

A Call to War or Slaughter?

Would You Have Sent Your Son (or Daughter) to War If...

By WILLIAM A. COOK

American families have always responded to the call of their President to send their sons and daughters to fight on behalf of the country. The cries of alarm resound over the years: "Remember the Alamo," "Remember the Maine," "Remember Pearl Harbor," "Remember the Gulf of Tonkin." While it's true that some of these alarms have turned out to be fabricated cries that covered the true intentions of the government at the time, witness the most devastating lie that gave rise to the "Gulf of Tonkin," the American people have shown remarkable trust in their leaders believing that the values expressed in the Constitution must be upheld.

In making this sacrifice on behalf of the democracy that grants them freedoms they hold sacred, American families depend primarily on the availability of information supplied by the mainstream media, both print and television. If Americans knew at the time that the Maine blew up from an internal explosion and not an unprovoked attack by Spain, they would not have supported going to war against Spain. If McNamara had made available to the press what he knew about the situation in Vietnam, 55,000 lives would not have been lost. There can be little question that accurate, informed, and honest information should and must be supplied to the American public. But that is not the case, as the brouhaha in the White House Press Corp makes perfectly clear. When reporters need to have their reports checked by the very people they are reporting, when CNN demands of its press corps that they can print nothing that is not reviewed by central headquarters in Atlanta, when NBC, owned by one of the major suppliers of military hardware in the country GE, fires Peter Arnett for making a news analysis report on Iraqi TV, the free press in America no longer exists. This accounts for the relatively strong support the President has received from the American people. They are the silent victims of the controlled news coverage available in the major newspapers like the administration's own voice, The Washington Times, and the corporate controlled speaking heads on TV, the Kudlow's and Kramer's, the O'Rielly's, and the Savage's. What would be the situation if Americans knew the truth? Let's ask the question.

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that, as the CBC news reported, "Law experts around the world have condemned the war as illegal." Would you want to jeopardize your offspring to the potential of a war crimes trial not unlike that at Nuremberg?

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that the plans for this war were laid out in special reports that date back to 1992? The Cheney Defense Department designed the Defense Policy Guidance report in the waning

days of the first Bush administration. This report, with input from Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Pearle among others, became the basis for another document, "A Clean Break: A New Strategy for Securing the Realm," that was prepared for Benjamin Netanyahu as a guide for Israeli foreign policy development by Richard Pearle and Douglas Feith among others. These same figures, now all holding major policy positions in the Bush Junior administration, brought their recommendations to Clinton in 1997/8. He refused to consider them. This means, in effect, that the reasons for going to war now -- the imminent danger Saddam poses, the Iraqi connection with al'Qaeda, the threat to America of weapons of mass destruction, the failure of Iraq to comply with UN resolutions -- are fabrications to provide a basis for war against Iraq as a means of achieving what these men considered to be advantageous to Israel, yet using the American military as proxy to accomplish their goals.

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you had known that it negates article 51 of the UN Charter that requires a nation to be invaded before it can go to war against another country or it must have compelling evidence that the country intends to attack it, e.g. proximity of that nation's forces to its borders? By negating the UN Charter, the United States opens the door for any nation to do the same. Witness the provocative behavior of North Korea. Without the UN, and without the United States accepting the decisions of the UN, the people of this nation put themselves at risk and open the door to anarchy throughout the world.

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that the Iraqi people had no intentions of throwing roses in front of our liberating tanks? Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that the Iraqi people held dear their nation state and would look upon America's entrance across their borders as an hostile act, not an act of salvation? Yet our soldiers were brain washed to believe that they would be received as liberators as many have told the imbedded reporters in question and answer sessions. Why were these deceptions perpetrated on the American people?

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that the military planning was being done by Chicken hawks (i.e. Rumsfeld, Cheney, Pearle, and Feith) who had to overrule real military planners when conceiving the Iraq war plan? Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that the brilliant plan touted as "Shock and Awe" had the potential to achieve the opposite? That politics would alter its approach in order to minimize world reaction? That the combination of the myths of Iraqi love for the US invaders and the "Shock and Awe" treatment would solidify Arab opinion against this Anglo-American intrusion and ensure weeks and months of mayhem and death?

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that Bush Senior supplied Saddam with the very weapons of mass destruction that we now seek? If the nations' press had published the information in Alan Friedman's book, A Spider's Web, written in 1993, the American public would know that the junior

Bush is out to protect his Father from censure for forwarding cluster bombs and missile technology through Pinochet to Saddam illegally and sending over 5 billion of our tax dollars to Saddam with full knowledge of the CIA, an outfit he had formerly headed.

