

Land of the Puppet People

Manipulate the American citizenry into a warmongering escapade

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American Heroin

It oftentimes boggles the mind to try and understand the ease with which the Establishment can manipulate the American citizenry into another warmongering escapade, this time an ominous foray into the Persian lands of Iran, a nation rich in history, culture, location and most importantly to the Evil Empire, oil and gas. Yet upon further inspection it is easy to comprehend this phenomenon, for we live, as Gore Vidal has labeled it, inside the United States of Amnesia, a country where all semblance of the yesterday becomes but a haze of blatant forgetfulness and convenient whitewash, a black hole of Alzheimer's-like darkness from where no recollection of past lessons, mistakes, errors or history can be seen or touched.

We live in a nation of gluttonous stupor and comfortable surroundings, easily distracted by the cocktail of materialism that lines our homes. We are trained to live to work, not work to live, sacrificing love of life for love for the Almighty dollar, becoming worker bees and soldier ants, selling our souls to the demons of capitalism in exchange for the happiness and stress-free lives of yesteryear, needing pharmaceutical drugs to escape the depression of our daily lives, willingly choosing to indebted our present and future in order to possess the vast array of adult toys marketed to manipulate our emotions, wrongly thinking this or that product will reincarnate lost happiness. America is the land of plenty, where waistlines expand, stress increases, mental problems grow, work hours increase and vehicles get bigger and bigger, a land addicted to the devil's excrement, like a heroin user injecting black gold into its ever thirsty veins, becoming a violent, warmongering junkie when the perpetual case of cold turkey arises.

Never before has a society been afforded the wealth and excessiveness that we possess, yet neither has a citizenry been subjected to the consequences invariably arising in order to achieve those ends. Unhappiness, depression, financial hardship, stress, inner demons, anger, dislike, psychological problems, undisciplined and unrealed children are some of the costs of maintaining our standards of living. The escapism needed to forget the madness of these costs, accumulated year after year, in daily life, work, finances and society, stands like an idol ready to be worshipped in the middle of our homes, its dark screen awakened with the push of a remote control.

It is the television, that drug of mental escapism and intellectual erosion, the invaluable purveyor of fantasy and fiction, that serves to distract, distort and alleviate the stresses of a life made exceedingly harder by the continued growth of the corporatist state, where profit will always supercede people and the interests of the corporation will always trump those of the People. Yet in the television we also see the greatest tool of mass manipulation ever

created, in the last few decades discovered by government and corporate interests for the incredible power emanating from its warm glow. In the span of a couple of decades it has transformed human society, acting as the corporate and governmental invasion of our homes, and into our brainwaves, affecting both the innocent and the old, indiscriminately penetrating the minds of black and white, male and female.

The propaganda emanating from its waves and the fiction produced by its owners has mutated American society into one of slouching couch potatoes, dumbed down ignoramuses, lazy and indifferent citizens, unthinking drones and brainwashed primates, turning a citizenry of creativity, vision, imagination and intelligence into one devoid of each, eroding the minds of experience and altering those of innocence, slowly catapulting America into the precipice of intellectual and knowledge collapse. It is the television that has created the amnesia running rampant from Pacific to Atlantic, saturating us with the brain manipulations of the corporatist world, creating a population needing the sensationalist programming designed to dumb down and distract, feeding into our minds senseless garbage of celebrity adoration and idol worship, introducing us to wave after wave of scheming advertisements and the thoughts and opinions the Establishment want us to incorporate as our own.

Television is the greatest addiction we face, a malignancy that controls entire populations, becoming a drug infiltrating all regions of the brain, altering brainwaves in children, thoughts in adults, creating a population easily controlled and programmed, becoming, over the course of a lifetime, the human antenna receiving the endless stream of propaganda disseminated by government and corporate entities. The effects of television on the human brain have become quite clear after only sixty years in existence. At no other time in human history had our primitive minds been subjected to the rapid imagery, fictionalized programming, brainwashing techniques, ceaseless propaganda, video capabilities and sound distortions of television.

We can now see the results of a decades old experiment, and Americans of today, as the people that most watch the monitor on a daily basis, with our rapid intellectual decline, loss of knowledge, extinction of logic and analytical reasoning, erosion of free thought and our propensity to absorb as our own anything aired on television, are the end result.

