

NATIVE INTELLIGENCE

A Column By
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OPERATION USA FREEDOM

The Bush Regime claims to have waged a war against Iraq called "Operation Iraqi Freedom." Now we will need to secure freedom within the United States.

Wars seem to be popular with many people unless they produce lots of casualties and property losses. In one of Hermann Hesse's novels he describes the elation of the German people at the beginning of World War I: bands marching, crowds cheering, young men eager to join the army, and local officials making patriotic speeches. I am sure that Germans felt the same in 1939 as Hitler launched his modernized, state-of-the-art war machine against poor, unprepared Poland. Poland was, of course, blamed as the aggressor by German propaganda.

Unfortunately, a militaristic society is not usually a free society. Militarism seems to demand government secrecy, with key information kept away from the people and even from legislators. It also demands spying on people, lying about objectives and plans, and the suspension of basic civil liberties and human rights, such as habeas corpus.

The Bush Regime has committed itself to militarism. As reported in the press, the Cheney-Wolfowitz-Perle cabal of right-wing schemers designed Bush's war plans in the early 1990s with a view to creating a US-dominated world, a world subject everywhere to potential US military intervention to prevent any rival power centers from developing. Such a plan requires the largest military

machine in the world, in terms of expenditures and modern weaponry. Thus the USA is definitely a militarized society, even if most of us cannot see the troops, weapons, and bases because so many of them are now placed in other countries.

Such a society cannot truly be free. As 9-11 illustrated, the more we intervene overseas in other people's territories, the more we open ourselves up to possible attacks. And, ironically perhaps, the militarism of our right-wing government feeds upon, and is strengthened by any and every attack, since each incident provides excuses for taking away more freedoms. That is why some people believe that 9-11 was not an accident, that it occurred because some people in the government wanted it to happen, since it provided the excuse for all of the anti-freedom legislation since adopted by Congress and for the attack upon a weak country, Iraq. Perhaps we shall never know why the US air defenses were down on 9-11 and why the jets of our powerful air force were not to be seen defending New York or Washington D. C.

The Nazis facilitated their takeover of German society by staging the Reichstag fire and, in a somewhat similar manner, 9-11 provided the trigger which caused Congress to give in to Bush on almost every request relating to "security" and "militarism." The so-called Patriot Act, the Homeland Security legislation, and the acquiescence in the outrageous treatment of prisoners being tortured at Guantanamo and Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan, and elsewhere, the acquiescence in the assassination of alleged "enemies" without any legal proceedings, the allowing of the bureaucrats of the State Department to unilaterally determine which organizations in the world are "terrorist" (which, therefore, can result in any

contributor or supporter being arrested and jailed, often without the right of legal representation, formal charges, or habeas corpus), and the authorization to use military force prior to any immediate threat of attack and without legal approval from the United Nations are all examples of how Congress has been reduced to a rubber-stamp, at least on any issues relating to war and control of people.

Now, we face a society which is unfree. As I have written elsewhere, the way in which Native Americans have been treated for centuries has now been extended to all other persons in the United States and to persons captured in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere. It is outrageous to have hundreds of men, supposedly connected with attacks on US property and persons, held in a manner which is prohibited by both the Geneva Conventions and the Constitution of our country. Why are these persons not on trial in the United States? If there is a case against them, why have they not been charged, given attorneys for defense, presented with the evidence against them, and placed on trial before a jury of their peers?

Are the Enron executives going to be held at Guantanamo in wire cages, subject to repeated and endless interrogations, with no legal representation and no formal charges against them? Of course not! After all, they are part of the rich and powerful! But it is quite possible that others may some day be held in cages at Guantanamo in endless conditions of torture and degradation. After all, US citizens are already being held without charges under similar legal conditions, and it already happened to Native Americans and Japanese-Americans. Many of those forcibly removed in 1942 were citizens, and the Fourteenth Amendment had given citizenship to

Indians in the 19th. Century (but the courts pretended that they were not born “within” the United States).

So we have a huge job for all persons. We have to take back our democracy. We have to bring an end to assassinations, torture and other behavior which literally drags our flag in the slime of depravity. We must defend the weakest and most vulnerable among us. We must seek the restoration of the Bill of Rights. No one should ever be deprived of the fundamental rights of due process and of the right to be innocent until PROVEN guilty. Is it not true that bureaucrats who possess absolute power (and secrecy) will become absolutely corrupt?

President Eisenhower warned us of the corruption of militarism and especially of the military-industrial complex. Who do we choose to believe: Bush-Cheney-Rumsfeld-Ashcroft or Ike?

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