

## Deadly Contradictions



# DEADLY CONTRADICTIONS

*The New American Empire and Global Warring*

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This book is dedicated to Nina and our family—  
a feisty bunch, creators all.



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## PREFACE

The whole world is covered with nations of which we know only the names, yet we dabble in judging. ... Let us suppose a Montesquieu, a Buffon, a Diderot ... traveling in order to inform ... by observing and describing ... Turkey ... the interior of Africa ... China, Tartary ... Mexico, Peru, Chile, and finally the Caribbean. ... Let us suppose these new Hercules ... then wrote at leisure the natural, moral, and political history of what they would have seen; we ourselves would see a new world ... and we would thus learn to know our own. (Rousseau, in Lévi-Strauss 1976: 34)

**I**n an essay about the origins of anthropology, Claude Lévi-Strauss credited Rousseau with a delineation of the discipline. The idea behind Rousseau's anthropology was to send 'new Hercules' out and about, "traveling ... to inform" compatriots about different people in the world, the better "to know our own." This book is Rousseauian in spirit. It is a real trip, a journey to other peoples and places to know the United States and its global entanglements. A word on how this peregrination came about is in order.

I received a draft deferment to attend an Ivy League university in the 1960s and so avoided the Vietnam War. In 1968, as a privileged graduate student, I went instead to live among the Barma in Chad—then as isolated a place as existed on the globe—to conduct research into descent groups. There I went from person to person, asking, "So, what about clans?" They didn't know. Chad, it turned out, was in the midst of civil war. One evening in 1969 in a tiny village, two months into fieldwork, Musa woke me with the words "*Malatol debgé kidé*," which translated as "The masters of killing have come" or maybe as "The masters of killing are coming—soon!" We waited for them under the old *bili* tree where the road into the village stopped and under which the chief held court—a motley crew of six, all over sixty except for the guy swollen from elephantiasis. We were armed with a shotgun (no shells), an ancient sword (pretty short), and a fishing lance (jagged).

They did not come that night, but they kept coming elsewhere. At a roadblock a few years later, a soldier maneuvered the barrel of his auto-

matic weapon to push up my companion's sunglasses, the better to see his face—and the better to kill him (if necessary). After some very fast talk, the gun was removed and the glasses slid back into place. During one period in N'Djamena, Chad's capital, if you woke up in the morning and saw birds in the tree, you knew there had been fighting near the Presidential Palace the previous night. At the time a friend recounted how an old man near the palace had raised his arm above his shoulder, brandishing a knife, and been machine-gunned by soldiers who then approached the body and threw hand grenades at it. "They blew him into mini-pieces," he said, and kept repeating, "mini-morcaux, mini-morcaux. *Why?*" This led me to understand that unilineal descent groups—then the regnant anthropological conceptual boytoys—were not of pressing significance to Chadians, whereas understanding why portions of their agnates kept flying off in blasted, bloody chunks was.

This realization was followed by another. Maybe Chad was not so isolated. Americans and Europeans were involved in the violence. After all, in that first village an old American World War II fighter plane, piloted by a Frenchman, would fly out of the eastern dawn, bank sharply over the village at strafing level—the pilot's silver glasses glinting in the sun—and head northward. Once, on the way to a funeral, I drove through a line of French legionnaires retreating from the area where the funeral was to be held. In 1970 at a parade in N'Djamena's Independence Square, celebrants of the tenth anniversary of Chad's independence watched a tank roll by. Actually, it was Chad's only tank, the Gaurang. Standing in the Gaurang's main turret, facing and saluting the reviewing stand, was a Chadian soldier; at another opening up front, a European officer stared straight ahead, saluting no one. Fast-forward ten years: on one battlefield in the 1980s there were reports of a "Bob," said to be a CIA officer. Fast-forward another quarter of a century: there was *still* warfare. As we traveled to the small city of Abeché near the Sudanese border, high, high above a French Jaguar jet left a contrail pointing east, toward the hostilities.

Such memories are disquieting—Bob and Europeans haunting imagination's shadows. But as readers will learn, Bob and the Europeans doing their thing in Chad was not a singularity. Rather, they were, and are, a global imperial phenomenon characterizing our times. I had gone to Chad to study Chadians' worlds, and in so doing had learned "our own" world was part of theirs. Bob and his compatriots—"masters of killing" who "have come" or "are coming—soon!"—were out there. Among other matters, this text provides theory and evidence to argue that since the end of World War II, a New American Empire has emerged in our world to choreograph Bob and his allies' operations in other worlds across the globe.

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## GLOSSARY

**Actions:** the strings of an individual actor.

**Actors:** a type of force resource composed of persons with particular forces and powers. The more force and power they have, the greater their agency.

**Agency:** use of the brain to combine different force resources, creating a force with an outcome, with power.

**Authority:** a type of force resource based on the rights of actors to choreograph specific force resources in different perceived situations.

**Autopoietic:** having or relating to a social being's power to reproduce and maintain itself.

**Being, human:** a sector of reality; that of humanity in all its interactive aspects.

——, **social:** the most complex structural form of human being. These are articulated systems, roughly equivalent to society. Social beings are open, autopoietic, and reflexive—always in motion, always doing.

