be a war about a tyrant's cruelty. It will not be a war about democracy. It will be a war about peace... That is why our commitment in the Gulf is a highly moral enterprise" (IHT Jan. 7, 1991).

It is hardly necessary to recall that before this same Richard Nixon resigned the US presidency to evade congressional impeachment for fraud and deceit, he directed a war to bomb Vietnam "back into the stone age." it was said that "we had to destroy it to save it."

Domestic Recession

Another immediate economic reason for going to war was to counter domestic recession or at least its political conse-

quences at home, as Secretary of State Baker suggested. Indeed, both presidents Hussein and Bush started this war to manage their own domestic political economic problems in the face of a new world economic recession. There was also recent precedent for the same. During the last world recession, both General Galtieri in Argentina and Prime Minister Thatcher in Britain started and escalated the Malvinas/Falklands War in 1982. The reason was that they both faced political problems at home, which were generated by the world economic recession. Only one of them could win the war gamble and thereby assure his/her political survival. Significantly, that war already pitched the entire West [and its nuclear arsenal] against a single country in the South.

Why was American reaction against Iraq's invasion of Kuwait so strong? The United States went far beyond what most initially considered appropriate, likely or possible, indeed beyond what most

gear up the war machine in response to all previous recessions since World War II.

Truman's massive response in the Korean War in 1950 followed postwar demobilization and the first recession in 1949, which many feared might replay the depression of the 1930s. During the 1953-54 recession, the United States intervened in the military overthrow of the constitutionally elected Arbenz government in Guatemala. The 1957-58 recession was followed by Eisenhower's intervention in Lebanon in 1958. The 1967 recession was important in Germany and Japan and only incipient in the United States; because the latter avoided it through President Johnson's massive escalation to war in Vietnam. Yet Vice President and Democratic candidate Johnson had run and won his 1964 electoral campaign against the Republican Goldwater on the promise against war in Vietnam. The 1968 Vietnamese Tet offensive and the 1969-70 recession

cal demise threatened her government in 1982.

Threats of recession and military budget cuts also prompted President Bush already to over-react massively in Panama. Even greater recessionary threats, decline of his popularity over the tax/deficit issue, and military budget cuts then drove him to over-react again even more against Iraq. Reports in the American press suggest that the Democrats have to shelve much of their proposed Congressional "peace dividend" cuts to the Pentagon budget. Of course, hardware and logistics for U.S. intervention in the Third World will receive an additional boost.

WORLD GEOPOLITICAL ECONOMIC REASONS FOR GOING TO WAR IN THE GULF

The World Recession of the 1990s

The discussion by the US administration and press about whether the Gulf crisis brought on the recession or not is totally turned around; for both the timing and the causation were the other way around. For the recession of 1989-1990-1991 began months before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and led first to President Bush's "Just Cause" invasion of Panama and then to the Crisis and War in the Gulf. As Richard Nixon noted, even Secretary of State Baker let on undiplomatically that the American stance in the Gulf was to maintain jobs at home; and The Chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, Michael Boskin, was quoted by the International Herald Tribune (Jan. 3, 1991) to say that the American economy would have been even worse off if military operations in the Gulf had not helped stabilize it.

The recession began with the renewed cyclical decline in the rate of profits in 1989, which continued in 1990. The recession became evident in 1990 - some time before the Gulf Crisis and War. A very small sampling of newspaper headlines and some text [mostly from the International Herald Tribune] from 1990 sets the tone: "U.S. Profits: Sign of a Slump [for second year in a row], " "1.3% Fall forecast for U.S. [3.4% annual rate in the last quarter of 1990], " "Amid Signs

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people deemed desirable before it took place, as we will observe below. So why this reaction here and now and not, for instance, when Iraq attacked Iran or when Israel invaded Lebanon, not to mention its continued occupation of Arab territories? Part of the explanation of course lies in the differences in American interests among their clients and enemies.

However, the timing of this American response abroad also is immediately related to economic needs and political conflicts at home. President Bush's failure to deliver on his electoral promises of a domestic renewal program were eating into his popularity ratings, and the oncoming recession reduced them further. The recession, the growing budget deficit and the end of the cold war fed Congressional threats to the Bush-Cheney Pentagon budget. President Bush reacted with much historical precedent. We may note that the incumbent administration in the United States, whether Republican or Democratic, had already escalated incidents or opportunities to

were followed by renewed American escalation in Indochina, including Cambodia. The 1973-75 recession also resulted in further escalation of the war in Vietnam.

The 1979 recession and Democratic President Jimmy Carter initiated the Second Cold War. The two track decision to install cruise missiles in Europe and to negotiate with the Soviet Union from strength as well as the 3 percent yearly increase in NATO budgets came **before** the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in December 1979. The unexpectedly strong American response, which was not expected by the Soviet or perhaps anyone else, **followed** not only the invasion but also the 1979 recession. The 1981-82 recession brought on Reagan's military Keynesianism and massive arms build up, not to mention his Nicaraguan Contras policy and perhaps his over-reaction in Grenada. As already noted above, Margaret Thatcher also over-reacted analogously and received a new lease on her political life in the Falklands/Malvinas War when economic recession and politi-

of a U.S. Recession, Bankruptcies Hit a Record," "U.S. Firms' Debt Service Burden Grows," "U.S. [corporate and municipal] Debt Downgrades Hit a Record in 1990." "Portfolios of U.S. Banks are Shaking in 15 years," "20 Big Banks Head for Failure. U.S. Agency Says Many Will Need Bailouts," "U.S. Deposit Insurance [of bank accounts] is 'At a Low.'" "1991 Bank Failures Threaten U.S. Fund. Most Large Institutions Are on Verge of Insolvency, Congress Study Says," "This Is a Rescue? The S & L bailout is faltering – and the meter keeps running," "No end in Sight. Politicians Hurl blame as the U.S. savings and loan crisis races out of control" – but not only at the S & Ls, and not only in the USA.

The recession is already worldwide: Canada and Australia are in severe recession. "U. K. Slump Worse Than Expected." France, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, even Switzerland ["bank profits down"] have reduced or negative growth rates. Africa is in depression. In Latin America, GNP declined 0.5 per cent and per capita 2.4 per cent in 1990, on top of a 10 per cent decline in the 1980s. Now it is the turn of Eastern Europe with an over all 20 percent economic decline in 1990, and of the Soviet Union. Also "China Sees Threats to Growth" and so does India, whom the crisis largely bypassed in the 1980s.

Are Japan and Germany exceptions? Can and will they be the replacement locomotives for the world economy during the early 1990s? "Without World Recovery, Bonn [Germany] Fears a Slowdown." "Germany's East: Bleaker Yet." "Economy Feels Strains as Price of Unity Mounts." "German Trade: No Moscow Miracles Foreseen" to restore exports and jobs lost. Bundesbank President Karl Otto Pohl declared the economic consequences of German unification a "catastrophe" and drove the D-Mark down several cents the next day.

In Japan, as well as in Korea and Taiwan, growth rates have also declined already. The Japanese speculative bubble has burst. "Japan's Big Banks Brace for Bad Results." The stock market declined 40 percent in 1990; real estate prices plummeted; and Japanese investors and speculators transferred funds

inward from abroad to help them cover their losses at home. That is also why in 1990, for the first time since 1986 and now that the United States needs it most, the net flow of Japanese capital was out from the United States to Japan. The prospects for a severe recession in Japan and the East Asian NICs are quite real. Either way, the prospects for economic cooperation instead of competition by Japan in the world economy are quite dim. "G-7 Aides Disagree on Policy;" "G-7, by Default, Gives Japan Go-Ahead on Loans to China." If Japan primes the pump or steams up its locomotive at all, it is likely to do so in its own region in Asia, as Germany would, if at all, in Europe.

Thus, the threat that would recession in the early 1990s will be even more severe than in the early 1980s is quite real. As I wrote in 1989 about "Blocking the Black Debt Hole in the 1990s":

"The question is less one of a soft or hard landing than whether the world

Third World and Socialist trading partners. They will find it ever more difficult to manage the growing conflicts between financial debt speculation and real economic productive investment, through the already conflicting monetary, fiscal, exchange rate, trade, security and other policies. Therefore, another (again more severe?) recession threatens also to spark another (again more severe?) crisis within the crisis. More of the same muddling through is likely to become impossible. Any possibility of reimposition of the old American dominance (or an alternative Japanese new dominance) in a multilateral world economic and financial system or its coordinated management by the G7, G5 or G3 is improbable in such a recession. (A US bomb and Japanese yen based Pacific basin political economic consortium is possible but rather unlikely, and one including Europe even less likely). The most likely possible alternative resolution will therefore be increasingly neo-mercantilist regionalization of the world economy into American dollar,

Saddam Hussein offered President Bush an opportunity to meet the European challenge.

economy has already bottomed out, or whether the next recession will be still deeper once again. This is a serious danger, because the next recession threatens to exacerbate all these imbalances and to accelerate their resolution by sucking the world economy into the black hole of debt (to use the expression of MIT economist Lester Thurow). The accumulation of domestic and foreign debt in many parts of the world is likely to inhibit further domestic reflationary finance (call it Gramm-Rudman in the United States) to combat recession just when it is most needed in the next recession. That would be among other things to forestall the bankruptcies of junk bond financed corporations and banks dependent on interbank loans. Both US and Japanese monetary policies would be damned if they do and damned if they don't...

The continuing world economic crisis is exacerbating the accumulated regional and sectoral imbalances especially among the world's major trading regions of America, Europe, Japan, and their

Japanese yen and German led European ECU/ D mark zones and/or trading (and political?) blocs (Frank 1990c).

West-West Competition

Additional underlying reasons for the belligerent American stance leading to the Gulf War was the defense of American economic and geopolitical interests world wide. The primary threats to these American interests are competition from Japan and Germany, or from a Japanese led Asia and a German led Europe – all the more so now that the Soviet "threat" is virtually eliminated. As we observed, the cold war is over – and Japan and Germany have won! The Reaganomics of the 1980s helped eliminate the Soviet Union from the running but at the cost of mortgaging the American economy and even its government's budget to the Japanese and the Europeans. The United States is now economically dependent on continued capital inflows from its principal economic rivals, which the Japanese already began to withdraw. In response to even deeper recession and/or

with greater deliberation, the Japanese now threaten to pull the financial rug out from under the United States and its dollar altogether. At the same time, trade and other economic disputes grow ever deeper at various points including the GATT Uruguay rounds. Japan was distinctly uncooperative, and Europe refused to budge more than a few percent on the issue of agricultural subsidies. The road to "Europe 1992" was made more difficult by the 1989-90 events in Eastern Europe and by Britain's intransigent foot dragging.

The July 1990 Houston Summit of the G [Group of] 7 industrial countries confirmed the live-and-let-live "Sinatra doctrine": Each one does it "my way," and the others nod approval, as long as they have no other choice. At the Summit, Prime Minister Kaifu of Japan announced a large scale program of loans to China, and Chancellor Kohl of Germany a similar state guaranteed loan of 5 billion DM to the Soviet Union. President Bush reiterated his "Enterprise for the American

The third major departure in the Gulf is the near unanimity and alliance in the North against the South.

Initiative" for a free trade zone from Alaska to Patagonia [and \$ 7 billion remission of debts out of the over \$ 420 billion] which he had already hurried to announce a week earlier. In each case, the other two listened, acknowledged, and did nothing either to participate or to stop it. Thus, they consecrated what the Soviet spokesman Gennadi Gerasimov had in another context baptized as "the Sinatra Doctrine."

Germany's first priority was and is reunification. The economic and social costs are enormous, and they are borne mostly by the people and their government(s). So far private industry in the West of Germany has been very slow to invest in the East of Germany— and much less even in the East of Europe. How long it will take Germany to get up the steam to put its locomotive in motion remains to be seen — in Central and Eastern Europe. Little of this locomotive power is likely to be visible in the world economy elsewhere. On the contrary, as an economy that has been very dependent on exports

to the world market, Germany itself has already suffered from declining export markets due to the recession elsewhere in the world economy.

In June 1990, the former editor of the American foreign policy establishment's **Foreign Affairs**, James Chace, wrote in **International Management. Europe's Business Magazine**:

"AUF WIEDERSEHEN USA. There will be a European challenge... Europe has... turned Servan-Schreiber's thesis on its head. Today it is the United States that is fearful of Europe's economic strength and worried about its own relative economic decline... approaching 1992... if there are severe economic dislocations or, let us not forget, a global recession, there is no telling how the new Europe will react... From this prospect arises the even more frightening specter, to Americans at least, of a Fortress Europe dominated by great industrial groups that could freeze all competitors out of its market. If this should happen, the risks to

the United States would be huge... The likelihood that the Europeans will eventually form a pan-European security system of their own will further reduce U.S. power and influence... Washington is almost desperately eager to remain in Europe. "The United States should remain a European power in the broadest sense, politically, militarily and economically," said U.S. President Bush in a speech last month."

Two months later, Saddam Hussein offered President Bush an opportunity to meet the European challenge.

Using Military Strength to Compensate for Economic Weakness

BRAVO FOR AMERICAN POWER celebrated the "serious" London paper **Sunday Telegraph** (Jan. 20, 1991) in a five column editorial: "bliss is it in this dawn to be alive; but to be an old reactionary is very heaven... Who matter are not the Germans or the Japanese or the Russians but the Americans. Happy days are

here again." The same paper added farther down the page, "this is not going to be a multi-polar world. If there is to be a new world order, it will be based on US military power with Britain playing a key role. Saddam's scalp will be its first trophy." Thus the London **Telegraph** also makes its own the observation of the aptly named American **National Interest**: "The fact [is] that the military power of the United States was the only thing capable of mounting an effective riposte — when the economic power of Japan or a Germany was virtually irrelevant." Since World War II, the United States has not been able to use its military might against Japan and Germany; and it can no longer do much for them either, now that the Soviet military threat is waning. However, the United States still can — indeed without Soviet encumbrance now all the more so — use its military might in and against countries in the Third World. In other words, the Gulf Crisis offered President Bush a black golden opportunity to try to redress declining American hegemony against its principal economic rivals in Japan and Germany by playing the only — that is military — ace he still has up his sleeve. Of course, at the cost of Iraq and the Third World, where this war was "played" out. Without exception, all East-West wars since 1945 were fought on Third World soil. Now the West-West competition is to be fought out in the South as well.