Leapfrogging Towards War

Our masters can today do with us as they wish, using the television as the instrument used to implant corporatist propaganda into our minds, knowing that millions upon millions of Americans no longer think for themselves, certain that the anemic education prevalent throughout the nation is succeeding in molding loyal sheep conditioned to obey, consume and produce. Our thoughts are being homogenized; our minds now linger in the assembly lines of corporate propaganda, robbing us of individuality, of different personalities, of various tastes and wants. We are the pawns in the front lines of the corporatist takeover of our nation and most importantly, our minds, with those in power toying with us, making us marionettes whose strings are easily manipulated by the few who control television.

Behind the magic curtain of power we can see that once again America is going on the warpath, getting herself ready for another imperialist offensive preemptive attack, disguised in the full spectrum of colors that are coordinated to hide the real reasons for war. Thus, the conditioning of the War Culture has for a few months now been set in motion with a media blitzkrieg engineered to prepare the nation's consciousness for further conflict. Gently,

slowly, systematically and methodically propaganda is being delivered into our comfortable homes on a daily basis that is designed to mold us into hating another nation, another people, using the same mold as before to deceive and manipulate an always gullible citizenry. The powers that decide the destiny of the nation have very little challenge in brainwashing the American public.

Knowing that Americans have perfected the art of amnesia, easily forgetting yesterday in a haze of distraction and escapism, possessing the attention spans of gnats and the enlightenment existing during the Dark Ages, ignorant to the world beyond our bubble of excessiveness, finding us addicted to television, videogames and prescription pills, relying on ten second sound bites and the subjective drivel of talking heads for information, our minds made distorted by the fantasy and fiction we watch incessantly, with free thought now made extinct by the massive abandonment of reading books, with mental lethargy now the rule rather than the exception, the Establishment can recycle long used and recently implemented blueprints to steer the nation towards the acceptance of illegal offensive war and further crimes against humanity.

The warmonger rulers realize that with such a dumbed down populace, readily accepting as true everything told them by their government, believing everything their television generates, no lie is too big or outlandish, no deception will ever be rebelled against and no whitewash will ever be questioned. Using television, which is today but an instrument furthering corporate control of our lives, spewing only what is of interest to the corporatist world, Americans are bombarded with the propaganda that will manufacture an enemy out of Iran. Without the television, able to reach hundreds of millions of people, able to penetrate our psyches and minds, able to affect our emotions and behaviors, getting our full attention as we sit glued to the set, listening to talking heads and government lackeys, the brainwashing of the masses by the government and the corporatist world would be a much harder endeavor. With it, however, the mobilization of minds is a relatively easy accomplishment, and the conditioning of hundreds of millions of citizens becomes cheap, efficient and successful.

With the same manual as that used to mobilize us for the war on Iraq, the warmongers begin instilling fear into our minds, repeating lie after lie, over and over again, that the new enemy is a threat to America, our way of life, our freedoms and democracy. They realize that most people do not want war, so they must be cajoled into supporting what is already a predetermined inevitability. Thus, exploiting our mammalian emotions and behaviors, using our own animal instincts against us, the warmongers in power envelope us with the fear factor, repeating the perceived threat enough times, in so many different ways and mediums, that most people instinctively begin to believe what their "trusted" leaders are telling them. With Iraq it was the threat of mushroom clouds, of WMD, of terrorists. Similarly, the mirage that is the Iranian threat has been marketed to penetrate our deepest fears, scaring us into believing that Iran seeks nuclear weapons, with the inherent lie that as our enemy, they would not hesitate to bomb one or more of our cities.

War marketers understand fully that rationality and common sense vanish in the wake of introduced fear and hatred. Therefore, the use of fear and terror to condition the masses into believing that only through war can their lives be made safer will once again be used, conveniently attaching the illusion of George W. Bush as the one man that will insure their security. Over the next few weeks and perhaps even months, the propaganda used to vilify Iran will intensify, just as it was prior to the Iraq War. We will be forced to hear, repeatedly, the evils of the regime, the wicked intentions of the new president and the manufactured

threat to our security. We will be told over and over again how Iran has been a pariah on the world stage, that they overthrew our puppet dictator a few decades back, held America's embassy hostage, support most of the world's terrorists, are a tyrannical regime, want to destroy Israel, are a clear and present danger to our national security and, if we are lucky, that they even harbor the bogeymen of the moment, Al-Qaeda.

