

Loving America

A Poem: "Love the people not the government"

By [Prof Peter Dale Scott](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [History](#)

Loving America

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We are made schizophrenic

by loving America

by our love of the well-cherished

gardens of our comfortable neighborhoods

of the kind woman this morning

who rebuttoned my sleeve

after drawing blood from my arm

and told me that her friends

two Christian missionaries

had *real problems in Afghanistan*

-or near there —

perhaps it was Zimbabwe —

and the cultures of its people

as caught by Bernstein

in *West Side Story*

and the music of Leonard Cohen

Democracy is coming

to the U.S.A.

Love has problems with knowledge
which is why Dostoevsky said
he would choose Christ over the truth
and Milosz wrote in the midst
of the destruction of Warsaw

Who serves best doesn't always understand

Milosz *New and Collected Poems* 50

which is why for Socratics
love isn't always a virtue

and because we love America
we tend to believe our president

it was only after

the Taliban refused

to turn over Osama bin Laden

we sent our troops into Afghanistan
12/1/09

Obama, West Point

as we suppress what the Taliban
actually said:

they would not hand over bin Laden

without proof or evidence

that he was involved in last week's attacks

which Bush refused them

CNN 9/21/01

and we ignore the unpoetic truth

from FBI Headquarters

why its "Most Wanted" webpage on bin Laden

does not list 9/11

the FBI has no hard evidence

connecting Bin Laden to 9/11.
<http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=va&aid=2623>

or Cheney on TV

We've never argued the case

that somehow Osama Bin Laden

was directly involved in 9/11.

That evidence has never been forthcoming.

Tony Snow Show, 3/29/06

and we ignore the fact

that America then recruited

high-level drug traffickers

from Pakistan and even France

to assist in the invasion it had already prepared

of Afghanistan

in the same way

that for more than half a century

our secret armies helped develop

Thailand Burma and Laos

to become for the first time

global opiate suppliers

in alliance with drug traffickers

so powerful and important

they are absolutely never named

in U.S. newspapers

Scott American War Machine

like Li Wenhuan

General of the Fifth Army

in whose honor a huge statue is being built

we ignore whatever our papers ignore

and we suppress the obvious

because we are made schizophrenic
by loving America
while our country is delivered
into the hands of men
like the priapic
ex-senior officer of Enron
who cashed out for a quarter billion
married one of his strippers
and became the second largest
landowner in Colorado

Mimi Swartz *Power Failure* 193

I don't believe for a second
that what we think are our thoughts
are only the thoughts of our age
like those *who proclaim*
that it is language that controls us
and not we who control language
we make our own culture
but not just as we choose
and we are bent way out of shape
when we struggle to lead
a virtuous life
in this freest
and most belligerent nation in the world

Milosz *Beginning with My Streets* 204

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so many of whose poets
once left the country
committed suicide went insane

play now in the gardens of their ivory towers
and the safely meaningless
or

have celebrated America's power
as a country of vast designs and expectations
of a new and *more excellent social state*

than history has recorded *Emerson, Sellers Market Revolution 380*

or Carl Sandburg your *Chicago*
alive and coarse and strong and cunning.
a tall bold slugger set vivid

against the little soft cities *Sandburg Chicago*

or even you Walt Whitman
celebrating the guns of *the new empire*
and its Broadway pageants
the way we celebrate fireworks

I chant America, the Mistress—I chant a greater supremacy....