East-West, North-South

Often used labels aligned the old world order along East-West and North-South axes and conflicts. In recent years, however, the East-West ones have waned while the North-South ones have waxed ever more. So have, albeit to a lesser degree, West-West conflicts among North America, Western Europe, and East Asia led by Japan. Thus, recent history was marked by "Political Ironies in the World Economy" (Frank 1984/1987). Since 1945, world economic conditions were shaping international and national politics and social movements. In particular, the economic conflicts and opportunities generated by the world economic crisis since 1967 would prove more important in shaping international relations and domestic policy than the ideological and political cold war between the United

States and the Soviet Union. Many East-West conflicts were a sham and largely a cover for the always real North-South contradictions. None of the 14 "revolutions" in the South since 1974 was what it appeared to be or would turn out as was hoped or feared.

These observations among others suggest the further irony that much of the East-West conflict, especially between Washington and Moscow, is a smoke screen cover for North-South conflicts... The world economic and technological development that is now passing through a crisis of regeneration, is perhaps, again ironically, likely further to diminish, if not eliminate, the importance of the East-West political division of the world much more than the North-South economic division, which it is likely to accentuate still further (Frank 1984/1987).

Under the title **The European Challenge** (Frank 1983/84), I also argued that world economic conflicts made greater "Pan-European Entente" [as per my subtitle] politically both possible and desirable, all state policies and obstacles of political blocs and their ideological inclinations notwithstanding. This inefficacy of "voluntarist" state policy and politics, especially for "national development" in a world economy, was also the basis for the rise to greater importance of alternative social movements in the West, South and also in the East (Frank and Fuentes 1989, 1990). In the meantime, all of these and related analyses and forecasts, which seemed unrealistic in the ideological climate of their time, have become hard reality. However, these "ironical" turns and consequences are only logical repercussions of the changing world economic conditions. Now the cold war is over, Germany and Japan have won! However, the United States still has the military power and the political ambitions to try to defend its place in the world order – now all the more so at the expense of the Third World South.

Political Economies of Escalation

The escalation of the Gulf crisis was marked by three important new departures in recent international political economic relations:

1. The energetic American response in the Gulf was visibly over a political economic issue. The issue is oil without any cold war ideological overtones. The conflict about oil and the massive American response was barely masked behind appeals to the "defense" of small states in international "law."

2. This mobilization was entirely against (a part of) the South without any pretense of an East-West ideological cover. Popular reaction in the United States – and some physical attacks and threats against innocent neighbours – was directed against the Arab bogey. Not for nothing are the image of the Arab and of the "terrorist" often identified in the popular mind. The end of the cold war and of the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact as a credible enemy require the legitimization of another target. Actually, much of the ostensible East-West conflict had always been a convenient cover for the underlying North/West-South conflict. Now, there is little alternative other than to bring the North-South conflict out into the open. Private enterprise drug traffic and individual terrorism are useful but limited alternative targets. They are better targets if it is possible to make a state sponsorship connection, as (wrongly) claimed about Libya. In Panama, the ostensible "enemy" was **narco-terrorism**. The two were combined and personalized by General Noriega and served as readily available ideological replacements for the no longer operative red menace/Soviet bogey. Significantly of course, the target was also (in) the Third World. It is even more useful now to be able to mobilize for real war against a bigger Third World state and its supposed threat.

3. The third major departure in the Gulf is the near unanimity and alliance in the **North against the South**. The lineup against Iraq from West to East, includes the United States, Western and Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, China and Japan, as well as American client states and governments whose arms are easily twisted, as in Egypt and Pakistan. That new alignment is a major difference, new departure, and ominous threat for the future of "international" relations. *Time* Magazine commented on "the astonish-

ing unanimity of purpose... It is rare that a victim's fortunes are so directly tied to the health of the Western economies." In view of the same, British Prime Minister Thatcher commented "I cannot remember a time when we had the world so strongly together." By "world" she means the "North," which is what counts. Yet, as *Time* quotes a Bush aide who watched his boss calculate, "he knew that to be effective, the lineup against Saddam had to be perceived as more than just the rich West against a poor Arab." This lineup was prepared with care and time.

ECONOMIC BULDUP AND POLITICAL ESCALATION OF CRISIS AND WAR IN THE GULF

Public Iraq-Kuwait Disputes and Secret Kuwait-US Agreements

The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was not an unexpected bolt of lightning out of the blue. Its utilization as a pretext by the United States to launch its new world order through the most destructive war since World War II appears increasingly as malice aforethought.

"Stealing Kuwait was not simple greed or national hatred. Theft on a national scale [of what had been Iraqi before the British created Kuwait] had become the only possible access for war-devastated Iraq to... the modern standard of living that Western nations and small oil-producing emirates of the Gulf enjoy today as a matter of right... The strength of this almost suicidal drive to emerge from poverty and backwardness... was the motor, (Jim Hoagland, IHT March 5).

Iraqi grievances against Kuwait were an old inheritance from colonial times, which was newly aggravated by Kuwaiti action and perhaps provocation. The disputed border between Iraq and Kuwait was arbitrarily drawn through the old Mesopotamian sand by the British before they had to abandon their colonial empire. However, the British deliberately did so to deny Kuwait's oil and access to the sea to the populous Iraqis and to reserve them to a rich emirate, which would be more subject to Western influence. Indeed, the resulting division into six large and populous but poor countries and six

artificially created smaller states with oil reserves ruled mostly by emirs. These have scarcely shared their oil derived riches with their poor Arab "brothers" and have preferred to use them to flaunt their luxury at home and invest their surplus funds abroad in the West.

Iraq never quite resigned itself to this colonial and neo-colonial arrangement and its borders with Kuwait. In particular, Iraq claimed two small off-coast islands, which would increase its access to the sea and tanker born exports of its own oil. Moreover, the border between Iraq and Kuwait obliged them to share the Rumaila oil field beneath. Iraq accused Kuwait of surreptitiously siphoning off increasingly more than its fair share of oil from this common field while Iraq was occupied by its war with Iran. This war left Iraq under-capitalized and in US \$ 30 billion debt to its rich neighbours. Therefore, Iraq asked its rich Arab neighbours, including Kuwait, to forgive this debt and supply it with another \$ 30 billion. They tentatively offered \$ 10 billion each, but then reduced their offer to an insulting \$ 500 million instead. Moreover, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia had started to add injury to insult by increasing their own production of oil and thereby driving down the price of oil on which Iraq depended to recoup its wartime losses. Long before its recourse to the invasion of Kuwait, Iraq repeatedly denounced and demanded relief from all these measures, which it regarded as injurious affronts to itself. To no avail.

On the contrary, information is emerging both quite publicly and less so that the overproduction of oil by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to drive the price oil down was a deliberate attempt to weaken Iraq. "The Kuwait government was acting aggressively - it was economic warfare" according to Henry Schuler, the Director of the energy security program at the Washington Center for Strategic and International Studies, which has often been linked to the CIA.

Saddam Hussein and other Iraqis repeatedly complained about this economic warfare against them and demanded better and fairer treatment from their Arab neighbours instead. To this end, Hussein convoked an Arab summit in Baghdad in

May 1990 and complained of "economic warfare," but to no avail. In his Revolution Day speech on July 19, President Hussein called the oil price policy by Kuwait and the other Emirates "a poisoned dagger" thrust into the back of Iraq, which was left alone as the only real defender of Arab interests.

King Hussein of Jordan was an intermediary in negotiations between Iraq, Kuwait and other Arab states. Michael Emery, writing in the New York **Village Voice** cites King Hussein as his source to make the following statements among others:

"Parties to the Arab negotiations say the Kuwaitis ... had enthusiastically participated in a behind-the-scenes economic campaign inspired by Western intelligence agencies against Iraqi interests. The Kuwaitis even went so far as to dump oil for less than the agreed upon OPEC price ... which undercut the oil revenues essential to cash hungry Baghdad.

The evidence shows that President George Bush, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, and other Arab leaders secretly cooperated on a number of occasions, beginning August 1988, to deny Saddam Hussein the economic help he demanded for the reconstruction of his nation ... However, Washington and London encouraged the Kuwaitis in their intransigent insistence" (*Village Voice* March 5, 1991 reprinted in *Open Magazine Pamphlet Series No. 9* and also cited in *International Viewpoint*, April 15, 1991).

The Iraqi foreign ministry has distributed the translation of a supposedly top secret report to the Kuwaiti Minister of the Interior by his Director General of State Security. It is dated 22 November 1989, informs of a meeting with the Director of the CIA in Washington, and reads in part:

"We agreed with the American side about the importance of exploiting the deterioration of Iraq's economic situation in order to put pressure on the Iraqi government to consent to the delimitation of the borders. The CIA offered its own ideas about how these pressures might be exercised through extensive cooperation

between the CIA and ourselves and that the coordination of these activities be established at a high level ... The American side offers us a private telephone line to facilitate the rapid exchange of information (cited in part by Emery *ibid.*)"

Emery also reports on a July 30 meeting between King Hussein and the foreign minister of Kuwait, who is the brother of its ruling Emir. Emery notes that "despite Saddam's army on their border, the Kuwaitis were in no mood to listen." Emery asks,

"Why were the rulers of this tiny city-state sure of themselves? Apparently, the Kuwaitis thought they knew something the Iraqis didn't. In their July 30 meeting ... [Kuwaiti foreign minister] Sheik Saben shocked the Jordanian delegation by saying: "We are not going to respond to [Iraq] ... If they don't like it, let them occupy our territory ... we are going to bring in the Americans ..." (Emery, *ibid.*)

"The Kuwaiti Crown Prince had told his senior military officers that they would have to hold off any Iraqi invading force for 24 hours and the "American and foreign forces would land in Kuwait and expel them" (Emery, *ibid.*).

Setting the American Trap for Hussein

"The Americans were determined to go to war from the start," and Saddam Hussein "walked into a trap" according to the former French foreign minister Claude Cheysson (IHT March 11). "State Department officials... led Saddam Hussein to think he could get away with grabbing Kuwait... Bush and Co. gave him no reason to think otherwise" (New York Daily News Sept. 29). The former White House Press Secretary Pierre Salinger has written at length about how this trap was set [but unfortunately I have not yet had access to this documentation]. Bits and pieces of the jigsaw puzzle trap are also emerging elsewhere, however; and some may be summarily put together here. The belatedly publicized July 25 interview between President Hussein and American Ambassador April Glaspie is literally only the tip of the largely submerged iceberg of this trap setting story.

Evidence is emerging to suggest that the Persian Gulf war is the result of a long

process of preparation, much more so than the Tonkin Gulf one in Vietnam. For a decade during the Iran-Iraq war, Saddam Hussein's Iraq had enjoyed US and Western military, political and economic support, including \$ 1.5 billion of sales approved by the U.S. government. George Bush had been a key figure in the Reagan Administration's support for Iraq. After the conclusion of Iraq's war with Iran and the accession of George Bush to the American presidency, US policy towards Iraq became increasingly confusing at best and/or the product of a downright Machiavellian strategy to deceive Iraq and set a trap for Hussein.

In March 1990, the "U.S. bungled Chance to Oust Hussein, Report Says" (IHT May 4-5, 1991). According to a belated U. S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff report, rebellious Iraqi military officers had sent out feelers asking Washington for support a coup against Saddam Hussein. However, the Bush administration rebuffed them, and they desisted.

The [forced] resignation and the testimony to Congress of former Undersecretary of Commerce for Export Administration Dennis Kloske revealed that in April 1990 he recommended "at the highest levels" the reduction of high tech sales to Iraq. He himself sought to delay these exports by tying them up in red tape to compensate for the lack of such action by the Bush administration. Still during the last week of July, the Bush administration approved the sale of 3.4 million in computers to Iraq. The day before the invasion of Kuwait on August 1, the US approved the sale of \$695,000 of advanced data transmission devices (IHT March 12). As Kloske later testified, "The State Department adamantly opposed my position, choosing instead to advocate the maintenance of diplomatic relations with Iraq" (IHT, April 11).

A month later in May 1990, the National Security Council [NSC] submitted a white paper to President Bush "in which Iraq and Saddam Hussein are described as 'the optimum contenders to replace the Warsaw Pact' as 'the rationale for continuing cold war military spending and for putting an end to the 'peace dividend'." "Yet the same NSC toned down an April

30 speech by Vice President Dan Quayle adding "emphasis on Iraq misplaced given U.S. policy, other issues" [John Pilger, The New Statesman Feb. 8].

At the State Department Secretary James Baker had promoted John Kelly to Assistant Secretary of State for Middle Eastern Affairs. Kelly visited Baghdad in February, "the records of which he is desperately trying to deep-six [bury]" (William Safire, IHT March 26, 1991). However, it has been revealed that Kelly told President Hussein that "President Bush wants good relations with Iraq, relations built on confidence and trust." Moreover, Kelly then rebuked the Voice of America and countermanded the Defense Department on statements, which he considered too unfriendly to Iraq. On April 26, Kelly testified to Congress that Bush administration policy towards Iraq remained the same and praised Saddam Hussein for "talking about a new constitution and an expansion of participatory democracy." Still on July 31, two days before the August 2 invasion of Kuwait, Kelly again testified to a Congressional sub-committee "we have no defense treaty with any Gulf country."

Kelly had sent the same message to President Hussein through the U.S. American Ambassador April Glaspie. In the July 25 interview with President Saddam Hussein, she told him that "we have no opinion on... conflicts like your border dispute with Kuwait... I have direct instruction from the President... Secretary of State James Baker has directed our official spokesman to emphasize this instruction." "Mr. President [Hussein], not only do I want to tell you that President Bush wants better and closer relations with Iraq, but also that he wants Iraq to contribute to peace and prosperity in the Near East. President Bush is an intelligent man. He is not going to declare economic war against Iraq." In her testimony to Congress, which the State Department deliberately delayed until after the end of the war, Ambassador Glaspie was asked "did you ever tell Saddam Hussein... if you go across that line into Kuwait; were going to fight" Ambassador Glaspie replied "No. I did not."

In the meantime on July 19, Defense

Secretary Dick Cheney told the press that the US was committed to defend Kuwait if attacked. However, his own press spokesman Pete Williams immediately repudiated Cheney's statement as spoken "with some liberty," and the White House told the Defense Secretary, that from then on he was to leave making statements to itself and the State Department. On July 24, Iraq moved two divisions to the Kuwaiti border, and on July 25, the same day as the Hussein-Glaspie interview, a Kuwait military attache working in the Basra consulate informed the government of Kuwait that Iraq would invade on August 2. Two days later the director of the CIA warned President Bush of the likelihood of coming invasion. On July 31, "a Defense Intelligence Agency analyst, Pat Lang, bluntly warned in a memo that Saddam Hussein intended to invade. Mr. Lang intended his memo as 'a thunderclap' to top policy makers... but it drew virtually no reaction" (IHT May 3, 1991 citing Bob Woodward). On August 1 Secretary of State Baker told his colleague Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnaze, as the latter waited till March 1991 in turn to tell Moscow News, that the United States "has proof that aggression is possible" by Iraq. Yet, time and again, President Hussein was and continued to be reassured and emboldened by the Bush administration and its Department of State, as well as by the US Senate minority leader Bob Dole, who also went to visit him. Little wonder, that many observers in Washington and elsewhere concluded that the Bush Administration [deliberately?] gave Saddam Hussein the green light to invade Kuwait. Moreover as the Village Voice (January 22, 1991) also revealed, since then US intelligence sources also learned from their "assets" in Iraq that President Hussein was personally informed of the American reactions, took each to be yet another sign of Bush administration acquiescence with his intentions, and then seemed genuinely surprised at the very different and belligerent American reaction to his move into Kuwait.