The newspapers of importance and prestige, those in New York and Washington, will be used to conjure up false intelligence and bogus news reports, most manufactured by the war marketers using cherry-picked intelligence, the false reporting of reporters with vested interests, concocted documents and reports from foreign intelligence services, and the false accusations by so-called Iranian dissidents and defectors. These newspapers, whose weight is heavy in the media world, will begin pasting on the front pages articles of deception regarding Iran's nuclear energy program, making us believe in the imminent threat to our security and that of certain Middle Eastern nation whose interests are well protected by the newspapers' editors.

Stories unfavorable to Iran will appear, making it look like the member of the Axis of Evil, making it hated in the mind of Americans. President Ahmadinejad will become the new Osama, Zarqawi and Saddam, a new evildoer extraordinaire, becoming the new poster child for the perpetual, and fictional, war on terror, just the latest incarnation of America's enemy. Again, fear and hatred will be used to cloud reason and logic; terror will be introduced to exploit both our emotions and still-fragile post 9/11 psychology.

The lies, deceptions and propaganda first outlined in print will invariably make their way to the televised media, where they will be disseminated far and wide, their content picked apart and dissected by talking heads and media hacks whose only purpose in life is to become the stenographers of the corporatists, as always pushing the idea of war into the mind of the viewer. Partisan talking heads from certain think tanks, many with the interests of foreign nations at heart, will make the rounds, chatting without stop in support of preemption, appearing incessantly in a barrage of subjective opinion and prepared propaganda, as always offering only the views for war and preemptive attack, as always appearing without dissenting views and opinion. Along with partisan talking heads, certain influential politicians, those carrying the mantra of deceived trust, will also appear incessantly on television, making the case for war and preemption using the same failed logic and manipulated lies used to sell the Iraq war, again without dissenting views present to contradict and debate the push for attack.

Like an advertising campaign, where the entire organization at a company's disposal is used to sell the product, the push to sell the American people into accepting an attack on Iran will be all-encompassing, reaching hundreds of millions of Americans through the television, radio and printed media. The public relations campaign run out of the White House will be relentless and assiduous, in the end convincing millions that an American attack is in the best interests of the nation. Already, for example, over 50 percent of the public has made it known that they would have no problem if Bush attacked Iran, a figure that perhaps reflects the ignorance, mass amnesia and incomprehensible idiocy of half the population. This figure represents a high percentage favoring attack, even before the campaign of propaganda, lies and deceptions even heats up. The percentage will only rise once the campaign hits its peak.

Iran will be made out to be a lawless nation at odds with the rest of the world. Of course

diplomacy will be designed to fail, as it was prior to the Iraq war. While shouting that the UN must act, thereby being able to claim legitimacy, America will maneuver its vast system of control and inevitably lead the charade of the UN to fail, granting Bush the excuse to attack. Terror threats will be manufactured, danger to us will be reborn and, in the end, Iran will be attacked and crippled, killing tens of thousands, escalating tensions, creating insecurity, perpetuating an already never-ending war and unleashing human violence upon the globe. Using the naiveté and ignorance of the citizenry to its advantage, the military industrial energy complex will claim to fight for freedom, democracy and an end to tyranny, again jumping on the fictional war on terror bandwagon to excuse its offensive attacks for imperial aspirations and control of the world's remaining oil fields.