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that the vast majority of countries around the world are adamantly against the invasion? If you knew that the "coalition of the willing" includes the UK although its citizens are 80% against the war? That Australia has supplied 2000 troops even though its population is over 90% against the war? That others have been bribed or coerced into allowing their names to be put on the list? That some, like Slovenia, did not know that their country had been placed on the list?

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that Cheney's former company, Halliburton, from which he receives a million per year in compensation even after his resignation, has already signed contracts for itself and its subsidiaries for contracting work in Iraq, before the war had started? Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that Bechtel, Fluor, Parsons, the Washington Group among others have also received similar contracts, all without a public bid process and all without consideration of existing Iraqi firms who are to be liberated by our forces? Would you believe that all these companies are major financial supporters of the Republican Party? Would you believe that these contract negotiations began as early as 1997?

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that Richard Pearle had arranged for his own company to gain contracts in Saudi Arabia and Iraq to ensure security strategies there even as America was preparing for war and as he served as Chairman of the Defense Policy Board? Would you have problems with those in charge of defense policy working out deals that would benefit them personally because of the actions they were proposing and because of their influential positions and prior knowledge? Is this what your son or daughter is defending and dying for?

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that Richard Pearle and Douglas Feith, in their 1996 report to secure the "realm" for Israel, a realm that includes the land it now holds (and more by implication, "Our claim to the land to which we have clung for hope for 2000 years is legitimate and noble."), defies the many UN resolutions demanding that Israel return the lands it captured in 1967. Perhaps this will force the US to bring Israel before the UN to ensure that it complies with its resolutions. Would knowledge that this same report calls for Israeli troops to give "hot pursuit" into all Palestinian areas, to actively destabilize Iraq even to the "redefining" of it, to strike Syrian military targets in Lebanon with the use of "proxy forces", and to establish a policy of "preemptive" strike that ensures Israeli dominance in the mid east, all efforts that require US financial and military support, would that knowledge give pause in sending sons and daughters to war?

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that Colin Powell used plagiarized material to make his case for war before the UN? Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that Blair's document detailing Saddam's WMD was fabricated as well? Would this knowledge have caused you to pause and question everything this administration says?

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that the President has pretensions to be an executer of God's Master Plan? That he sees himself as an instrument in bringing about the prophecies described in the Book of Revelation? That both the Iraqi population and the American people are his to use as he fulfills this mythological vision? Would you want your children fighting in a war that is the brainchild of right-wing Christian zealots and Israeli Zionists?

Would you have sent your son or daughter to war if you knew that Donald Rumsfeld's righteous indignation at Iraq's alleged abuses of the Geneva Convention protocols failed to mention that the United States did not sign Protocol 1 of 1977, a Protocol added to the original human rights documents of the Geneva Accords. This Protocol provides for Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflict. Indeed, Rumsfeld had been chastized by the Commission on Human Rights for US abuses to the Geneva Convention protection relative to the prisoners held in Guantanamo in a statement that noted, "The Secretary seems unaware of the requirements of international humanitarian law." In short, the US does not abide by the principles that protect prisoners yet cries foul when another state, that also failed to sign the Protocol, doesn't play according to the rules.

This litany of failures to the American people demonstrates how great is the failure of the American press. What had been an objective instrument to bring information and analysis to the people is now in the hands of corporate interests whose profits are dependent on ensuring acceptance of policies and legislation that will increase their power and wealth. The American democracy has been bought. Freedom of speech is possible for those with the wealth to assert it in the media they control.

The majority of Americans depend on the mainstream media for their information, both newspapers and TV. But as one can see from the above, they cannot find the truth there. American democracy depends on a free flow of information to inform the citizenry. Absent accurate information, citizens become puppets of those willing to control. The magnitude of this issue cannot be overstated. American families have sent their children to war believing in their leaders as honest and trustworthy men. They are not. When one considers that the United States has become an invading power of a nation that did not attack or provoke it, that it has done so against the deliberative judgment of all the world's communities, that it has become the dominant force in the world willing to determine who should rule and willing to inflict its judgment on all, that this posture was conceived by a handful of men who have gained control of the American government and forced it to their will, that these same men have personal fortunes to gain as a direct result

of their influence, then the America that was defined by the Constitution no longer exists.

The media's responsibility is to search out the truth and present it to the public. When it does not, it has committed the sin of omission. When it allows the people to believe the lies perpetrated by this administration, to have them believe in the righteousness of its policies, it has become the very embodiment of evil.

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