President Hussein also may have had additional reasons for his move beyond the immediate ones of his oil related grievances with Kuwait. The stalemate in his war with Iran incited him to try for a

realignment of the regional balance of power once again. It is useful to recall that Mesopotamia [Iraq], Persia [Iran], and Egypt always, and occasionally the Arabian peninsula also, have disputed but never achieved hegemonial regional overlordship for long since the Sumerian Sargon tried around 2,500 BC!

Immanuel Wallerstein (*Economic and Political Weekly*, April 27, 1991) suggests four reasons that may have made the time ripe for Hussein to make another move to that effect: 1. The world debt crisis for which seizing Kuwait assets offered some relief at least to Iraq; 2. Israel's recent foreclosure of peace talks and increased intransigence with the Palestinians, to whom Hussein's move seemed to pose no further loss and might enhance their bargaining power; 3. The end of the cold war and the crisis in the Soviet Union deprived him of their support but hereby also of American fears of the same; and 4. the collapse of the ideology of national development through domestic efforts suggested the need for more drastic measures. These included seizing Kuwait first as a bargaining chip, and when that failed, then as Iraq's 19th province. The likelihood of much adverse response must have seemed remote, particularly in view of the repeated green light by the Bush administration.

Springing the Trap on Hussein by Foreclosing any Diplomatic Way Out

Between the Iraqi invasion on August 2, 1990 and the start of American bombing on January 17, 1991, President Hussein gave clear indications of his willingness to negotiate an Iraqi withdrawal on at least six separate occasions. Three times, he unilaterally took steps, which could have led to withdrawal. President Hussein made repeated statements indicating that he was serious about withdrawal, which would include Iraqi "sacrifices" for a negotiated package deal. On more than one occasion, President Hussein and his foreign Minister Tariq Aziz also told UN Secretary General of their desire for a negotiated solution. All these Iraqi and other initiatives came to naught, because the American Bush administration wanted and arranged for them to fail. We briefly review only some of these initiatives to avoid the Gulf

War, which the Bush administration in the United States insisted on fighting.

British Prime Minister Thatcher was in Washington in early August and egged President Bush on to take a completely intransigent hard stand to deny Saddam Hussein any step back or way out. We should recall that President Hussein himself first claimed he was only helping a rival government in Kuwait, which had asked for his help. Only after the first still not clear international response, did he take the next steps to complete military occupation, then to annexation, and finally to making Kuwait the 19th province of Iraq. In the meantime on August 3, the day after the invasion, the inveterate Jordanian mediator King Hussein got Saddam Hussein to agree to attend another hastily convened Arab summit on August 5 and then to begin to withdraw from Kuwait again on condition that there should be no condemnation of Iraq. Nonetheless, under pressure by Washington and London especially on Egyptian President Mubarak who received a call from President Bush, by the evening of August 3 a majority of the Arab League had already issued a condemnation at the urging of Mubarak. He immediately received the remission of the US \$ 7 billion Egypt owed the United States. It was a deliberate and ultimately successful drive to scuttle all attempts at a negotiated diplomatic settlement of the Iraqi claims, which many people even in Washington considered reasonable and negotiable.

US troops "to defend Saudi Arabia" arrived there on August 7, after several days delay. However this delay was only necessary to overcome the resistance thereto of the Saudi government who felt no danger of any possible attack by Iraq. It appears that the Pentagon then duped the Saudis with allegations that US satellite pictures showed Iraqi troops massing on the Saudi border ready to invade. Later Soviet satellite pictures examined by American exports showed Iraqi troops in Kuwait that numbered not "even 20 percent the size the [US] administration claimed. We don't see any congregations of tanks, or troop concentrations. The main Kuwait air base appears deserted" (St. Petersburg Florida Times cited in War Report No. 67, March 23, 1991).

However, Emery comments again:

"But Saddam's intentions were actually less critical at this juncture than Western intentions. In another conversation King Hussein had around this time, with then prime minister Margaret Thatcher, the iron Lady let it slip that "troops were halfway to their destination before the request came for them to come [*International Viewpoint* April 15, 1991, p. 21]"

Indeed, Iraq sent another proposal to negotiate, which was received on August 9 in Washington. The next day, the NSC recommended its rejection as "already moving against [our] policy." Former CIA director Richard Helms tried to find consideration for the Iraqi initiative, which a State Department Middle East staffer called both "serious" and "negotiable." However, it was not so considered by the Bush administration, where Helms found no one and "nothing in this that interested the US government." On August 12, Iraq again proposed its own withdrawal from Kuwait linked to the withdrawal from their occupied territories by Syria and Israel. The US, of course, rejected all "linkage," and Iraq then dropped this negotiating demand according to Yasser Arafat. Two weeks later, Iraq made still another offer of withdrawal linked to some settlement of its old demands about the two islands, the Rumaila oil field, and oil production. The offer reached the Bush administration on August 23 but was rejected out of hand. Indeed, as the *New York Times* diplomatic correspondent noted on August 22, any and all such Iraqi initiatives with "a few gains for Iraq... [like] a Kuwaiti island or minor border adjustments" had to be blocked lest they might "defuse the crisis."

Therefore also, Iraq's "serious pre-negotiation position" was again dismissed by the United States on January 2, 1991. The US and UK also threatened to veto the French proposal on January 14 to avert the start of bombing after the January 15 UN deadline for Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. The February 15 Iraqi offer to withdraw was again dismissed as "linked" to the Israeli-Palestine problem. The February 20-22 Soviet initiative to preclude the ground war was rejected, etc. Indeed countless further Iraqi, Iranian, Jordanian, Algerian, French Soviet, and

other initiatives, including those by the UN Secretary General, to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the crisis had to be and were effectively blocked by the Bush administration. It wanted and planned its **NEW WORLD ORDER WAR** instead. Far from "going and extra mile for peace," President Bush deliberately deceived one and all with his and Secretary Baker's "negotiations" instead to camouflage his own war plan, to be reviewed below.

The Jordanian King Hussein remarked "I've been convinced for a while that there was no effort to dialogue, there was no effort to reach for a diplomatic solution, and there was preparation from the word go for war" (Emery, *ibid.*)

Planning Mr. Bush's War

According to a reconstruction of major internal deliberations and decisions by President George Bush and his senior advisors... offensive military planning began in earnest in September, and on Oct. 30, a week before congressional elections, Mr. Bush secretly approved a timetable for launching an air war against Iraq in mid-January and a large-scale ground offensive late in February that would strike deep into Iraqi territory to encircle President Saddam Hussein's army... General Schwarzkopf had introduced the concept of offense from the very beginning... The dimension of the planned military buildup were closely held by Mr. Bush and his inner circle... The plan required almost doubling the 200,000 U.S. forces in the Gulf... That critical decision increased U.S. troops from 230,000 to more than 500,000... Mr. Bush showed no hesitation in making the decision to increase troop strength, but decided to keep it secret until Nov. 8. Why? 'Nov. 8 was a very important date because it was after Nov. 6' a White House official said, referring to the election. ... In the two hour meeting [on October 30], Mr. Bush made two fundamental decisions: first, to set in motion the machinery for a midwinter war against the Iraqi Army and, second, to win a UN mandate for that war. To that end, he dispatched Mr. Baker on a round-the-world tour to round up support for a Security Council resolution authorizing the use of force" (Thomas Friedman and Patrick Tyler, IHT March 4, 1991).

Yet two days after this important war plan meeting, on November 1 "Bush Denies He prepares U.S. For a Gulf War. Says He Wants to Refocus Attention on Hostage Plight" (IHT Nov. 2, 1990). Later President Bush would repeat again and again that 'no one wanted war less than I did.' But did he ever tell the truth?

Mr. Bush's decision to use military power was opposed by a bewilderingly mixed bag of radical Democrats, moderate and conservative Democrats, conservative Republicans and Republican right-wingers. The strongest intellectual cases against going beyond sanctions were made by Republicrats like Zibigniew Brzezinski, James Schlesinger and Paul Nitze. All are staunch conservatives; all are renowned advocates of a muscular U.S. national security policy. Then there was Edward Luttwack, the mother of all conservative strategists... [and] Pat Buchanan.

Eight of nine recent secretaries of de-

The Americans also used their first opportunity, of course in the Third World, to try out their new weapons of mass destruction and annihilation on their poor defenseless Iraqi victims.

fense favoured staying with sanctions. This group included none other than [President Reagan's Secretary of Defense] Casper Weinberger. Two recent chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral William Crowe and General David Jones, were even more reluctant to use force than Mr. Weinberger. This unique brew of Bush critics was joined by probably 90 percent of American and European experts on Arab affairs" [Leslie Gelb, IHT March, 1991].

"This is becoming one man's war. It is George Bush's War; the only thing that matters is what he thinks. In Washington, people who know Mr. Bush say he is a man obsessed. There is no point in arguing with him about this matter, but men very close to the president say privately that anyone who tries to disagree is risking access and position... What does the President want? More war, less talk. As commander-in-chief, he is operating like a medieval king. This chief seems to be in command alone, with technical advice from his military leaders" [Richard Reeves IHT Feb. 26, 1991 my emphasis, AGF].

In this context, it is even more revealing then to find from Bob Woodward's later expose that,

"last fall, General Colin L. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of staff, had serious reservations about the Bush administration's shift toward an offensive military strategy in the Gulf and repeatedly suggested "containment" of Iraq... short of war... He finally raised the issue with Mr. Bush... Mr. Bush, according to Mr. Woodward's account, answered "I don't think there's time politically for that strategy." The book does not elaborate on the president's political considerations. After that meeting General Powell felt he had gone as far as he could" (IHT May 3, 1991) -

without, perhaps, risking his access and position!

The ultraconservative American columnist Charles Krauthammer notes in the IHT, March 5, 1991:

"Remember how roundly, and correctly, Mr. Bush was criticized for being unable to articulate the justness of the cause.. So he did it, as they say in the Middle East, by creating facts. Four times since Aug. 2 he made unilateral decisions that were bold and generally unpopular. Yet each action reshaped the debate... Fact 1, Aug. 7: the initial U.S. troop deployment... found 56 percent [of polled Americans] opposed. Announcement of the deployment, framed as a defense of Saudi Arabia, drew immediate, 81 percent approval...

Fact 2, Nov. 8: doubling the ground troops. That put the United States on a war footing and created a great wave of Democratic opposition. But there was little the Democrats could do. Mr. Bush had used his power as commander in chief to create a political fact... Fact 3, the launching of the war itself. But here, too, Mr. Bush had constrained the debate with more facts, in this case the already established United nations deadline... Having prepared the battlefield, as the

military briefers like to say, Mr. Bush won. By a hair, but he won. Then Fact 4, the ground war... Ten days before the ground war, the CBS/New York Times Poll found only 11 percent of American in favour of launching one. When asked again after the ground war started, 75 percent approved... My point is merely to note the magnitude of his political achievement and the most unusual way in which he did it: not with language but with action" [Charles Krauthammer, IHT March 5, 1991].

Fighting and Lying to Win the War

Two propaganda blitzes dominated the war: one was that it was valiantly waged against "the world's fourth largest army" with a highly trained "elite Republican Guard." The other one was that therefore the coalition forces had to put on history's first high tech "Nintendo" like electronic war with "smart bombs" – at least curtesy of US and UK military command video taped briefings for CNN and other TV

Wildlife conservatins now estimate that 1/2 of 1 percent of the birds in the area were affected. The percentage did not go around the world.

networks around the world. Hardly anyone then noticed that these two features of the war were mutually contradictory in principle, and empirically false in practice.

However, former French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson declared:

"I categorically reject notions about avoiding unnecessary damage. The allied goal of annihilating Iraq's economy was bound to involve civilian casualties... 200,000 – a massacre, with a terrifying impact... Why don't you ask why the air war lasted 40 days instead of the 15 as planned" (IHT March 11, 1991).

Only after it was all over, did a bit of the truth emerge about what finally the International Herald Tribune headlined "Desert Mirages: In the War, Things Weren't Always What they Seemed. U.S. Over-estimated Size and Ability of Iraq's Armed Forces." It did so deliberately to help justify the carpet and terror bombing of both the military and civilian "assets" of

this Third World country with a population of only 17 million souls. The Pentagon presented sanitized images of a new kind of high tech war between machines, not men. We saw videos of outgoing Patriot [ic] American missiles impacting on incoming Iraqi Scud missiles. However, we only learned later in the war that the Patriots only hit the Scud propulsors and did not destroy their warheads, which still hit buildings and killed people. We also were not shown that both missiles fell back to the ground to cause damage. Indeed only on April 18 did the IHT reveal that "the Patriot may have caused as much damage as it prevented."

The military commands also released many videos of precision guided smart bombs taking out hard targets in Iraq. However, they neglected to show that these bombs still were not smart enough not to miss 10 percent of their targets. Still less did they mention that the smart bombs accounted for only 7 per cent of the tonnage dropped. Of these, the 3 percent

of the total dropped by the new Stealth bombers accounted for 40 percent of the target hits, which included roads, bridges, power plants, irrigation works – indeed "the works." The New York Times editorialized a bit late on March 25, 1991 [IHT edition]

"The bulk of the damage found by the UN team was not accidental or "collateral," but the intended consequence of the successful air campaign to destroy Iraq's war machine by attacking its industrial base and urban infrastructure. The findings raise questions about how much of that bombing was needed, or justified. That debate will go on..."

The Times and other "responsible" media, however, did precious little to start the debate before or during that bombing, when it should have been avoided, limited or stopped. When the American targeters hit first the only powdered milk and infant formula factory in the country and then a civilian air raid bunker/shelter, the Pentagon insisted that

they had correctly hit military targets. CNN and its Peter Arnett was hounded as a traitor to the cause for sowing doubts after having loyally already aired hundreds of hours of war propaganda. In the pot calling the kettle black, the US Commanding General Schwarzkopf said "I did resent CNN aiding and abetting an enemy who was violating the Geneva Convention" (IHT March 28, 1991).