The threat of nuclear attack by Iran will of course be exaggerated, as will its failure to comply with international law and its use of nuclear technology. Orwellian newspeak and doubletalk will permeate the airwaves; news reports will be manipulated to fit the predetermined storyline. Facts and figures will be contorted and altered, their true meanings erased, their mirror image twisted. And it will all be repeated, over and over and over again, designed to manipulate, condition and steer us toward accepting further death and destruction in the Muslim world. The plethora of broken UN resolutions of a certain Middle Eastern nation will never be mentioned, nor its possession of 200 nuclear missiles, nor the fact that Iran would be committing suicide if it attacked with nuclear weapons either America or Israel, nor the fact that any nation under the intense threat faced by Iran will inevitably seek to defend itself through nuclear weapons, nor the fact that every nation is entitled to sovereign creation of civilian nuclear technology for energy purposes, nor the fact that Iran possesses roughly thirteen percent of the world's available fossil fuels, nor the fact that its new oil bourse threatens the stability of the US dollar, nor the fact that we are in the age of resource wars, already engaged in clandestine battle with China, Russia, Europe and India, nor the fact that America has over 700 bases worldwide, including four new permanent bases in Iraq, wishing for a few more in the geopolitical treasure that is Iran, nor the fact that this rebranded offensive strategy and attack is nothing more than pursuit of strategic oil fields close to Iraq, containment of a very potent rival, control over oil and, as always when America interferes in the Middle East, proxy wars benefiting Israel.

Using the bully pulpit afforded the President, George W. Bush will release the hounds of his administration, parading known liars and immoral miscreants, each shouting loudly the case for war. Rice, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Goss, Chertoff, Hadley, the nest of neocons festering in Washington and Bush himself will be given a podium and a microphone from which to preach the virtue of offensive warfare, as usual manipulating our instincts and emotions, as always resurrecting 9/11 to engender fear, hatred and anger amongst the populace. They will grace our television monitors, given all the airtime they desire, their lies and deceptions heard around the nation, never to be contradicted, always to be believed.

It will not matter that they lied, deceived and manipulated the case for war against Iraq. It will not matter that they took America to war on false pretenses, creating a wasted debacle in Mesopotamia. It will not matter that their incompetence, arrogance, ignorance and immorality have made us less safe, not more, creating more terrorists, not less, endangering our "way of life" more by their actions at home than by their ineptitude abroad. It will not matter that their potential actions could engulf an entire region in violence, conflagrating the Eurasian land mass in a very dangerous and long-lasting new Cold War against potent rivals. It will not matter that with each new attack or act of humiliation upon the Muslim world the fire of hatred continues to boil inside the minds of one billions Muslims,

threatening to destabilize the entire planet. Of course it will not matter that these warmongers seek to perpetuate the vicious cycle of Muslim killing Westerner and Westerner killing Muslim, thereby giving rise to the perpetual war on terror, now remarketed "Long War," for they have been wishing for this for a very long time, finally giving rise to their "clash of civilizations," thus birthing their self-fulfilling prophesy. None of the above will matter, for all has been forgotten and disregarded, for we live in the United States of Amnesia.

Land of Paradoxes and Certainties

This is the America of the early 21st century, a land of paradoxes and of certainties, at once the richest nation on the planet yet offering anemic and dilapidating educations to the bearers of its future torch; a nation rich in technology yet its people dumbed down to the point that ignorance of both the natural world and human civilization prevails; a nation industrialized and modern yet a place where tens of millions remain captive to the theologies and beliefs more in tune to those of the Middle Ages; a country once enlightened by creativity and imagination now eviscerating both through the incessant illumination every night of that disseminator of fiction, fantasy and propaganda called television; a people once shining bright, allowed innumerable freedoms and rights, now extinguished by the same system they protect and defend; a citizenry once active, loud and knowledgeable now made indifferent and servile thanks to the comforts inherent in mass consumerism and materialism; a people at one time questioning and seeking accountability of government now transformed into the acquiescent and complicit serfs of corporatism; a land once fighting for the rights of workers now a land fighting for the rights of slaves; a nation of, by and for the People mutated into a country of, by and for the Corporate World.

Such is the state of affairs inside the borders of the War Culture, with almost 300 million human beings conditioned from birth to become subservient instruments of war aiding and abetting the war machine of the Pentagon. Thanks to the military industrial complex and its vast instruments of control, they have become a nation of warmongers and xenophobes, clandestinely cheering the rumbles of tanks and the cracks of guns, the dropping of bombs and the sadistic torture of Arabs. Like Pavlovian dogs, hundreds of millions of American citizens drool at the sounds of the trumpets of war blasted into their minds by the television monitor, eager to satisfy the destructive cravings of inner conscious propagated throughout the citizenry by an ingenious mechanism of mass manipulation.