I chant my stars and stripes fluttering in the wind;

I chant commerce opening,

When the thunder-cracking guns arouse me

with the proud roar I love Whitman, "A Broadway Pageant" *Leaves of Grass*
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and I have to say to my friends
who as I do love Whitman
you ignore the esoteric
you suppress the obvious
because we are made schizophrenic
by loving of America

I saw it in fragments of a text
as in two shards of a mirror
that it is not we
who speak the language
but it is the language
that speaks us
and then nearby
We can express no more than
the language of our time and place
allows us to.
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Milosz *Beginning with My Streets*

In the wake of our civil war
when Whitman was attacked by Allen Tate
can there yet be a poet
with the breadth of compassion
to do for America

and Whitman's *fervid IDEA*
*Works*935-6

Whitman *Democratic Vistas Complete*

what Milosz achieved for Poland

when he translated Simone Weil

Scott *Poets Who Grow Gardens in Their Heads*

into the language of his people

the unreasonable hating themselves

even more than they hate other nations

Milosz *New and Collected poems* 245

to persuade the militant church and the militant left

the factions of believers and thinkers

engaged in cultural wars

and increasingly self-deranged

by rejecting each other

that they could instead address
the heartlessness
at the center of the capital
conniving with lies and murder
as now in the case of Washington
which targeted a hospital in Fallujah
as "a center of propaganda" AsiaTimesOnline 11/10/2004, DahrJamilIraq.com 11/16/04
and has sent a fleet
on its way to the Persian Gulf

with "bunker busters"
for blasting underground structures
aiming specifically at Iran

Chomsky July 2 2010

Are we mentally obese?
why do most of us
barely mind or even notice
*"They are gearing up totally
for the destruction of Iran"?*

HeraldScotland March 14 2010

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Love America!

(means)

Love the people

not the government!

and don't seriously blame anyone!

not the people

not those in Washington

not even the poets

though *What is poetry which does not save*

Nations or people?

A connivance with official lies...

Milosz, New and Collected Poems, 77-78

we make our own culture

but not just as we please

and all are caught up in

a relentless dialectic

the two sides of Whitman

love of power and hatred of pain

which no poet can resolve

until America comes to realize

like Britain in 1956

it can no longer

control any situation in the world

Joint Vision 2020 Pentagon

Peter Dale Scott, a former Canadian diplomat and English Professor at the University of California, Berkeley, is a poet, writer, and researcher. He was born in Montreal in 1929, the only son of the poet F.R. Scott and the painter Marian Scott. He is married to Ronna Kabatznick; and he has three children, Cassie, Mika, and John Scott, by a previous marriage to Maylie Marshall.

His prose books include *The War Conspiracy* (1972), *The Assassinations: Dallas and Beyond* (in collaboration, 1976), *Crime and Cover-Up: The CIA, the Mafia, and the Dallas-Watergate Connection* (1977), *The Iran-Contra Connection* (in collaboration, 1987), *Cocaine Politics: Drugs, Armies, and the CIA in Central America* (in collaboration, 1991, 1998), *Deep Politics and the Death of JFK* (1993, 1996), *Deep Politics Two* (1994, 1995, 2006), *Drugs Oil and War* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, March 2003), *The Road to 9/11* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), and *The War Conspiracy: JFK, 9/11, and the Deep Politics of War* (Ipswich, MA: Mary Ferrell Foundation Press, 2008).

An anti-war speaker during the Vietnam and Gulf Wars, he was a co-founder of the Peace and Conflict Studies Program at UC Berkeley, and of the Coalition on Political Assassinations (COPA).

His poetry has dealt with both his experience and his research, the latter of which has centered on U.S. covert operations, their impact on democracy at home and abroad, and their relations to the John F. Kennedy assassination and the global drug traffic. The poet-critic Robert Hass has written (Agni, 31/32, p. 335) that "Coming to Jakarta is the most important political poem to appear in the English language in a very long time."

His latest book of poems, Mosaic Orpheus, appeared in 2009 from McGill-Queen's University Press. It [can be ordered from Amazon.com](#). His other chief poetry books are the three volumes of his trilogy Seculum: Coming to Jakarta: A Poem About Terror (1989), Listening to the Candle: A Poem on Impulse (1992), and Minding the Darkness: A Poem for the Year 2000. In addition he has published Crossing Borders: Selected Shorter Poems (1994), published in Canada as Murmur of the Stars. In November 2002 he was awarded the Lannan Poetry Award.

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