Nonetheless it was later revealed that only 60 percent of the laser guided bombs hit their intended targets and the other 40 percent missed (Boston Globe Jan. 29, 1991). Moreover, we may ask what happened to the 97 percent of bombs that were not from Stealths or the 93 percent of the bombs which were not smart enough to get on TV? Answer: 75 percent of them missed their assigned targets and did only "collateral" damage. In English, they carpet bombed and terrorized both the civilian population and its conscripted sons in the Iraqi army. Indeed, that was of course the deliberate purpose of using squadrons of Vietnam age B52s and their notoriously inaccurate higher altitude bomb runs. Indeed, some bombs were so big that they would not fit into the B52s and had to be carried in and shoved out of even bigger transport planes.

The United States again used Vietnam fame napalm and cluster "anti-personnel" [not anti-person/s?] bombs and fuel explosion bombs. These bombs suck oxygen out of their target area and wantonly asphyxiate their victims of mass destruction, if they did not kill them through the concussion waves of their explosion. The Los Angeles Times (Feb. 24, 1991) also reported on the first wartime use of more "efficient" new anti-personnel weapons: "Improved conventional munitions [ICM] can kill four times as many soldiers." Adam and Bouncing Betty bombs bounce off the ground to detonate at the more lethal groin level. The Beehive is "perhaps the ultimate concept in improved fragmentation... [and] spins at high velocity, spitting out 8,000 flechettes—tiny darts with razor edges capable of causing deep wounds." The fragments of white phosphorous howitzer shells "can continue to burn hours after they have penetrated a soldier's body, creating

leep lesions." According to the propaganda, the "Hitler" Hussein had and threatened to use fuel explosive and chemical "poor man's atom bombs." However, Iraq never used any such weapons. The Americans did not threaten. They not only used their tried and true old napalm and other anti-personnel weapons.

The Americans also used their first opportunity, of course in the Third World, to try out their new weapons of mass destruction and annihilation on their poor defenseless Iraqi victims. The Iraqis never fought back. Except for the Western propaganda value of scud missiles, the Iraqis were never reported to have even tried to drop a single bomb or shell on allied troop formations.

The United States also violated United Nations International Energy Commission regulations to which it had agreed not to bomb nuclear facilities, because of the danger of uncontrollable contamination. Despite this ban and danger, American bombs were dropped on Iraqi nuclear facilities anyway. "In one of these cases, the bombardment resulted in what Iraq described as 'radiation contamination of the region' Thousands of Iraqi weapons have been described by Baghdad as buried beneath the contaminated debris of Iraqi storage sites and production factories" (IHT May 2, 1991). Contrary to Allied assurances as well, bombs also damaged ancient archaeological treasures from Sumerian and Assyrian times (IHT May 6, 1991).

HUMAN AND MATERIAL WAR DAMAGES AND COSTS

The Casualties of Direct Hits and "Collateral Damage"

No one knows, or probably ever will know, the resulting number of Iraqi casualties in an unnecessary war that could and should have been avoided. The world's "fourth largest army" from a population than 50 percent bigger than New York City had been decimated without any means of self defense from the air before the long heralded but only 100 hour allied long ground offensive even started. Only after the war, several press sources repeatedly reported American

military and CIA estimated between 100, 100 and 250, 000 Iraqi primarily military dead. In his televised interview with David Frost, the American commanding general Norman Schwarzkopf referred to "50,000 or 100,000 or 150,000 or whatever of them to be killed." A Saudi military commander told CNN of 100,000 Iraqi troops dead and 200,000 wounded. A French military intelligence source told the Nouvelle Observateur that 200,000 were killed. The Muslim Institute referred to "up to 500,000 Iraqi civilians killed or injured by Allied bombs" in the April 12 IHT. The eleventh hour or last minute destruction of the two convoys, one 38 Km long with 5000 vehicles, retreating out of Kuwait, whose grisly remains were televised around the world, cost the totally unnecessary and unjustifiable death of further countless thousands of Iraqi soldiers and civilians, as well as of Kuwaiti hostages. Pilots later said that the retreating Iraqis were "basically just sitting ducks" and "it was like shooting fish in a barrel" (Washington Post Feb. 27, 1991). The British Independent (Feb. 28,

That is, "The New Way of War is to Bomb Now and Kill Later," as the April 17, 1991 IHT headlines a column in the Washington Post by the vice president of the World Resources Institute, Jessica Mathews. As a direct result of carpet bombing Iraq's infrastructure back into a pre-industrial age—

the international Committee of the Red Cross, which normally expresses itself in the most understated language it can devise, warned last week of the seeds of a "public health catastrophe of immense proportions." It was referring not to the plight of the 1.5 million Kurds but to that of the other 14 million Iraqis. The principal threat is contaminated water and lack of sanitation Dr. Jack H. Geiger, president of Physicians for Human Rights, who has just returned from Iraq, says he would not be surprised if the nationwide toll may soon reach "many tens of thousands." The [UN] secretary general's mission expects "a catastrophe ... at any time."

"Food is scarce ... The June harvest is

The cruel fact is that in popular perception and feeling in the North as well as in the South, this was a WAR BETWEEN "US" AND "THEM"!

1991) found it "sickening to witness a routed army being shot in the back." Otherwise, hardly any protest was murmured, and even that was rejected by on high.

At war's end in Iraq, a United Nations commission of inquiry found a country in "near apocalyptic" conditions of catastrophe with its economy, society and people bombed back into the pre-industrial age. The civilian economic infrastructure had been deliberately destroyed. There is no more electric power to treat urban sewage, to provide drinking water or to irrigate agricultural land. US President Bush wants "not one dime" spent on Iraqi reconstruction and, instead, had the Security Council adopt a cease fire resolution to force poor Iraq to use some of its future oil earnings to pay for the reconstruction of rich Kuwait. The Emirate, in turn, has reserved and assigned over 70 percent of its reconstruction contracts for American companies like the Bethel construction company, which sacrificed itself to supply the Secretaries of State and Defense to the previous administration!

questionable, with no electricity to run irrigation pumps and no gasoline for harvesting combines. Food now available cannot be stored because of lack of refrigeration. Seeds for next season's crop were destroyed. Famine is an imminent prospect...!

The extent of present and anticipated human suffering demands some clear answers to these questions. With whom were the allied at war, Saddam Hussein or all Iraqis? If not all Iraqis, which?... How far does America's and other coalition members' responsibility extend for Iraq's suffering? If Iraq cannot pay for what its people need while also paying reparations, what should be done? Finally, unavoidably: Was it worth it?

In answer, Gulf War US Commander in Chief General "Stormin" Norman Schwarzkopf declared:

"I have a great feeling of a great victory. Anyone who dares even imply that we did not achieve a great victory obviously

doesn't know what the hell he is talking about" [IHT April 13-14]

The same General Schwarzkopf had also declared that if there ever were any conflict between his ethics and his duty, he would of course chose his ethics above his duty. In 1983 already, he valiantly used 6,000 troops to conquer mighty Grenada and its unarmed Cuban construction workers at the cost of still untold casualties. Early on in the Gulf conflict, he had given public assurances that anyone evacuating Kuwait would of course be guaranteed safe passage, for otherwise it would be unreasonable to expect them to leave. Then, he killed every last member of the 5,000 vehicle retreating convoy. Now, General Schwarzkopf also says "never say never" to the well earned proposals of a nomination to the presidency of the United States. In the meantime, Stormin Norman intends to retire with "multimillion dollar book offers" for his memoirs and/or a multimedia book and

exchange from the workers. Moreover, they now return home penniless to augment the masses of the unemployed. The price of petroleum temporarily skyrocketed for the old Third World countries in the South and the new Third World countries in Eastern Europe. Hundreds of millions of people around the world saw their most urgent problems [like renewed famine in Africa] even more neglected by the attention, which was focussed on the Gulf. All of these suffer from President Hussein's occupation of Kuwait and President Bush's escalation of the same into a major war. Post war refugees by the millions were also foreseeable. As in all occupation and war, the rape of women multiplied. All of these casualties were bound to multiply again in the course of the war itself and even after the "liberation" of Kuwait. Yet only some of these costs and casualties merited little concern at best, and then only when it was necessary in order to tie some regional governments into the alli-

stricken birds. As it turned out, these pictures were taken during earlier oil spills elsewhere. The purpose, of course, was to whip up even more anti-Hussein sentiment to justify the escalation of the war. After all the propaganda, the ecological damage turned out to be less than advertised. Wildlife conservationists now estimate that 1/2 of 1 percent of the birds in the area were affected. The percentage of Iraqi people killed was very much higher, but their pictures did not go around the world. As to the oil slicks themselves, Claude-Marie Vadrot of the Paris Journal de Dimanche (Feb. 3) writes "none of the existing slick in the Gulf have resulted from voluntary action or piracy, and four out of five are the responsibility of allied forces." The first one was from the January 19 allied bombardment of three oil tankers. The second one from the January 20 bombing by French and British planes. The third one can be attributed to Iraqi bombardment. The fourth is due to allied bombardment of Al Ahmadi, and the fifth oil spill is from the bombing of Boubyane Island by British planes.

Deliberately or not, the Gulf War bypassed, undermined, violated, subverted, and otherwise seriously damaged the most precious democratic institutions and processes in the very democracies who supposedly went to war to defend democracy against tyranny. This violation and sacrifice of democracy, in addition to the negation of peace and threat of future wars, are a terrible price to pay for the new world order.

film deal [IHT 13-14 April]. For the victory euphoria among some people in the United States seems to know no bounds.

So it was certainly "worth it" for them, since President Bush aptly noted that "By God, we've kicked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all." Vietnam had been "bombed back into the stone age," but the humiliated Americans were forced to withdraw in defeat anyway. Now the "great victory" over Iraq is the corner stone of America's "new world order."

Other Human Costs

There were already been many other important casualties even before the first shot was fired: The millions of refugees in the Gulf region; the millions of people who lost sources of their livelihood from the occupation of Kuwait and the embargo against Iraq: The many Third World countries from which the guest workers came lost the remittances of foreign

ance, like Turkey and Syria, or maintain then neutral, like Jordan and Iran. Most of these momentous problems and their literally untold costs to countless millions of people have received no, or virtually no, attention from the "responsible" presidents, their allied prime ministers, their governments, the United Nations, or the mostly warmongering media. The direct financial costs of the war to the coalition allies, from which the United States seems to be making a net profit, are better considered in the discussion below of the American New World Order.

Ecological Costs

The Ecological costs of the war have been enormous, but so has been their western propaganda use to extend and intensify the war. That way, the ecological costs were increased still further. The oil spills in the Gulf were blamed on the Iraqis by the Pentagon. The media showed heart rendering images of oil

The 500 Kuwait burning oil wells were indeed set afire by the Iraqis, who had announced from the very beginning that they would have to use this measure, it was one of the few available to them to defend themselves from superior force in general and from threatened amphibious attacks across the Gulf waters in particular. Moreover, having been incited into this war by Kuwait oil competition and duplicity, Iraq now assured itself of a long respite from this competition by setting fire to the Kuwait oil wells. The resulting man-made environmental damage from smoke is unprecedented, at least in its regional impact. However, this damage also is much less than was advertised, and it has been noted that the same oil would eventually be burned one way or another somewhere else anyway. Less has been said of the ravages to the desert environment by over a million troops with their heavy equipment and its destruction. However, the responsibility for the wanton disregard of all this environmental threat and damage must be shared if not carried by the coalition allies and their American leadership, who pushed ahead with their war plans in total disregard of this problem. So much for the promises and commitment of President Bush and

others to safeguard the environmental future of wo/mankind.

Political Costs of the Gulf War: Violation of Democracy at Home

The Gulf War fought against a ruthless dictator in the South by the great democracies in the West violated or subverted the most important bases and institutions of democracy. The United States Congress, other Parliaments, and the will of the vast majority of the people in the West were violated. Freedom of the Press was actively censored, and the Free Press guardian of democracy self-censored itself. As much by omission as by commission, the media deliberately misled the public. Participant democracy in civil society and its organization through social movements were bypassed and neutralized or sterilized. On the other hand, racism and chauvinism flourished and were used to aid and abet the war effort on the home front. The Gulf War was falsely fought in the name of "democracy." The war witnessed one of the sorriest days for real democracy in the West, not to mention the newly democratic East.

Setting Up and Blackmailing Congress

Another major institutional casualties of the Gulf War were the American Congress and other parliaments. The constitutional mandate of Congress to keep the President in check and balance, and especially to exercise its authority to declare war for good cause were subverted. President Bush skillfully maneuvered Congress with deceit and blackmail reminiscent of and functionally analogous to the Tonkin Gulf affair. [That was when President Johnson faked a Vietnamese attack in the Tonkin Gulf to deceive Congress into authorizing escalation in Vietnam in 1964]. All through the autumn, the American Congress and public were against a US war in the Gulf. However, President Bush maneuvered and blackmailed Congress to back him up to go to War in the Gulf by adept and deceitful timing.

Congress would surely refused to vote Mr. Bush war powers in November or perphas even in December. That is surely also why President Bush did not send his war resolution to Congress before he had

crossed so many Rubicons, that Congress could hardly deny its support to the American men and women, whom President Bush had sent to the battle front. A crucial step by Presedent Bush was to double the number of troops in Saudi Arabia by bringing in 200,000 more American NATO troops from Germany in November. He brought them, not as initially announced to rotate them with, but now to add them to, those already was changed from the supposed defense of Saudi Arabia against a possible attack by Iraq to the "liberation" of Kuwait through the planned American attack of Iraq itself and to the defeat of its military forces. In view of this commitment by President Bush, the ever astute Henry Kissinger then observed that any withdrawal without victory now "would lead to a collapse of American credibility, not only in the area but in most parts of the world" (quoted in the International Herald Tribune Jan. 17, 1991).

This war clearly announces that military might is right in all senses of the word. Ominously, this war also threatens the repeated resort to similar wars in the future. The linkage of this war to a supposed "new world order" is serious, because it demonstrates for all to see that this "new" "order" is being initiated and constructed, and then is to be maintained, through the wanton destruction of the weak by the military force of the powerful.

These far reaching decisions were made before the November 6 American congressional elections. However, they were deliberately withheld from the public and Congress before the elections and only implemented thereafter. The same day of the above cited eventful meeting at the White House,

"on Oct. 30, Mr. Bush and Secretary of State James Baker briefed congressional leaders but said nothing explicit about the president's war policy. Later that day Mr. Bush doubled U.S. troop levels — a decision not disclosed to the public until the election was past" (New York Times editorial "Bush the Warrior" in IHT May 6, 1991).