When the drums of war commence their thunderous beat the inbred thirst for bloodshed and violence is unleashed, with the population instinctively aware that the Empire's addiction to war will soon be satisfied. Half of Americans, at once eager to smell the blood of brown-skinned humans, their hidden xenophobia and bigotry having a chance to finally rise to the surface, ingratiated by the sounds of destruction, mesmerized by the pyrotechnics and concussions of military might, are quick to march in lock step behind the tanks and battalions of the Empire, becoming an army of chickenhawks, yellow elephants and armchair generals, as always extolling war yet living in cowardice, preaching Jesus yet practicing Satan, preferring the safety of jingoism rather than the bravery of service, hiding behind the Flag and the charade of 9/11, made deaf by the hymns of that fantasy called American exceptionalism, becoming members of the cult which follows White House incompetence and ineptitude, all the while basking in their debt-ridden comforts and toys of escapism while the less fortunate among us fight their wars and battles.

At the first hints of military mobilization by the state, this half of the population, otherwise

decent and law abiding people, jump at attention, ready to become the clandestine storm troopers that will blindly follow those in power into battle, never questioning the reasoning behind the push for war, never wondering why America must again go to battle and never thinking for themselves as to whose interests are being furthered and what ramifications will arise from mass murder and destruction. Without thinking and rationalizing tens of millions of citizens will support the military industrial complex and its sinister designs without ever knowing what the military industrial complex is.

At the sound of war drums these millions blindly align themselves behind the President, regardless of the incompetence, the ineptitude, the chicanery, the criminality, the illegality and the immorality. To these sheeple, the herd mentality is in full effect, in essence eagerly following a wolf dressed in shepherd's clothing, unable to see the horizon, unable to see the journey, unable to think independently, blinded by fear, needing the diapers of bed wetters and the pacifiers of security, eager to follow and be led to the slaughterhouse disguised as so-called security and protection, unable to see anything except the blind manifestation of ignorant loyalty.

The other half of America, meanwhile, talk the talk but rarely, if ever, walk the walk, preferring instead to protest and dissent from the comfort and security of their keyboard or through the messages on their car bumper, as if that alone grants them entitlement to call themselves self-proclaimed anti-war activist, with many placing more interest and exerting more energy in the asinine, non-important, relatively insignificant news regarding the quail hunting adventures of Dick Cheney than in the much larger issues affecting the nation, with many unwilling to sacrifice time, effort and energy to fight for the future of the country.

They criticize without remorse but cannot bring it upon themselves to mobilize and take to the streets in protest, preferring losing freedoms and rights than being bothered into joining a mass movement. From their pajamas they proclaim vitriol at the chicanery of the Bush Administration yet refuse to take the direct action those that came before once did, voicing their frustrations at the direction America is taking through Internet message boards and simple family gatherings.

Merrily this half proclaims undying and blind loyalty to the impotent and spineless minority party, unwilling to see, thanks to the denial so prevalent among diehard Democrats, that their beloved party is but the lesser of two evils, naïve in their belief that this side of the army of corrupt politicians will ever again have their interest at the forefront, their ideology acting to mask the fact that their cherished heroes are but the prostitutes of corporatism and that their party is an illusion designed to convey the mistaken belief that an opposition exists.

Gone from their core, thanks to the comfortable and pampered existence they have been granted and the conditioning that has enveloped them from birth, is the fire that once lit brightly during the time of another American debacle, thriving inside the youth of a now vanished generation, a fire that granted radiance to bravery and warmth to courage, transforming a nation and a time, bringing truth to power and justice to criminality.

The fire that engulfed the sixties has been extinguished by consumerism, materialism and the glow of television, by an indifference that gives complacency a welcome embrace, by a collective amnesia that forgets yesterday and fails to recognize today, by videogame distractions and unenlightened passivity, and by the dark covers that have virtually eliminated from our consciousness the lost war in the Middle East, with millions of armchair

protesters made placid to the cries of an America hemorrhaging to death, unwilling to create a movement, unable to leave the comfortable warmth of their homes, preferring to protest on the Internet, unable to mobilize more than a minute and insignificant number of souls while the nation rots and fascism grows.

