

# The Folly of Total War

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Is Dubya's objective to see how many wars he can start at one time? Let's see, there's Iraq Attack II, of course, the family affair, and then there's North Korea, that bit of fifty year old unresolved business, and now there's Pakistan where the US bombed a religious school the other day. If you really want to groom hatred, simply bomb religious schools, hospitals, water purification plants, electrical grids, etc. Then there's Bahrain where the people rioted against the presence of US troops the other day. In Kuwait, policemen are taking potshots at soldiers. According to the Russian newspaper Moskovsky Komsomolets, over a hundred US soldiers are missing in Afghanistan.

Reality check for the neocon chicken hawks — the US is not set up to wage multiple wars in multiple “theaters” across the world. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, of all people, should know this — yet he tells the world no problem, the US can wage multiple wars and win them hands down. “The message of the holiday season is peace on Earth,” Rumsfeld told the troops over Christmas. “Yet, despite our best hopes, history shows that this season of peace has often been a time of war.” Donald Rumsfeld, as the Grinch who stole Christmas, ordered the carpet bombing of Who-ville. “No one quite knows the reason. It could be his head wasn't screwed on just right. It could be, perhaps, that his shoes were too tight. But I think that the most likely reason of all may have been that his heart was two sizes too small.”

“I don't like the word crisis,” said Secretary of State Colin Powell the other day, “it suggests we're about to move forces or there's a war about to break out, and that's not the case at all.” Powell is often at odds with the neocons who have exclusive permission to yell strident directives in the ear of his half-wit boss. In the months before Dubya was installed in the White House these dogmatic neocons made their intentions known. The “core mission” of the US military is to “fight and decisively win multiple, simultaneous major theater wars... the process of transformation is likely to be a long one, absent some catastrophic and catalyzing event — like a new Pearl Harbor.” As the neocon Richard Perle — known in Washington by the affectionate moniker the “Prince of Darkness” — told the journalist John Pilger, the US must wage a “total war” against “a variety of enemies. There are lots of them out there. All this talk about first we are going to do Afghanistan, then we will do Iraq... this is entirely the wrong way to go about it. If we just let our vision of the world go forth, and we embrace it entirely and we don't try to piece together clever diplomacy, but just wage a total war... our children will sing great songs about us years from now. “

So, Mr. Powell, climb onboard — or your children will not be allowed to “sing great songs” about mass murder and endless wars of conquest. Of course, your children may choose not to live in the world after the neocons are finished with it — a world ravaged by “mini-nukes” and poisoned by countless tons of depleted uranium, a world where the “grand imperatives of imperial geostrategy,” as Zbigniew Brzezinski so candidly put it, “are to prevent collusion

and maintain security dependence among the vassals, to keep tributaries pliant and protected, and to keep the barbarians from coming together.” The New Feudalism envisioned by the Bush neocons may require multiple wars fought with designer nukes (specifically engineered for regional conflict), as the Rumsfeld-Grinch Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) spells out. Nuclear war’s not strictly for deterrence anymore, but a “force intended primarily for war-fighting,” as Robert K. Musil, Executive Director and CEO of Physicians for Social Responsibility explains. “Future warfare scenarios may require low-yield nuclear options,” says the Heritage Foundation matter-of-factly. Get used to it.

Now imagine the above mentioned “multiple, simultaneous major theater wars” fought against “a variety of enemies” using “low-yield nuclear options.” Hold that wretched thought in mind and then consider what David W. Allan, esteemed atomic clock physicist, has to say about such madness. “Detonating many nuclear explosions at once, such as in a nuclear war scenario, would be like focusing a giant blow torch toward the center of the earth,” writes Allan. Not only would this exacerbate the green-house effect, it would also contribute to polar ice cap melting and the rise of ocean levels and the inundation of the continents with water. If you live in England, you might want to think about moving. Even without a noxious concert of nukes going off simultaneously, according to researchers, 85% of Alaskan glaciers have lost vast portions of their mass in the last 40 years and some are now thinning at double the rates of the 1950s, which may explain the 9% sea level rise over the last century. No doubt the neocons see this as pure poppycock — that as if they even bother to notice such inappreciable facts. After all, we’re talking about the “axis of evil” here and preventing “barbarians from coming together.” Richard Perle is looking forward to his kids singing “great songs,” so what’s a little more water — or massive misery in “lesser” nations — when “geostrategic imperatives” are at stake?

Junior’s not fooling around. The US military, now fully cognizant of its mission, will use “every resource, every weapon, every means to assure full victory” over intransigent “vassals,” many of whom have their own ideas about the natural resources and the destiny of the people who live in their countries. Let them chew on the prospect of the newest addition to the Pentagon’s armory — the B-61, called the Mk-11 or the “burrowing bomb.” This marvel of death technology is designed to smoke ‘em out in appreciable fashion, especially if they hide in underground bunkers or the caves of Tora Bora. “Built ram tough with a heavy metal casing for smashing through earth and concrete, ” writes George Smith of the Village Voice, “the B-61 explodes with the force of an estimated 340,000 tons of TNT. It is lots of bang for the buck, literally two apocalypse bombs in one — a boosted plutonium firecracker called the primary, and a heavy hydrogen secondary for that good old-fashioned H-bomb fireball. The B-61 also features a detonation option called the Dial-a-Yield for those times when 340 kilotons is just a little too much.” Lovely. “One B-61 will bring on a calamity of biblical proportions between Tigris and Euphrates. The sky will turn the color of sackcloth, the Arab world will supernova, our European allies will try our leaders in absentia as war criminals in the Hague — but, hey, anyone who contemplates using the thing plans on America’s hair getting a little mussed.” Considering Bush’s authorization for such excessive weaponry — and the stated willingness to use them — it would seem there will be more than a few bad hair days for America in the days ahead.

But how does the empire “assure full victory” when increasing numbers of “vassals” are moved to resistance and violence? How does the US “mini-nuke” a Muslim fundamentalist with a Kalashnikov and not kill the innocent shopkeeper walking past minding his own business? Bush and his neocons do not seem concerned with such insignificant details.

“Neca eos omnes. Deus suos agnoset,” proclaimed the papal killers of the Cathars (“Kill them all. God will know His own.”), an expression, slightly modified, which found popular use during the Vietnam war and in paramilitary operations and neocolonial brush wars ever since. Surely, the relatives of 500,000 plus children to die of entirely preventable diseases over the span a decade of US-imposed sanctions against Iraq must understand this cruel maxim. “Bush can just say ‘I don’t like that leader’s face so he must be removed’. If he removes Saddam he will do the same in the whole region,” a Kuwaiti lawyer told Michael Georgy of Reuters a few days ago. “The Americans are just trying to impose their influence on Muslims. We hate the Americans,” declared another.

Rumsfeld may brag “a capability in the United States to provide for homeland defense, to undertake a major regional conflict and win decisively — including occupying a country and changing the regime if necessary — and simultaneously swiftly defeat another aggressor in another theater,” but this will hardly stem the tide of growing hatred in countries where US “pre-eminence” is to be exacted for the likes of transnational corporations and the international banking cartel. No doubt the US military will be able to take out Saddam’s Republican Guard — and maybe in short order while at the same time taking out North Korea’s nukes — but the hatred for the US will remain and painstakingly eat away at the edges of the empire like a slow acid.

The geniuses in the Pentagon and in the diabolical labs over at Lockheed Martin have yet to invent a bomb able to eradicate the hatred of millions of people who yearn to determine their own destinies.

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