Neither the American public, nor the American Congress, would have agreed to this deliberate escalation towards war by President Bush if they had been given a choice. That is why President Bush

gave them no choice, but instead deceived them and pursued his covert policy of faits accomplis.

Then, President Bush deliberately delayed seeking authorizaion of his war plans from Congress until January, because he knew he would be refused until he could put together a strong enough foreign hand to finesse and blackmail an ever patriotic domestic Congress. In the meantime, Bush and Baker used diplomacy to build up an international coalition for the Gulf. Especially crucial was UN Resolution 678 to set a January 15 deadline for Iraq and for Bush to use the over half a million armed forces he had sent to the Gulf. Some American commentators remarked on the irony that President Bush was able to get the authorization for going to war in the Gulf from the United Nations, which he was unable to get from his own American Congress. Then, of course, he used the one in his faits accomplis policy

to get the other as well.

Thus, President Bush used the powers of his office first to overcome congressional and popular opposition, then to get reluctant approval, and finally to achieve jingoistic enthusiasm for his war. President Bush had already made over 400,000 American troops ready for battle in the Gulf, which in itself exerted pressure on Congress now to accept this fait accompli and to authorize their use. Moreover, President Bush threatened to give the order to send them into war with or without the approval of Congress, to whom the Constitution reserves the right to declare war [which it never did in Vietnam]. Even so, in its predeadline resolution nearly half the Senate still dared to oppose or at least to delay the use of these troops for war. However, President Bush's war resolution passed, the January 15 UN deadline came and went; and the US Commander in Chief gave the

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order to fire. Then, of course, Congress - the Senate voted 98-0 - and the American people were faced with President Bush's [so far] final fait accompli, which now oblige them to rally around their troops, their flag and their President.

President Bush's strategy to blackmail the American Congress was particularly effective through its use at the eleventh hour before going to war. Another conservative commentator asks us to,

"recall the circumstances of the key congressional vote on Jan. 12, four days before Mr. Bush launched the air war Some number of legislators - made their decision not on the basis that war had become necessary and feasible. No,.... they felt that a vote to authorize force offered the only chance remaining to squeeze Saddam into backing off. In short, whatever the president and his advisors may have thought, the vote in Congress was finally carried not by those who had

supporting and paying for a war whose real reason and purpose was never explained to them or their voter constituencies. The easiest task was perhaps in Britain, where all substantive discussion of the matter in the House of Commons was avoided, and attention was focussed on the change of parliamentary and government leadership. President Bush's most enthusiastic foreign support did come from Britain, first under the leadership of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and then under that of her successor John Major. The London Telegraph (January 20, 1991) offers an interpretation in a column entitled "TO THE POINT": "Britain goes up in the world" again thanks to its support for President Bush in the Gulf, which "suggests that Britain, not Germany, is the more natural leader for a Europe aspiring to greater political unity." In support of this thesis, the same paper also cites "so influential an American organ of opinion" as the Wall Street Journal. Moreover, by February 14, the

and exercised, because the people and their elected representatives in these countries had much trouble understanding just what they were supposed to contribute their taxes for, or why.

Free Press Censorship, Self-censorship and Orwellian New Speak

The Gulf War was accompanied and indeed prepared by the biggest media blitz in world history. However, when war breaks out, the first casualty is the truth — it was said already during the Crimean War 130 years ago. Poor Joseph Goebbels. Hitler's minister who made the management of racist and totalitarian war propaganda synonymous with his name, would have had to start again in Kindergarten to learn today's high-tech news management of Orwellian New Speak to brainwash a global population via instant satellite TV. If democracy relies on informed people, all semblance of democratic procedures were thrown to the wolves.

Instead of preserving the peace, the United Nations was used to further an illegitimate and unnecessary war. The cost of this precedent to the people and peace of the world could not be higher. It will have to continue to be paid for years to come.

determined that war was inevitable and who were ready for it, but by those that hoped that war was still avoidable. At that moment, moreover, there was little awareness evident anywhere in Congress that the United States and its allies were going to wage the sort of fantastic high-intensity military campaign, air and ground, that materialized" (Stephen Rosenfeld IHT March 11, 1991).

Thus, President Bush won. The American Congress was denied its constitutional mandate to exercise checks and balances on the President, and especially on his ability to wage war. Through all this deceit by President Bush, the two major institutional safeguards against war, the United Nations and the United States Congress, became major casualties of President Bush and those who supported him before the first shot was even fired in the Gulf War.

Other Parliaments in the West were also bypassed and /or bamboozled into

International Herald Tribune would report that "Britain has a new credibility within the EC that has been bolstered, for the time being at least, by the Gulf crisis, officials said." Unmentioned but perhaps not irrelevant is the London financial "City" still need the continued financial support of the Kuwaiti and other oil sheiks and that in this same recession the unpopular Tory government was in dire need of a political boost. A jingoist war in the Gulf offered both.

In Japan, in Germany and even in France the heads of government had more trouble bypassing their parliaments and/or twisting their arms to exact support for Mr. Bush's war. All in turn were subject to blackmail and arm twisting from Washington, also ironically exercised through Secretary of State Baker's trip around the world to pass the hat for financial contributions to the "common cause." Considerable powers of persuasion by the governments of the United States and their allies were necessary

They clad themselves in sheeps' clothing not to misinform Little Red Riding-hood but supposedly educated responsible adult citizens and voters. "Managing the news was seen as part of the war-winning effort" as the TV reporter Geoff Meade observed from his posting in Saudi Arabia. Indeed.

The Pentagon managed press [cess?] pool was the most successful military weapon used in the war. The pool was designed to permit a military monopoly on gathering, assembling, and disseminating information through commission and especially omission. Far from denying military secrets to the military enemy in Iraq, however, the pool was intended to and did operate to create secrets for and foreclose or neutralize potential civilian enemies of the war on the home front. The military command not only prescribed and administered sanitized news drop by drop for its dissemination by an obedient medical corps of news doctors. The Pentagon news pool also prevented unlicensed practitioners to operate on or near the battle field. Moreover, woe was to any independent free-lance or indeed network newsman or woman who dared to ask "anti-military" questions about the patient or to see him outside of established visiting hours and places, or to

disseminate any medicine not prescribed by the Pentagon's team of news doctors. Big brother Pentagon immediately blacklisted these undesirable newspeople and denied them access to the socialized medicine of the military blood news bank. An information pamphlet was also circulated to US troops in Saudi Arabia urging them to avoid any mention to newspeople and others of 19 different topics ranging from American good relations with Israel to questionable ones with some Arabs.

Therefore, there were the severest penalties for filming, writing, speaking, editing, publishing or otherwise broadcasting any news or any ever so mild critique of the real or video shooting war, which was not to the Pentagon's complete liking. Newspeople were threatened not only with de-accreditation, but also with deportation from Saudi Arabia and environs. Very few took the risk or left on their own account, as a CNN reporter apparently did rather than forsaking her integrity.

The self-censorship by the press at home probably exceeded even the military's blackout of battlefield-news and its analysis, which might have fed the patient at home with even a modicum of the information he might have used to question the aims and prosecution of this war. Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) for instance summarizes "Eight (Self-) Censored Stories National Media Ignored" in the United States:

1. Secret U.S. arms shipments to Iraq during the Reagan Administration;
2. The diplomatic scandal of Ambassador Glaspie's signal that the U.S. would not oppose Iraqi invasion;
3. The Kuwait connection of its financial clout in the U.S. and the conflict of interest of National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft;
4. Racism and bigotry in the U.S. military;
5. Slave labor in the Gulf;
6. The true cost of the war including interest and veterans;
7. The army that wasn't there poised to invade Saudi Arabia; and
8. Bush's family ties in the Gulf (quoted and paraphrased from Extra, May 1991, p. 16).

These and many other stories were deliberately ignored, because their airing by the media might have sown some doubts in the public mind about the justi-

fication of this war and thereby reduced home front support for the same. Instead, the news were managed to really home front support for the war before, during, and after its bloody prosecution in Iraq – and to manage public perception of the political, military and missile/bomb aims and victims of the war. They were sanitized through newly mounted video cameras accompanied by comments in Orwellian Military NewSpeak. It covered the whole gambit from the poisoned alphabet soup of new acronyms for military technology and terminology to the sanitized verbs used to "soften up," "degrade," "suppress," "take out," "down," "cleanse," "neutralize" and "eliminate" mention of killing real people by the hundreds of thousands. The famous "collateral damage" was not limited to the "target rich environment" of Iraq, but was worldwide – or was all of that damage to informed public opinion and democracy deliberate as well? If so, the media blitz war was successful – and not so.

In the case, the begining of a Third Cold War cannot be excluded; and the Gulf War would have done its bit to promote that additional disaster for the world and its "new order" as well.

For the evidence is that on the home front itself there was still much dissatisfaction with the press – for failing to contribute enough to the war effort! Once the shooting started, barrages of letters, phone-ins, interviews, and public opinion polls in the US and UK at least gave vent to public demand for even more sanitized news censorship and management of their own brainwashed opinion. 80 percent of Americans supported the restrictions on the press and 60 percent wanted even more military control over the press and information (IHT Feb. 1, 1991). So where then was the denial of democracy? Was it in managing public opinion less than it wanted? Or was the abrogation of democracy to be found in the brainwashing of people who for the whole second half of 1990 knew neither what such a war should be fought for, nor wanted it to be fought to begin with – that is before the missile and video shooting started?

Little wonder that Anthony Lewis could belatedly summarize in the New York Times under the title "Docile Media

Hawked the Official view of the War":

"Most of the press was not a detached observer of the war, much less a critical one. It was a clique applauding the American generals and politicians in charge. In the press I include television, its most powerful component now and the most egregious lapdog during the war. For the most part the networks simply transmitted official images of neat, painless war. Or worse: put a gloss of independent corroboration on those false images. And they were false... Perhaps the most dangerous shortcoming of the press was its failure to keep asking whether the war was necessary or wise. Once the bombing started that fundamental political question was mostly put aside... The May issue of Harper's Magazine... [carried an article] by the editor, Lewis H. Lapham and is entitled "trained seals and sitting ducks" [which observed that] the administration well understood... that it could rely on the

media's complicity in almost any deception dressed up in patriotic costume" (IHT May 7, 1991).

The Violation of Participant Democracy in Civil Society

The London Sunday Telegraph (January 20, 1991) offered good advice to Western and other governments:

"Not that the danger from the peace movement has wholly passed... It things start going wrong in the Gulf, we may need to have recourse to jingoism, if only to combat the fire and fervour of the peace movement... For so long as primitive, irrational pacifism can continue to cloud the minds of men – as it can and does as never before – so long will it be necessary for there to be an equally strong emotional antidote on the other side... It would be a emotional antidote on the other side... It would be a foolish Western leader who threw this indispensable, if ancient and primitive, psychological weapon [of jingoism] onto the scrap-heap before victory was assured."

The London **Telegraph** must be proud to have such attentive and obedient readers in Downing Street and the Mother of Parliaments, in the White House and Capitol Hill, and of course in Baghdad and all over the Arab and Islamic world too.

The decisions and faits accomplis to go to war were made at the highest national and international levels. These governmental leaders not only failed to consult their populations and voters. As we noted above, President Bush deliberately even avoided putting the issue to the people's elected representatives in Congress until long after the Congressional elections and his subsequent doubling of American Gulf troops in November 1990. In so doing, these government leaders also pulled the rug out from under the social movements in civil society both in the United States and Western Europe, after these movements had already been bypassed in Eastern Europe. The mobilization of civil society around a myriad of

innocent neighbors—was directed against the Arab bogey. Not for nothing were the image of the Arab and of the "terrorist" often identified in the popular mind. When Hussein launched his Scud missiles against Israel, he helped rally widespread sympathy and media support around the world for Jews and the war in defense of Israel. For that reason, many Jews themselves already supported the war against Iraq since [before] the beginning. Hussein intended his attack on Israel to mobilize support for him among Arabs and other Muslims; but its effect was to rally much more support for the war against him elsewhere. The same Saddam Hussein who had received scant media and popular attention when he gassed his Kurdish citizens was then vilified as a new "Hitler," who had to be fought like the old one. Critique of this false comparison and the western war aims was then unjustly branded and dismissed as "Anti-Semitism."

In Europe, the media confronted people with a choice between the Iraqi Saddam

Nonetheless and very significantly so, western people in Europe, and of course in the United States as well, demonstrated that they were not entirely duped by the myths that their leaders and the beholden media propagated about this war and the supposed "principles" for which it was fought. Instead, these people in the North demonstrate through their own belligerent action against colored immigrants or workers from the South on the streets at home that they feel and understand the War in the Gulf was between their North and the South. In the ex-East, especially in Central and Eastern advantage by siding with the **Western powers** in the Gulf War. They vented their spirits against Third World workers and students brought into the still residing in their societies and neighborhoods by the previous regimes.

At the same time, the people in the South felt and understood the same thing about this war. That is why all around the equator not only Arabs and not only Muslims, but all kinds of other people in Asia, Africa, and Latin America demonstrated against the United States and its war against the Third World. They also demonstrated in support of Saddam Hussein who, however cynically, has been cast in the role of defender of the South. The cruel fact is that in popular perception and feeling in the North as well as in the South, this was a WAR BETWEEN "US" AND "THEM"! Alarming, this terrible war was also fought out in the streets, schools, and institutions of civil society around the world. What's more it continues to be fought there long after the allied bombing stopped in Iraq. Thus, another one of the major political, social, and cultural costs and damages of this war has been to feed aggression and pitch neighbor against neighbor in civil society neighborhoods West, and South. Moreover, the war and its macho TV imagery meant another big step to the [re] masculinization of society everywhere and thereby also promoted another set back to women's demands and struggle for more equal rights.

Thus deliberately or not, the Gulf War bypassed, undermined, violated, subverted, and otherwise seriously damaged the most precious democratic institutions

Beyond being a war between the North and the South, perhaps the clearest gulf in this War is between the rich on one side and the poor on the other.

local, national, and international issues of gender relations, environmental issues, and the peace movement itself received a brutal blow. Even the director of that old cold war think tank, the International Institute for Strategic Studies, observed in the International Herald Tribune (February 11, 1991) "the current collapse of pacifist movements in Western countries, not the least Germany, is one of the notable features of the war."