Gone are the massive marches, campus insurrections, the defying solidarity, the movement that altered history. A giant tsunami of change that once brought the upper echelons of government to its knees has given way to those who have sold out to principles once held dear, no longer to be bothered by truth, justice and peace, and to younger generations suffering the laziness and ignorance spawned by the excessiveness of living in America. Gone is the military draft and the threat of conscription, once a tinderbox that fed fuel to the peace movement's fire, for without it middle class America, white America, has no real vested interest in protesting, no loved ones to bring home, no friends to fight for, no sons and fathers to protest over, no funerals to attend, no threat of them being drafted.

In Iraq it is not their sons or fathers or brothers or daughters being maimed and dying. It is not their relatives or friends being psychologically damaged; they do not see the devastation done and the demons spawned. This is a war that does not hit middle class America close to home or inside their sphere of existence, where the heart is, where emotion flows and anger grows. To the great majority, the Iraq war remains an abstract reality, seen in images and in articles, not in the flesh or in immediate suffering. As such, and as long as the lower castes of American society are made to "volunteer" for war, with those from urban jungles or of rural regions comprising the armed forces, as long as middle class America is not conscripted, there will not exist a massive peace movement, the kind that once moved mountains and introduced fear into the halls of power. This the Bush Administration knows all too well, which is why they avoid it at all costs, while at the same time manipulating the system in a myriad of ways to assure itself of enough cannon fodder to continue its war of imperialism and occupation.

Warmongers One and All

The War Culture we are called, birthed from the first images of cartoons our innocent minds are bombarded with, their entire content based on conflict, aggression, violence and destruction, our brainwaves slowly manipulated and altered to suit the ways of war. Conditioned from infancy to accept the sounds of gunfire, the dropping of bombs, the violence of war, the violent conflict of man versus man, we in time become immune to death and violence, suppressing inside us feelings of horror and revulsion. As we begin getting older we are introduced to the magical world of Hollywood, full of pyrotechnic wonder and digital artistry, making us awe and gawk at exploding bombs and reverberating waves of thunderous booms, becoming wide-eyed by the destruction unleashed by the weapons of war and the heroes we fantasize about.

Transfixed by Dolby digital sounds, the concussions of bombs exploding in our ears, the whizzing of bullets flying by, mushroom clouds of fire and smoke emanating on screen, blood and guts spilled throughout, we are made to accept war and violence and destruction as inherent mechanisms of conflict resolution. Slowly but surely we are conditioned to believe that the brutality of man killing man is not as severe as we believe it to be, that blood and guts are but movie magic, that death and injury are as fictional as that seen in the movies. We are made to love mayhem; we are made to love weapons; we are made to accept violence; we are made to believe death is nothing more than the role an actor must play.

In our deluded minds, thanks to years of watching television and movies, lies the ingrained propaganda that everything the military does is benevolent and altruistic, as always fighting for “freedom and democracy,” for “human rights,” for the salvation from “tyranny.” In our distorted view of human reality, the US military is always the good guy fighting the enemy, who is always evil, a dreaded evildoer. This black and white view of the world has been firmly planted into our minds by the happy ending, good-guy always wins bull manure manufactured by the fictional geniuses in Hollywood, where America is always the winner and where the evildoer of the moment always gets killed or caught. In a war such as the present debacle in Iraq, therefore, where reality is hidden and truth suppressed, our instinct will always be to blindly believe, in spite of mountains of evidence to the contrary, that the US military has been sent to Iraq for good, altruistic and noble intentions.

The truth, though, is altogether different, as evidenced by the devastation unleashed by the American military inside Iraq. The sadistic images that emerged from Abu Ghraib, the crimes against humanity being committed in Guantanamo and other such clandestine gulags, the death of perhaps 200,000 innocent Iraqis, the complete devastation of Iraq’s infrastructure, the indiscriminate shooting of civilians, the immeasurable level of suffering created as a result of occupation, the destruction of Fallujah missile, bomb and use of white phosphorus, the lack of electricity, sewage, fuel and adequate drinking water, the ongoing dropping of bombs and an increase in the aerial war are but a few examples of the wickedness exported into Iraq by America’s illegal and immoral invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq. The complete collapse of society and unfettered chaos in the streets, the civil war now raging and expanding, the insecurity prevalent throughout the nation and the deep seated anger and hate brewing in Iraq are all a result of what our cherished military, at the behest of George W. Bush, has helped birth in a nation once tranquil and secure.

