

"New World" armaments

Over the past week various truths about the Gulf War have begun to seep through the cracks in the Pentagon's media facade.

EDITORIAL

Refugees have begun to arrive in Jordan from Iraq speaking of large numbers of civilian bomb casualties. Apparently substantiating these reports, television footage of bombed-out Iraqi apartment blocks, gutted city streets and dead civilians has been broadcast.

The fact that civilians are the main victims of the bombing of Iraq has been clear to anybody intrepid enough to admit it since the night of the 16th. We all remember the 600 or more civilian victims of last year's "surgical" U.S. air strike against Panama City.

Less obvious, but equally stark, were the further implications of the war revealed last week in President Bush's State of the Union address. Bush used the opportunity to reveal that the 85% success rate of the Patriot anti-missile system in knocking down Iraqi Scud missiles has convinced him that the almost dormant Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) should be revived.

SDI, you remember, was Ronald Reagan's \$1.5 trillion solution to the "evil empire" and all its Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles targeted against the "Free

world". It was Reagan's delirious illusion that SDI, by placing missile-destroying laser satellite weapons in space, would make nuclear warfare not only survivable but winnable.

Many scientists spoke out against the infeasibility of "Star Wars" technology, and the moral bankruptcy of the Initiative, to make nuclear warfare wageable. The money, they argued, would be better spent on social programs, especially after Perestroika brought the cold war to its end.

Bush's address, however, revealed that the economic interests who made a killing out of the cold war are still alive and kicking. The cynical decision to rekindle SDI in the light of the Patriot system's 85 per cent success rate (how would you like to live in a city targeted by one of the 15 per cent of ICBMs that got through?) indicates that General Dynamics, Northrop, Sperry, General Electric, McDonnell-Douglas, Chrysler and all the other weapons-makers are climbing back into their saddles.

The "evil empire" may have come onside but that doesn't mean that the weapons fraternity is going to let the "peace dividend" slip through their fingers. The cold war is not over. Indeed, it's just begun again. The victims will, again, be the poor. The poor bomb-crazed people of Iraq, and the poor of America, who are being denied education, health care, jobs, and a decent chance at peace all in the name of the defence industry's "new world" armaments order.

Paul Webster



War: an American perspective

by Kevin McDonald

War in the Gulf, which has been opposed with such eloquence and passion in past issues of the *Gazette*, is now an ugly reality. To those opposed to Canadian involvement in this war I say: history will prove you wrong. The well meaning, but "peace/peace" protesters with their dramatic "No Blood For Oil" placards cannot reasonably be compared (as they would like to be) to the millions who protested America's unjust conduct in South Vietnam.

Today's protesters will be remembered as Neville Chamberlain was at Munich: clutching at straws (useless sanctions), and bending over backward to maintain an ephemeral peace with a ruthless dictator. Saddam Hussein is feared by everyone in the Middle East except the downtrodden Palestinians many of whom mistakenly believe he invaded Kuwait for the sake of Palestine. This is a lie. He has tried to divert attention from his theft of Kuwait by linking it to Israel's occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which was done in self defense.

Another of Hussein's lies is that he took "selfish" Kuwait for the poor of the Arab world. That is lie number two. In fact, Kuwait gave a higher share of its GDP in foreign aid than any other Middle Eastern country, and employed hundreds of thousands of foreign workers, many of them Palestinian, whose

remittances are now sorely missed by their families at home.

The "appease" protesters say Kuwait was no democracy. True, but compared to its Arab neighbours it was a veritable oasis of freedom, mostly tolerant, allowing a freer press and more open politics than Iraq's police state. And what of Saddam's specious claim that Kuwait is Iraq's 19th province and that its borders are "artificial"? That's lie number three: actually most of the Middle Eastern countries, including Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Iraq were given artificial borders by their former colonial masters.

Why should the coalition forces be there? For starters, the United Nations and Canada have two motives in this war. A moral goal: to free the sovereign nation of Kuwait, a UN and Arab League member. The second goal is less altruistic, but altogether necessary: to keep oil, the life blood of the world economy, flowing. By occupying Kuwait, Saddam Hussein controls 19 per cent of the world's oil, if he were to take Saudi Arabia he would have 44 per cent. That is unthinkable.

Whether it lasts seven days or seven years, this war is morally right and entirely justified. UN forces must destroy his offensive war machine, chemical weapons and nuclear facilities to protect the civilian populations of the countries he threatens. He has attacked civilian populations in Kuwait,

Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel and even Iraq itself. Allowed to consolidate his position in Kuwait he could later turn his attention westward to Israel, a conflict by which this one would seem mild. To those ever

marching anti-war protesters I really do share your desire for a quick peace, and a minimum of casualties on all sides, but your simplistic and often naive platitudes are falling on deaf ears.

"No Blood For Oil" is a catchy slogan, but does not tell the whole story, and has no moral, economic, or historical relevance. It's time to support our women and men in the gulf.

Article is unacceptable

by John Burchall

I was quite appalled when I opened up a copy of the last issue of the *Gazette* (Jan. 31) to see an article entitled "Blacks get adviser". After reading the first sentence my dismay turned into anger.

The reporter, Mr. (Ms.?) Jerry West displayed a remarkable lack of sensitivity in this article. As anyone who has attempted to write a news story knows, the headline and the first sentence are to a large extent the principal means of determining whether a reader continues on reading an article or skips it.

Let's examine the headline. Many persons, especially of European ancestry, would look at that headline and never give it another thought. Why? Because it conforms to the accepted racist stereotype of people of African descent.

In order to justify colonialism the Europeans had to convince themselves that the Africans were in need of their "civilizing" presence. The Europeans, armed with their

ideas of liberal democracy and economic might, were the MINDS bent on developing the Africans who were always identified with the BODY.

Africans were seen as lazy savages, who were highly sexed. African men were supposed to exhibit a potent sexuality, while African women were seen as lusty and especially desirous of sexual intercourse.

I develop this background to

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explain why many Black students on this campus including myself were angered by this headline. It implies that we are mindless, shiftless students in need of direction and the Dal administration have lived up to yet another one of

its "promises" in granting us an adviser.

First of all, this is the same administration that closed the African Studies Centre, and was threatening to cut the Transition Year Program. The Dalhousie administration, far from bestowing this gem on us poor, backward, shiftless Black students who need direction from above, they were pressured by various interest groups within this university!

I think the presence of Beverly Johnson on this university campus is very important. She fulfills an urgent need, which has long been ignored by this university. Hers is no easy task but I am sure she possesses the determination necessary to serve the Black students of this campus.

I would ask Mr. (Ms.?) Jerry West to do a little research and ask a few more questions before he (or she) sits to write articles of this nature. We may be a minority on this campus but we are vocal and visible!