That, of course, is one front in which the media played out their assigned roles. A few thousand Western hostages in luxury hotels merited banner headlines and major TV coverage, while several hundreds of thousands of destitute Third World refugees from Kuwait and Iraq went virtually unmentioned. Saddam Hussein's retention of Westerners as his "guests" unfortunately facilitated the further popular image equation with the hostage syndrome. In the United States early on already, popular reaction — and some physical attacks and threats against

Hussein and the American George Bush. With that choice, the man in the street and in front of his TV set chose the white American. More women, fortunately or wisely, refused that false Hobson's choice and opted for peace instead. Nonetheless, European civil society rapidly became shot through with rabid racism and chauvinism directed against any and all Arabs and Turks—in total disregard of the fact that many governments of Arabian countries and Turkey [which also has its eye on some Iraqi petroleum producing territory] were loyal and active members of the allied coalition of the Americans and Europeans. Thereby, these West Europeans may also have demonstrated a preference for replacing cheap non-European labor from the South by the newly available source of European cheap labor from the East. Perhaps it was not altogether accidental that half a dozen countries in Western Europe chose that time to lift visa requirements for entry by Poles, who came by the train and busloads to look for work.

and processes in the very democracies who supposedly went to war to defend democracy against tyranny. This violation and sacrifice of democracy, in addition to the negation of peace and threat of future wars, are a terrible price to pay for the new world order.

More Political Costs of the Gulf War: The International Dimensions

The Peace Dividend Cancelled

The most important and most obvious international political cost of the war is to peace. This sacrifice of peace, however, has several dimensions, not all of which have received the attention they merit. Perhaps the most significant one is the [deliberate?] cancellation of the "peace dividend" in its broadest sense, which was perhaps naively expected from the end of the cold war. The hoped for peace dividend was not limited to the conversion of military production to civilian use or the diversion of military budgets to social needs. More importantly, the peace dividend promised a transition from cold war and its associated hot wars in the Third World to a new era of peace, such as that which broke out in several Third World countries in 1988-89. Then, the United Nations successfully intervened to that effect in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, Iran-Iraq, Namibia, if not Nicaragua; and its blue helmets were awarded the Noble Prize for Peace. The end of the cold war and its associated stalemate between the superpowers in the Security Council held out [vain?] hopes that the UN could finally begin to meet its chartered responsibilities to keep the peace. Most important perhaps however, the peace dividend was to be the de facto renunciation of war as an instrument of foreign policy in the settlement of international disputes, as enshrined 45 years ago in the United Nations Charter.

The Gulf war has dashed all of these peace dividend hopes. Most important and most dangerous as a post cold war, precedent for the "new" world "order" is the renewed resort to war, this time by a coalition of allied Western powers with some southern and eastern support. They waged war without any clearly defined cause against a solitary small Third World

country. This war clearly announces that military might is right in all senses of the word. Ominously, this war also threatens the repeated resort to similar wars in the future. The linkage of this war to a supposed "new world order" is serious, because it demonstrates for all to see that this "new" "order" is being initiated and constructed, and then is to be maintained, through the wanton destruction of the weak by the military force of the powerful. To do so moreover, the Western allies pervert, divert, and subvert the world's and their own most precious institutions. The world's United Nations institution is perverted. The Western allies own "defensive" military NATO institution is diverted or converted into an offensive instrument against the Third World South. Western parliamentary institutions are subverted to lend anti-democratic after the fact blessings to the war. Civil society is bypassed west, east and south, except to use the emergency of inflamed racism and virulent chauvinism to support the

de Cuellar has declared outright that "this is a US war, nor a UN war" and "the Security Council is controlled by the United States, Britain and France."

The conservative American columnist William Safire wrote under the title "Consider These White Lies and the Truths they Veil":

"This is not a UN enforcement action; that part of the UN Charter has never been invoked. Instead this is a collective defense authorized by the Security Council, similar to the Korean defense, which means that the resolutions... cannot be revoked without American concurrence... America shows obeisance to the UN, but obedience is a white lie: The fighting coalition determines..." (William Safire IHT Feb. 26).

President Bush and his Secretary of State Baker put together a coalition in the Security Council first to condemn Iraq,

The deadly threat of mass destruction of anyone who might wish to take exception to or even rebel against this world "order" was pressed home demonstrably by the bombs launched against the innocent people of Iraq and their ideological cover up at the "United" nations, the "coalition" of the Western allies, their controlling interest in the "free" press, media, etc.

war. In the recently "liberted" East, the first international policy decisions by the newly "democratizing" governments are to support a war against the South in hopes of thereby meriting a few crumbs from the Western table. Several Third World and Arab governments are literally bought and paid for to lend their support and coverup of this charade against one of their own. The media around the world are coopted, censored and self-censored to present the whole package as the beginnings of a just peaceful new world order! We may proceed to examine some of this new world order blueprint and construction a bit more carefully.

Perversion of the United Nations Peace Mission for War

The first and most major institutional sacrifice and cost to peace was the perversion of the United Nations. Secretary General of the United Nations Javier Perez

then to impose an embargo, then to authorize military teeth to enforce it, and finally to legitimize recourse to war. In all, they got twelve UN resolutions in their pocket, as President Bush and Mr. Baker never tired to point out. However, they do not say how much their diplomacy paid, bribed, blackmailed or strongarmed some member governments to do their bidding. Most significantly President Bush maneuvered the United Nations into legitimizing his actions, without revealing that each step of the way would be irreversible nor how it would lead on to the next step to war. Yet the Washington Post (International Herald Tribune Jan. 17, 1991) quotes a senior official and long time aide to President Bush to the effect Sunday Telegraph (Jan. 20, 1991) agrees: "President Bush and Mrs Thatcher took the decision to go to war long before there was any hope of getting UN sanction, and they did so with a justifiable clear conscience." President Bush "al-

ways knew what he was going to do and has now done it in his own good time in the most favourable diplomatic and military circumstances."

The United Nations surely did not know, and certainly was not told by President Bush. The UN is not likely to have given him its support for the purpose President Bush and known and prepared for "in good conscience" since August. The UN is not likely to have voted the same way after the shooting started, if it had the choice, but it did not. Indeed, the Security Council was never again convened on the Iraq war until it ended. Only then was the Security Council again convened by the United States to legitimize its demands for unconditional Iraqi surrender—and by implication the entire war and devastation, to which the United States and its coalition allies had subjected the people of Iraq.

and its coalition allies. Moreover, under Article 42 the forces to be used are those of the United Nations, which can "include" those of member states. The armed forces used in the Gulf war, however, were not the UN blue helmets, and the coalition allies did not even, as in Korea, fight under the UN flag. Resolution 678 stipulated that "all necessary means" could be used to evict the Iraqis from Kuwait if they did not leave on their own by January 15. Of course under the Charter again, what "all necessary means" may be is to be determined by the Security Council and not by the United States. Finally, of course, all the political and military commander. For their own reasons and purposes and with out any advice or consent from the United Nations, and American led coalition clearly used far more deadly means than necessary. As observed above, the United Nations Security council was never again

temporarily boycotting the UN and China was denied its seat]. Thus by all counts, this was not a United Nations war. However, the war was falsely presented as being sanctioned by the United Nations and the 12 resolutions, which the United States exacted from the Security Council to use in flouting and deceiving public opinion in the world. In so doing and in the service of its own questionable motives to say the least, the United States deliberately subverted the institution and prestige of the United Nations.

The imposition of the January 15 deadline and the commitment of military forces to the Gulf war by other countries were other ineluctable steps on the road to war. These steps were (deliberately) made necessary by the foregoing ones to begin with. That is, both presidents Hussein and Bush built up military forces and political positions, which made further escalation necessary. The American military forces and perhaps the coalition alliance could not be maintained in the Gulf without further escalation. In particular, it was realized that the military forces could not continue to sit on their hands indefinitely and especially not after the onset of the sandstorms in the Spring. Then and during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, these forces also could no longer go on the offensive. Therefore, it became necessary to get an earlier deadline for them to be put into action. Better sooner than later, and the Security Council obliged with a January 15 deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

Of course, the United States had the enthusiastic collaboration of the United Kingdom, the reluctant cooperation of France, the silent acquiescence of the Soviet Union, and the abstention of China among the permanent members with veto powers on the Security Council. They and some other members of the Security Council lent their votes and/or their silence to this perversion of the Charter and this hijacking of the name and prestige of the United Nations for this sordid war. Instead of preserving the unnecessary war. The cost of this precedent to the people and peace of the world could not be higher. It will have to continue to be paid for years to come. American begin neglect and payments arrears in the UN were less damaging than US [mis]use

All testify to learning the first lesson in Mr. Bush's war school for the Third World in his new world order: Dare once again to lift your head against the "national interest" of the United States, whatever that may be, and you expose your country to being returned to the stone age and your population to annihilation from on high. North-South political and economic polarization is to continue apace, and no Southern political economic challenges thereto will be tolerated. That is the THIRD WORLD WAR against the South! Is it also to be waged by another Third Reich?

The Security Council violated the United Nations Charter on several counts in particular and shirked its general responsibility to the world to keep the peace. Instead, the Security Council and the United Nations institution and prestige was perverted to "legitimate" war.

Under the UN Charter, the Security Council mandate is to preserve the peace, not to authorize or legitimize war. Moreover the Charter enjoins or bars the resort to war under Article 42 until the Security Council [not the President of the United States] determines under Article 41 that all peaceful means to resolve a dispute have been exhausted. Clearly, this was not done before this war. Then again, the Security Council, and not President Bush, is supposed to decide what to do next with the means at its disposal, not those of the United States

convened or consulted during the course of the war. Its pursuit therefore was condemned only in their own names by the Secretariat staff of the United Nations!

In fact however, even the procedural legality of the Security Council resolutions is in doubt on several counts under the UN Charter. One of these is that under the Charter's Article 27, Clause 3, all five permanent members of the Security Council must cast an affirmative vote for a decision to be valid. However, China did not vote affirmatively, but abstained on the crucial Resolution 678 to use "all necessary means" after the January 15 deadline for Iraq to get out of Kuwait. Only by convention, but not by the Charter, is an abstention not counted as a veto. [The United States used the same sort of convention to marshal UN support for its war in Korea, while the Soviet Union was

of the UN to further its own imperial ambitions. The Gulf Nations itself became the first major casualty of the Gulf War.

Indeed, "the diplomatic activity of the UN was impeded from the very beginning" and "Thus US and the United Kingdom, mainly, was opposed to the Secretary General's involvement" according to the Yemeni Ambassador to the UN and its representative on the Security Council, Abdallah al-Ashtal (MERIP, March-April 1991, p. 9). UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar himself said that his hands were tied and he was powerless. Why did he, like Soviet Foreign Minister Sheverdnaze or French Defense Minister Chevènement, and expose or perhaps even stop the charade of using a United Nations cover for a United States war!

NATO Redirected Southward

The diversion and redirection of the NATO alliance and institution by President Bush from East-West conflicts to North-South ones portends a most serious precedent for the world as a whole. Indeed de facto, President Bush already set a very serious precedent in November, when he sent to the Gulf the American NATO troop contingents, which had been stationed under American NATO command in Germany. De facto also, President Bush used NATO facilities and American supplied military hardware – and no doubt software also – for deployment to the Gulf and asked his NATO allies in Europe to step into their place with their own. This quiet diplomacy and de facto policy of faits accomplis by President Bush to transform the function and direction of NATO threatens to become one of the most dangerous legacies of the Gulf War for the rest of the world. Thus, the integrity of NATO and the peace dividend from the end of the cold war were another major casualty of President Bush's Gulf War policy even before the first shot was fired.

NATO was also used to blackmail a reluctant Germany into active military support for the Gulf War. Germany is preoccupied with its own unification and is scarcely interested in direct support for President Bush's war policies in the Gulf.

So President Bush found a round about way to involve Germany too. Fellow NATO country Turkey shares a border with Iraq. Its government has been an American client all through the cold war, and still is. Thus, it was not too difficult for President Bush and Mr. Baker to bring Turkey first into the embargo and then into the alliance against Iraq. That exposed Turkey to a potential threat from Iraq. Therefore, why not have Turkey call on its NATO allies for protection against this real or imagined threat by Iraq. Still better, Turkey why not have Turkey call on its NATO allies for protection against this real or imagined threat by Iraq. Still better, Turkey could make a direct appeal to fellow NATO member Germany. It did, and Germany was obliged by NATO rules to send at least a squadron of military aircraft to Turkey. Germany, like Japan, is prohibited by its American imposed constitution from sending its military forces abroad, except in its own defense. However, it is permitted to so dispatch its military within the framework of NATO.

eliminate such problems the next time around, the Dutch, now propose to restructure their NATO contingent armed forces for rapid intervention more in North – South than East-West conflicts. NATO itself is now more seriously discussing already previously tabled proposals to 'redirect its political attention and military organization to intervene in North-South conflicts. "NATO Military Commanders Agree to Work for a Rapid Reaction Corps," which would number 70,000 to 100,000 troops from various European countries with US air support for "maximum flexibility" (IHT April, 13-14, 1991). For his part, the European Commission also needs a transnational rapid intervention force to forge a military capacity and establish political authority to participate in the next conflict in its area of interest in the South or East. Again, the Gulf War's legacy of future danger to the Third World South [soon to include parts of formerly Eastern Europe] could not be greater as the West now redirects its political and military institutions better

The old world order make work schemes in the Great Depression of paying workers to dig holes and fill them up again, or paying farmers to grow and then bury crops, were small potatoes compared to the destruction/reconstruction nice cop/bad cop schemes of the new world order. Some progress!

Thus, President Bush managed to divert both Germany and NATO from their regional concerns and potentially to engage them in his war against a Third World country in the Gulf. Turkey agreed to permit the use of its soil for American military aircraft to attack Iraq. [First the announcement was withheld; then the American flights were called "training missions;" finally it turned out they had been flying bombing missions every six hours Bush's fait accomplis. It opened a second front against Iraq in the north and exposed Turkey to retaliation by Iraq. The latter, however, was constrained by what would have been an attack by a country that is not a member against one that is a member of NATO – and therefore on NATO itself. This NATO alliance includes Germany as its most reluctant member country, which would thereby have been dragged into Mr. Bush's war as well.

To short cut or indeed altogether to

and more forcefully to intervene there.

The Middle East Convulsed

Far from settling any of the longstanding political problems in the Middle East, the Gulf war first exacerbated them, and then made them even more difficult to address and solve. The strengthened recalibration in and by Israel through its "non" participation in the Gulf War and the political weakening of the PLO leadership, as well as of the Jordanian King Hussein, are only the most visible and interrelated iceberg tips. So are the post-war Shiite and Kurdish rebellions in Iraq. Even the mild success of the Iranian supported Shiites is not at all in the interests of America and its European or Arab allies, for whom the mullahs in Iran are more than enough. Therefore, the Iraqi Shiite opposition has received neither western or other allied support nor publicity. However, Iraqi Kurdish demands for autonomy also threaten Turkey and

Iran. Therefore, their demands for autonomy, or God forbid independence, cannot be tolerated either, and they are at best publicized and manipulated only as long as they can be used for ulterior allied motives in northern Iraq. "For Exiles, the Bitter Truth is that No One Wanted them to Win" (IHT April 12, 1991). That includes the democratic opposition forces in and exiles from Iraq. Who in the world except them and their people would want a democratic Iraq? No one, of course, especially if a democratic example in Iraq were to become contagious among its neighbours. Better to leave Iraq with weakened but still adequate military forces to continue the Baathist military regime, without Saddam Hussein if possible but with him if necessary, to maintain the integrity and control of the Iraqi state. For Iraq is still needed as a linchpin to maintain stability in the region, which in the aftermath of the Gulf War is now threatened ever more than before.