Yet to millions of Americans who either do not care or will never know reality, what we have done in Iraq is bringing “freedom and democracy,” even though women now have fewer rights than before invasion, freeing a nation from its tyrant, even though America has become the new tyrant, that they hate us for our freedoms, when in reality they hate us for our foreign policies, our imperialism and our support of ruthless tyrants, and “fighting them over there so we do not have to fight them over here,” even though there were no terrorists in Iraq before but now it has become a training ground for thousands who will one day use their expertise in order to inflict blowback at the United States.

Lost from the memory of tens of millions of Americans, whether conveniently or from the general amnesia now prevalent throughout society, are the myriad of excuses used to justify the illegal invasion and occupation, from WMDs, mushroom clouds, connections to 9/11 and Al-Qaeda. Lost is the reality that we are the invading Red Coats fighting against American Revolutionaries in the Iraqi version of the Revolutionary War and War for Independence, that the truth behind the Iraq war is freedom fighters trying to cleanse their lands of the imperial invaders intent on dehumanizing Iraqis, raping their women, killing and brutalizing their children, conquering their oil fields and possessing their geostrategic lands. We cheer freedom fighters in expensive Hollywood productions, yet not when we are the invaders and occupiers. Such is the power of propaganda. Thanks to incessant propaganda, however, tens of millions of Americans will continue to live in the illusion that we are fighting the so-called war on terror against Al-Qaeda, that Iraq is the central front in this mirage, that we are the defenders of humanity, pursuing evildoer bogeymen with no interest in controlling the vast oil fields deemed vital to the continued expansion both of our economy and the coffers of the military-industrial-energy complex.

After years of propaganda and conditioning, and thanks to continued and incessant brainwashing by the mainstream media, we readily accept war as an institution, as a product re-introduced every few years for the benefit of the state. War thus becomes a necessary component that we inherently associate, perhaps subconsciously, with the continued health of the nation and its economy. By association, then, war is good not only for the country but for us as individuals, assuring our children of continued excessiveness. Inside our minds exists the charade that without war we would not possess the vast wealth we have or the comfortable lifestyles we live in.

Yet we also know that without war, without our reckless grab for land and exploitation, the nation would stutter and cease to be the power that has allowed us to dominate the globe, pillaging the world's people and their resources in the process, in wanton fashion exacerbating misery, regional wars, global warming, poverty and thus further imperiling the security of the planet. It is this reality that we are fully aware of yet refuse to accept or openly talk about, becoming the ugly truth that must never be allowed to escape its dark closet. It is better to live in denial and in hypocrisy than in the shantytowns exclusively reserved for billions of our fellow human beings.

Millions of us know we owe our fruitful and gluttonous lifestyles to war, to the suffering of billions and the imperialist mechanisms controlled by us, yet many of us refuse to change our ways, refusing to act in opposition to the Empire, refusing to acknowledge that our lifestyle was born in sin, in human misery and in the invasion and colonization of alien lands. Living inside the belly of the beast, using and exploiting its many riches, living its comfortable reality, yet refusing to alter our standards of living or our comfortable existence, refusing to amend our crimes and stop our exploitation of the planet, we remain, as always, fully complicit in the crimes and destruction and misery unleashed by our government. Remaining silent, indifferent and ignorant to this reality does not absolve any of us.

Through silence we merely acquiesce to everything done in our name. Our failure or unwillingness to alter our ways, our inability or refusal to change the direction of this nation and the continued indifference or complicity to the plight of billions has unmasked us all. This hidden truth lies at the heart of us all, making us a nation of warmongers, one and all, of amnesiacs, one and all, of pampered and spoiled primates, one and all, a citizenry unapologetic in its complicity and acquiescence to imperialism, war and destruction through our excessiveness, comfortable lifestyles and deafening silence.

We are a nation asleep at the wheel, drunk off our self-exceptionalism and gluttony, ramming head on into the massive trunk of unthinking self-destruction, our arrogance blinding us to the giant cancer in our midst, addicted to materialism and television, every day dumbed down further, unwilling to learn about the world outside our infallible bubble, creating a snowball rolling downhill, gaining momentum and growing in size, in its path eviscerating the dreams and hopes of the future as well as an American past that once offered humanity a glimmer of hope in an ever-dwindling and myopic world.

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