For many Arab governments are threatened to become further casualties of the Gulf War. Some were at risk already

Without foreign active political and material economic support, the United States no longer has the domestic economic base even to finance this war, let alone to build a "New World Order" of its own design.

before the fighting started. Now the auto-crat Arab governments that sided with and/or were bought off by President Bush have thereby sacrificed what little popular support and legitimacy they still had. They have further cemented their dependence on the United States, and the United States is now obliged to prop them up politically and subsidize them economically [which it can ill afford] even more than before. Popular uprisings, if not military coups or splits, are now likely in one country in the Middle East after another. That is why the Israeli ex-minister Isaac Rabin recommends that the wealthy Gulf countries contribute their oil riches especially to Egypt and Syria "to stabilize the moderate regimes in the face of the zero sympathy of their citizens" (interview in El Pais, February 10, 1991).

In these circumstances, it was another sham for President Bush to have promised to bring the American troops back home just as soon as possible after

completing their job in Iraq. For President Bush knowingly committed American troops to "stabilize" the Middle East for a long time to come. Now the,

"U.S. Weighs Command Post in Bahrain and Keeping Troops with Saudis... [which] has been a goal sought by the Pentagon for years, but was resisted by leaders of Gulf nations... General Powell says 'We have always been anxious to have a forward headquarters in the region, and I think we may be able to get one this time' (IHT March 26, 1991).

De-And down-Grading Europe, Japan and the Soviet Union

With the help of their "special relationship" with Britain and her sycophant governments and press, the United States already achieved major political coups in Western Europe beyond getting its support for the war itself. President Bush successfully bluffed or finessed all of the West Europeans to line up behind him – and to fall out among each other. Mrs.

Thatcher lost the battle and her job, but she won her war both in Iraq and in Europe! The Gulf crisis and war would exacerbate the political and economic conflicts of policy within Europe, on which she made her stand against a more united Western Europe.

In the Gulf crisis, the West Europeans gave up all pretense at a unified and independent Europe foreign policy. In particular, the relatively more constructive and progressive European policy towards, and good will in, the Middle East was sacrificed. European intervention in favour of a more reasonable settlement of the Palestine-Israeli issue receded beyond the visible horizon. Israel's all purpose ex-minister, Isaac Rabin, recently declared that Israel has no use for Europe or the United Nations. For the time being, the American-Israeli line is unchallenged, except by the for now weakened Arabs themselves.

Another coup is the already observed transformation and diversion of NATO. Far from constructing a stronger post cold war [West] European pillar in NATO, let alone an alternative European security system, the West Europeans have now acceded to an already earlier American pressure, which they previously resisted: To turn the NATO thrust southeastward to intervene in the Middle East in particular, and in North-South conflicts in general. American troops, bases, material, and logistics, but also those of several European countries' NATO contingents were diverted from the defense of Western Europe against the Soviet Union to the attack against Iraq in the Middle East! They even took their central European Air Land battle plans with them to the Arabian desert.

Moreover, the Europeans not only paid their own but also many of the American costs of this diversion. Europeans even paid for the fuel that American B 52 bombers used when they took off from and were refueled at bases in Europe. The "Socialist" government of Felipe Gonzalez in Spain even tried to keep this take off secret, if only because it had won an earlier referendum to keep Spain in NATO with the quid pro quo offer to voters to maintain Spain free from the NATO military command structure and related military commitments. Since he now activated secret commitments to the United States to use Spanish air bases in case of "need" he also kept the whole sordid business secret, until the American press inadvertently let the cat out of the bag!

Thus, West Europeans supported President Bush's war politically, military, and financially, even with significant financial contributions from Germany. Beyond that, the European Economic Community finally also caved in on the issue of agricultural price supports, its biggest protectionist measure, which had scuttled the last meeting of GATT. Symbolically, the last deadline for GATT reconsideration was the same January 15, 1991 set by the United Nations for Iraq to get out of Kuwait – and for the United States to go to war!

For their part, the East Europeans did all they could to scramble onto the Western victory train, and Czechoslovakia even

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sent troops to Saudi Arabia. However it is doubtful that the rewards of any amount of kowtowing to the West in the Gulf War can compensate Central East Europe for the major political and economic attention and funds at the worst possible moment from reconstruction in Europe to destruction in the Middle East. More directly, the temporary rise in the price of oil cost East Europeans dearly during the autumn and winter cold precisely when they had to start paying hard cash instead of [non] convertible rubles to pay for Soviet oil. Additionally, they had to import more oil from other areas. At the same time moreover, they lost the previously agreed repayment of Iraq's debt to them through Iraqi oil exports to Eastern Europe. They were supposed to be stepped up to repay these debts, but instead they were cancelled by the embargo against Iraq. Thus, the Gulf War came at bad time for and gave a bad time to Central and Eastern Europe.

The Gulf War participation in and consequences for the Soviet Union are less clear, but for that perhaps even more dangerous. No less but more significantly than in Central and Eastern Europe, Gorbachev's government in the Soviet Union sought to be on its best behaviour and caved in and/or sold out to the United States and its Western allies. This concession, of course, was essential to construct the charade of the United Nations cover for the American war plan. Even an opportune Soviet abstention, not to mention a veto, at the Security Council would itself have tipped the balance and would probably have changed the votes of China and France as well. However, President Gorbachev went along with President Bush, except for his and his envoy Primakov's vain effort to shore up the waning Soviet role in the area. As it turned out, its role in the Gulf War sacrificed Soviet influence over its Arab friends; the war further increased sympathy among its own Muslim population with their Islamic brethren abroad; and Soviet military leaders had to witness the miserable defeat of the Soviet weapons systems and their military strategy of its client army in Iraq. Of course, the Soviet Union also faces more serious domestic problems.

If and when these Soviet problems result

in a replacement of the regime or even of the government however, Gorbachev's concessions and Soviet losses in the Middle East through the Gulf War may contribute to strengthening the hand of military and other conservative forces who demand some return to the past and/or Soviet or even Russian play with their only remaining strong, that is the military, card. After all, the intended Gulf War lesson that the threat and use of military power gets results must be making school in the Soviet Union as well. At the same time, the military-industrial complex may also play its none other left to play in the world at large, Secretary of Defense Cheney already declared on TV that if US-Soviet tensions do not continue to decline he would have to tell President Bush "I am sorry, but we cannot carry arms reductions as far and fast as we had originally thought" (*El Dia Latinoamericano*, April 29, 1991, p. 17). In that case, the beginning of a Third Cold War cannot be excluded; and the Gulf War would have done its bit to promote that additional disaster for the world and its "new order" as well.

Without an adequate economic base, military power is insufficient to keep a great super power afloat. On the contrary, the foolish use of its military power may instead sink that power.

NORTH-SOUTH WAR TO PUT THE THIRD WORLD IN ITS PLACE IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER

The same already quoted editorial of the London *Telegraph* (January 20, 1991) also clarifies why President Bush chose to flaunt American power against Iraq in the Gulf War:

"[It] does sound cynical. But it also goes to the heart of the matter. For there is a clash of interest between the First World and the Third World, and no international order satisfactory to the former should rely on the say-so of an institution [like the United Nations] dominated numerically by the latter... Sooner or later the Third World will throw up other challenges. But if the Gulf war ends as it has begun, there can be no doubt who are the masters now – at any rate for another generation... Not only will our arms have prevailed in a most spectacular fashion. So also will our ideals" (Emphasis in the original, Amen).

Here we have the real significance of the Gulf War, which was promoted and led by the "ideals" of President George Bush, the Commander in Chief of the world's greatest military power, who wants to use this war to initiate his NEW WORLD ORDER.

Beyond being a war between the North and the South, perhaps the clearest gulf in this War is between the rich on one side and the poor on the other. Obviously, the Western powers in this war represent above all the interests of the rich in the world. Perhaps the Texans, President Bush and Secretary of State Baker, also represent the rich Texas oil interests more than they would like to admit. However, the Saudi Arabs [the original dispatch of troops was for their protection!] the Emirates and the Kuwaitis are also among the oil rich, who are reputed to have placed some US \$ 670 billion worth of investments abroad (*Peter Custers in Economic and Political Weekly*, Jan. 5-12, 1991). Sukumar Muralidharan suggest that:

"the need to safeguard oil sources is

only the states agenda behind the assault on Iraq. The far more fundamental concern is the need to protect the West's preemptive claim on the financial surpluses of the Arab world. These are vital for underwriting the political stability of the US and the UK, which are today in irretrievable industrial decline, and desperately need the rentier incomes arising from the recycling of these surpluses... The pathological character of the hate campaign launched against President Saddam Hussein... speaks of a desperate vendetta against a man who has dared to challenge the financial hegemony of the west" (*Economic and Political Weekly*, March 30, 1991, p. 838).

The Kuwaitis and its ruling Al Sabah family alone have some US \$ 200 billion of investments overseas, many of them in commercial and political joint ventures in the United States and Britain. Of course these investments and relations also afford the Kuwaitis continued income and

political influence in there even without drawing up another drop of oil at home. Suffice it to ask whether the rich West would have sent over half a million troops to defend any poor country or people elsewhere in Africa or anywhere else. The other Arabs in the coalition are the American client governments also representing the rich in their respective countries. The poor populations of these same Arab countries were massively on the other side of this conflict in support of Iraq, whose President Hussein opportunistically declared himself their and the poor Palestinian's and other Muslims' spokesman. As we observed above, throughout the Third World South masses of the people understood that this Gulf War was designed and executed to put them in their place in Mr. Bush's "new world order."

The deadly threat of mass destruction of anyone who might wish to take exception to or even rebel against this world "order" was pressed home demonstrably by the bombs launched against the innocent people of Iraq and their ideological cover up to the "United" Nations, the "coalition" of the Western allies, their controlling interest in the "free" press media. etc.

It is no joke that the April first cover of Time Magazine depicts the US "GLOBO COP. COMING SOON TO YOUR COUNTRY?" Time took the trouble to send its reporters around the Third World and elsewhere to ask how people view the "New World Order." The introductory summary of Time's findings in cover story on the "Global Beat" is that:

"Critics protest the Bush's proclaimed new world order conjures up misty and dangerous visions of a militaristic American Globo-cop on the march..."

[A huge placard depicting a dozen skulls surrounding the words "THE NEW WORLD ORDER" is subtitled] AN INTENSELY SKEPTICAL WORLD. Despite Bush's view of American as "the last, best hope of mankind," people around the globe—along with New York City protesters—fear that the U.S. plans to exercise naked power to secure dominance. Even sympathizers with Bush's ideal wonder whether it can remedy the causes of war.

Said the President "the victory over Iraq was not waged as 'a war to end all wars.' Even the new world order cannot guarantee an era of perpetual peace." Far from it: the new order, such as it is, cannot even guarantee that national interest will ever again converge as they did in the gulf war.

By itself, Bush's successful "first test" of the new world order carried the seeds of future disaster...

What Bush's vision has also failed to take into account is a sense in many developing countries that the old world order was preferable. For all its nuclear terrors and proxy conflicts, the cold war balance-of-power architecture was a place that came to feel like home."

As it to rub in the point, in early April and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell, declared in Honduras:

"we hope that in this New World Order conflicts will be solved through negotiations and not through acts of war, so that there need be no repetition of what happened in the Gulf. But it is necessary to defend freedom, it can be done" (El Dia Latinoamericano, May 13, 1991, retranslated from Spanish by AGF).

In the meantime the annual American Military exercises with nuclear weapons in Korea began a month earlier and ended a month later than usual, and North Korea denounced them to the United Nations as a trial invasion of that country. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Solomon in turn denounced North Korea, and spokesmen in the American press have already called North Korea "a potential Iraq" (El Dia Latinoamericano, May 1991). Many more people of course, now fear renewed American threats against Cuba.

Nonetheless, President Bush finds ever newer words to describe his new world order, which:

"realy describes a responsibility imposed by our success. It refers to new ways of working with other nations to deter aggression and to achieve stability, to achieve prosperity, and above all, to

achieve peace. It springs from hopes based on a shared commitment... [for] peaceful settlement of disputes, solidarity against aggression, reduced and controlled arsenals and just treatment of all peoples. [That is] the quest for a new world order" (IHT April 15, 1991).

The translation into plain English or "into Christian" as Spanish speaking people say is to be found in a myriad of publications and statements from South Asia to South America. All testify to learning the first lesson in Mr. Bush's war school for the Third World in his new world order: Dare once again to lift your head against the "national interest" of the United States, whatever that may be, and you expose your country to being returned to the stone age and your population to annihilation from on high. North-South political and economic polarization is to continue apace, and no Southern political economic challenges thereto will be tolerated. That is the THIRD WORLD WAR against the South! Is is also to be waged by another Third Reich?

However, there is also a message for America's economic competitors and political allies in the West (and perhaps for any rivals in what remains of the East): Military power can be used and of use as a alternative to economic strength, especially when the latter is lacking. For military power is the only thing the United States has left, and it is the only thing it is capable of still flaunting to maintain any political power in the face of the "virtually irrelevant" growing economic power of Japan and Germany, "no matter" the Russians.

Fortunately, there are some reasons to doubt the American capacity, albeit not its intentions, for the United States to rely only on its military power to carry out this role of global cop in the Third World and powerful bully on the block among its allies in the West. Time refers to the "pre-eminent apostle of realpolitik" Henry Kissinger who observed that the alliance and war against Iraq was "an almost accidental combination of circumstances unlikely to be repeated in the future." Indeed, the original deployment of American and other troops and equipment was "to defend Saudi Arabia" from-

possible, albeit never threatened, attack by Iraq. However, there was at least one other reason for the choice of Saudi Arabia as the site for the massive buildup: During more than a decade after the debacle with Iran, the United States had built up Saudi Arabia as its client regional military power in the Middle East, next to Israel. The United States sold Saudi Arabia US \$ 50 billion of arms [in support of its own industry and balance of payments] and built up a whole network of naval and air bases, which Saudi Arabia pledged to make available to the United States for use in case of an emergency in the Middle East. Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait provided that emergency. Then, the United States shipped half a million troops and their supporting naval and air forces to Saudi Arabia, which is the only place that has the necessary ground facilities ready to receive them!

Even so, the allies had over 5 months time to put their offensive capacities in place there. Therefore, the deputy commander of the U.S. Military Transportation command observed that "we ought to keep in perspective that we've had the luxury of time – 161 days to land all that stuff without anybody firing a shot." Moreover, "47 percent of it came from foreign ships, which might not be available in the next emergency." These facts, argues the *Washington Post*, "make Operation Desert Storm an inadequate test of the U.S. military's usefulness in forgoing what President Bush called 'a new world order' according to military analysts" (*International Herald Tribune* February 11, 1991).

We need note only in passing how these analysts and publicists also take it for granted that "The New World order" is to be "forged" by U.S. military intervention in one "emergency" after another. But at what political and economic cost, and can the United States afford them? In the case of the Gulf War against Iraq, the answer is yes, but perhaps also under "circumstances unlikely to be repeated in the future." For the direct out-of-pocket [and off-budget!] expenses of the war for United States have been variously estimated from US\$ 30 to 57 billion. Yet, the United States already received pledges, and in many cases payments, of direct foreign financial contributions totalling

over \$54 billion: Saudi Arabia \$ 17 billion, Kuwait \$ 16 billion, The United Arab Emirates \$ 4 billion, Germany over \$ 6 billion, Japan almost \$ 11 billion, and even South Korea \$ 385 million. Unnamed other countries pledged additional \$ 15 billion. By early May 1990 all but \$ 18 billion had already been paid out (IHT May 11 1990, 1991).

This war, therefore, was profitable business for the Wild West style gun for hire American mercenary forces, whose motto in the new world order could be "have [only] gun, will travel." Over and above these direct payments, of course, predominantly American construction and other firms, private and public including the US Army Corps of Engineers, are running away with the lion's share of Kuwait and other contracts to reconstruct the destruction caused by this war, at least where there is money to pay for this reconstruction.

Finally, the Pentagon and its associated military-industrial complex has already announced a major campaign of tens of billions of new arms sales for the wholesale replenishment and extension of military arsenals in the Middle East. First the Americans and their European allies armed the Shah of Iran to the teeth. Then they sold their arms to President Hussein to cut Iran's successor regime down to size. Then the same allies bombed Hussein's war machine to smithereens. Now they propose to provide more arms to their next client in the region. It is living dangerously indeed to be an American client state in the Middle East [or for that matter in Panama and Central America], but to build them up and then abandon them is also profitable for the United States, indeed.

The old world order make work schemes in the Great Depression of paying workers to dig holes and fill them up again, or paying farmers to grow and then bury crops, were small potatoes compared to the destruction/reconstruction, nice cop/bad cop schemes of the new world order. Some progress!

THE UNITED STATES IN THE NEW WORLD ORDER

Former National Security Advisor Zbig-

niew Brzezinski has made his balance sheet of the "principal benefits and debits of the U.S. – led triumph":

"The benefits are undeniably impressive. First, a blatant act of aggression was rebuffed and punished. An important political and even legal point, central to internal decency, was reaffirmed... Second, U.S. military power is henceforth likely to be taken more seriously... [and] is bound to have a chilling effect even as far away as North Korea... Third, the Middle East and the Gulf region are now clearly an American sphere of preponderance. Pro-American Arab regimes feel more secure; so does Israel. U.S. access to oil is now not in jeopardy. Fourth, the Soviet Union... has been reduced largely to the status of a spectator" (IHT April 22, 1991).

However, Brzezinski also finds some negative consequences on the scales: Iraq's defeat benefits Iran in the region; its ethnic, religious and tribal animosities are intensified and threaten 'Lebanonization'; Arabs may conclude from their bombardment that Americans view them as worthless; "and that raises the moral question of the proportionality of the response... especially given the idea of the 'just war' (ibid).

Nevertheless though Brzezinski does not explicitly say so, little doubt can remain then that the main purpose and result of President Bush's American led the Gulf War was another last ditch attempt to make former President Reagan's promise come true to "make America Number One Again." As we observed, President Reagan tried and failed to do so through the economic means of military Keynesianism and spent the United States into economic and social bankruptcy. President Bush is trying to change the global, rules of the game from economic competition, in which America is losing, to military competition in which it still has a near monopoly of power. The Gulf War was designed and used by President Bush to flaunt this power both against the Third World in the South [and East] and against his own economically more powerful allies in the West. Thus this Gulf War by a pack of wolves in the West against poor sacrificial lambs in the South was used to try to turn the political economic tables among the hungry wolves

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hemselves. The conservative American columnist Charles Krauthammer observes that:

If we Americans want relative stability in the world we are going to have to work for it. It will come neither of itself or as a gift from the Security Council. It will only come from a U.S. foreign policy of "robust and difficult interventionism."... We have entered a period of Pax Americana. Why deny it. Every other nation would like to be in America's position. Why be embarrassed by its?" (IHT March 23-24, 1991).

Let there be any disbelief, we may appeal to the authority of President Bush and the American people themselves. President Bush:

"We saved Europe, cured polio, went to the moon and lit the world with our culture. Now we are on the verge of a new century, and what country's name will it bear? I say it will be another American century."

The same August 1 issue of Time observes that

"Some of Washington's closest European allies wonder whether the scheme is not just an exercise in nostalgia – a wishful exodus back into the 1950s, when America has both the will and the vallet to dictate to the rest of the planet."

However, that is precisely what both President Bush and the American people are doing. For the two most important reasons and explanations for the American flag waving and yellow ribbon chauvinistic popular enthusiasm for the war [once it started] and the victory were precisely: 1. The Gulf War offered Americans the opportunity to "lick the Vietnam syndrome" of defeat by a poor Third World country. 2. A Gulf War victory could assuage their deep down feelings of shame or being economically bested by the Japanese and other Asians – abroad and at home! By "taking [it] out" on and "neutralizing" or "eliminating" a half million self doubts and again be "proud to be an American" in "God's Country"!

The opposite side of the same coin is displayed by John Lewis Gaddis in Foreign Affairs, published by the American

establishment's Council of Foreign Affairs:

"A kind of division of labor has developed within the international community, in which the United States contributes the troops and weapons needed to sustain the balance of power while its allies finance the budgetary, energy and trade deficits American incur through their unwillingness to make even minimal sacrifices... of life-style and pocketbook" (quoted by Jim Hoagland, IHT April 23, 1991).

In plain English, of course, this "balance" is to keep the otherwise remuncious Third World peoples in their place in the South, which is assigned to them in both the Old and New World Order.

However, over the short run even the European and Japanese also sat up and took notice of America's military business success in the Gulf War. In world markets, foreign interest in American revived to share its victory bonanza. Stock markets and the dollar shot up. Political and economic negotiators began to knuckle under the Americans, for instance regarding the above mentioned European and Japanese agricultural price supports and other obstacles to the American way in the GATT Uruguay round negotiations. Also, there is "For U.S., New Clout in OPEC." "I think we are going to see a closer relationship between the Gulf oil producers and ourselves. We had been laying the foundations for some times, and the house was built very quickly when the war came" observes the US Assistant Secretary of Energy (IHT March 6, 1991). Moreover, "Gulf states are much more open to military cooperation with the United States now than before the Gulf War" (IHT May 11-12, 1991). American control of the Middle Eastern oil on which Europe and Japan are dependent could come in useful as a bargaining chip to extract future political economic concessions from them on a myriad of other potential conflicts of interest.

So how long will or can this second Western honeymoon and this new Middle Eastern house, both made in heaven over Iraq, last? Only time will tell. Or is even that honeymoon an illusion? The

Chairman of the US Senate Commerce Committee writes under the title "Trade Wars: Time of an American That Can Say No":

"Last year we won the Cold War. This year we won the Gulf war. Now, it is time to win the war that really matters for America's future: the trade War – the no-holds-barred struggle among nations for market share and standard of living in a largely zero-sum world market place (IHT March 27, 1991).

The perhaps ironic question remains whether in the long run this North-South War in the Gulf will recoup American hegemony or help destroy it. President Bush is well aware of this major question. He devoted much of his January 1991 State of the Union Message to the Gulf War and gave his answer directly to this question and perhaps indirectly to why he went to war against Iraq in the first place: America's responsibility to "defend freedom" is greater than ever and therein its golden age lies not behind, but before it. The 21st century to will be an American century, he said. President Bush may not be deliberately bluffing when he says so; but does he have the political economic cards in his hand to make his prediction come true? Or may the ultimate economic irony be that this gamble at prolonging the American century through yet another war will cost the United States so much as to become its last Indian summer Swan song?

The longer term question reminds whether the BRAVO FOR BRAVADO of President Bush's NEW WORLD ORDER will really save the United States or even himself. Or will President Bush's adventurism bankrupt and sink the United States even further than his mentor Ronald Reagan, who promised to make "American Number One Again" and nearly bankrupted the United States instead? It well may, especially in face of the new world economic recession and the "virtually" irrelevant economic power of Japan and Germany" to whom President Bush had to send Secretary of State Baker had in hand to help finance his war in the Gulf.

This recession/war is not likely to turn out like previous ones. World War II pulled the United States out of the Depression

and made it hegemonic. The Korean War pulled the United States out of the recession of 1949 and launched the military Keynesianism, which helped ward off the feared economic stagnation. The Vietnam War was enough for the United States to avoid the recession, which hit Germany and Japan in 1967. It was not enough to prevent the recession of 1970, and certainly not to ward off the first severe post war recession of 1973-75. It was not enough to prevent the recession of 1970, and certainly not to ward off the first severe post war recession of 1973-75. On the contrary, The Vietnam War already weakened the United States relative to its Japanese and German rivals. The costs of that war obliged the United States to abandon the fixed exchange rates and the institutional mechanisms established at Bretton Woods, and then to devalue the dollar.

For American economic power, it has been downhill ever since. President Reagan's recklessness and "Reaganomics" [which in good time George Bush himself baptized as "Voodoo Economics"] put the American economy at the mercy of Japanese bankers and German industrialists. It is even more at their mercy for financial and political support during the new recession, which began in 1989/90 before the crisis in the Gulf, and then during the war in the Gulf itself. Any severe and prolonged recession would still sink the American economy and President Bush. Unfortunately, the President would take many innocent people – and a few of his not so innocent sycophants – down with him.

At home in the United States, the Gulf War distracted attention from the deepening recession. That may have been another one of its purposes particularly in distracting public opinion from increasing bankruptcies and unemployment. However on the policy making level, this diversion of needed attention from the recession may have been a short sighted or even ostrich policy. It can become costly; in the middle run, if it lets the recession get all the more so out of hand. Moreover, because even without the distraction of the war, the U.S. government and Federal Reserve have scarce anti-cyclical economic policy instrument left to combat recession. Most measures to stem

the recessionary tide at home, likely lowering the rate of interest as the Fed did in early 1991, only open the floodgates even more to a lower dollar and reduce or reverse the capital flows from abroad, which the American economy also needs to remain afloat. The debates about how war and victory affect domestic consumer confidence or spending and therefore the outlook for recession or recovery are largely beside the point. They are largely attempts to blame the recession on the war, while if there is any such causation, it is the other way around from the recession to the war. The main recessionary forces were both prior to and independent of the war; and, as observed above, they may have given President Bush and additional impulse to go to war.

Probably more important than the wartime or postwar confidence of consumers at home in the United States, is the confidence of international capital and of allied governments elsewhere in the West. The more important effects of the recession and war will play themselves out via the reactions of private capital and the decision by governments and central banks in Europe and Japan.

Still during the war, the German [Central] Bundesbank, and following it perforce the Dutch and some others, already followed the US interest rate decline by raising their own rates of interest, to the dismay of the more recession ridden United States, British and France. The fixed exchange rates within the European Monetary System were brought under pressure, the dollar immediately plunged, and capital was attached to Germany. As usual, the intervention of the central banks to shore up the dollar was to no avail. The Bundesbank president defended his decision by saying that the war contributing to "stability" in fighting against inflation in Germany, which is Europe's most important – but also still most healthy – economy. Let the Devil take the hindmost! True, the dollar rose again against the mark after the American victory in the war and the revelation of the costs of German unification. And then the dollar began to decline again. Its and American fortunes remain unstable at best.

So, how long will the Japanese and the Europeans other than the British with

their "special relationship" but most depressed economy, continue to lend helping hand of private and public funds to support the American War in the Gulf and the American economy at home? That is the question. For without foreign active political and material economic support, the United States no longer has the domestic economic base even to finance this war, let alone to build a "New World Order" of its own design.

"A victory in War, U. S. Is Pinned Down on Economic Front" is the front page headline, whose story quotes a British Diplomat:

"There's no question after the Gulf war that the U.S. is the only super power in the world. It is also clear, however, that there are limits to that power, particularly in the economy arena" (IHT, April 22 1991).

After another week of American-German disputes about interest rates and other economy policies:

"a final lesson of week's events is the vivid contrast between the leverage America still has in high politics of war and peace, compared to its deepening importance to dictate economic policy. In the Gulf conflict, the United States was able not only to win broad support from its allies... but when Washington needed allied support for its economic strategy, it was politely but firmly rebuffed" (Robert Kuttner, IHT May 3, 1991)

Walter Russell Mead correctly observed in the international Herald Tribune (Feb 7, 1991):

"At a time of diminishing national resources and power, the United States has not lowered its foreign policy horizons; it has universalized them. The mirage of universal alliance against instability, led but not paid for by America is potentially the most dangerous idea in U.S. foreign policy in the last generation. It raises expectations that cannot be met... It tempts America to take on responsibilities beyond their resources. While they want the post – Cold War order to evolve in [New World Order] ways that defend American primacy America's associates want it to diminish

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There is the rub! The Soviet Union never had the economic clout to support its claim to being a super power. Now it is being downgraded into the position of an over-armed Third world/rate power. The United States was long obsessed with its political and ideological security in [successfully] defeating the Soviet Union in the cold war. In so doing, the United States neglected to maintain its real economic base in competition with its real competitors in Japan and Europe. So now the United States no longer has sufficient economic clout to be super power either.

Yet with President Bush waving the American flag, the United States rushed where angels fear to tread. It rushed into War in the Gulf in a probably vain attempt to shore up its declining power on the world stage one last time by the only means it has left and knows how to use—its military power. However, without an adequate economic base, military power is insufficient to keep a great super power afloat. On the contrary, the foolish use of its military power may instead sink that power. It is not for nothing that Paul Kennedy became a best seller [apparently not in the Bush White House or the Pentagon] when he wrote that foolish military overextension beyond the economy's means to support it is the basis of **The Rise and FALL of the Great Powers.**

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