**Coalescence:** increasing co-occurrence of contradictions.

**Choreography:** the designing of sequences of movements in which the motion of objects and people are specified in space and time.

**Concatenation:** the particular co-occurrence of contradictions that may be increasing or decreasing in intensity.

**Conservation of *délires*:** the principle that social change moves iteration by iteration, with iterations understood as similar ways of doing the same thing.

**Contradictions:** are logics that give a social being, or a portion of it, the power to move toward its limits, threatening its reproduction and autopoiesis.

——, **political:** a contradiction within or between political systems.

——, **imperial:** a contradiction between two or more empires.

—, **dominator/dominated**: a contradiction between the dominators and the dominated in imperial social beings

—, **economic**: a contradiction with or between economic systems.

—, **cyclical**: economic contradictions that cycle between growth and decline.

—, **systemic**: economic contradictions moving economic systems toward their limits.

**Culture**: a force resource consisting of learned and shared signs bearing information of the times; required for choreographing (see also technical culture, ideology, worldview).

—, **perceptual**: signs indicating what is.

—, **procedural**: signs bearing information about what to do with what is.

—, **neuronal**: signs embedded within neuronal tissue in I-Space.

—, **discursive**: signs forming the basis of information transmitted in E-Space.

—, **positional**: signs shared by those in different positions within social beings.

**Délires**: the intentions and the emotions supporting them of elites.

**Elites**: upper-class actors who occupy positions with considerable authority over considerable force resources. They are the “tip of the spear” in class conflict.

—, **subject**: elites found in colonies or client states who are supervised by imperial handlers.

—, **advantaged**: elites found in advantaged client states.

—, **hybrid**: elites found in ordinary client states who have positional culture from both their own state and that of the imperial core to which they belong.

**Empires**: social beings doing domination especially in other countries and other regions as their elites amass force and, with force, power.

**E-Space**: structures external to humans.

**Experimental fixation**: different attempts to address a particular vulnerability.

**Force**: generally, any cause of outcomes or effects. It is specific to social forms. Any outcome or effect is due to the exercise of force resources.

—, **exercise of**: utilization of force resources.

—, **violent**: force resources exercised to break things.

—, **constructive**: force resources exercised to make things.

**Force resources**: instruments, land, actors, culture, and authority that, when choreographed together, cause effects.

**Formal:** describes a group whose procedural culture is explicit (with standardized, written procedure)

**Global warring:** strings involving overt or covert, direct or indirect, exercise of violent force managed by security elites of an imperial state against a colony, client state, or region of interest somewhere other than the imperial core.

**Hermeneutic:** a choreographic message from technical culture, ideology, or a worldview that informs actors what is and what to do about it.

**Hermeneutic blindness:** inability to recognize vulnerabilities.

**Hermeneutic deception:** fixes said to relax vulnerabilities that actually do not relax the vulnerabilities.

**Hermeneutic politics:** generally, any debate over the understanding of some aspect of being; specifically, debates between elites over what public *délires* to authorize to resolve reproductive vulnerabilities.

**Hermeneutic puzzles:** generally, any aspect of being that demands understanding; specifically, any vulnerability that elites apprehend as needing fixing.

**Hermeneuts:** illuminati, educational or cultural elites who bring the messages of what elites desire to everybody else.

**Hermetic seal:** actors sealed into thinking and feeling X, and sealed out of thinking and feeling not-X.

**Ideology:** large systems of cultural information that is normally contested; e.g., there are conservative and liberal ideologies.

**Imperial handlers:** core elites who manage the administration of client states. Security elites are a form of imperial handler.

**Imperialism:** the reproduction of empires, with elites doing whatever it takes to keep them going (simple reproduction) and, when possible, to grow them (extended reproduction).

**Informal:** describes a group whose procedural culture is not entirely explicit (not completely standardized, not written)

**Institutions:** co-occurring, interrelated practices.

**Instruments:** A type of force resource consisting of things—both material (e.g., machines) and immaterial (e.g., capital)—used by actors in exercises of force.

**Intensification:** movement of a contradiction toward its limits.

**I-Space:** structures internal to humans.

**Iteration:** a specific fix, or a number of different fixes, of a reproductive vulnerability.

**Land:** a type of force resource; raw materials.

**Limit:** the point at which an action or social form can go no further.

**Logics:** abstract accounts of the powers of strings.

—, **multiple:** logics of institutions or systems operating to produce more than one power.

—, **hierarchical:** where some logics need to occur for other logics to occur.

— **of disorder:** logics directed toward the limit of contradictions

— **of social constitution:** logics directed toward the fixing of reproductive vulnerabilities.

**Open:** describes the power of social forms to connect with other forms, including natural structures.

**Operations:** strings and practices authorized by actors in formal institutions.

**Play of forces:** the contradiction between the logics of disorder and social constitution.

**Power:** any outcome or effect of an exercise of forces.

—, **intended:** effect that was premeditated by actors.

—, **unintended:** unpremeditated effects.

—, **extensiveness:** the number of actors a particular actor has power over.

—, **density:** the number of power actors have over other actors.

**Practices:** a number of individual action strings choreographed together to do something.

**Public *délires*:** elites' resolution of their desires to solve their weaknesses that takes the form of authorizing solutions to these vulnerabilities (in laws, decrees, etc..) Public *délires*, once authorized, serve as a means of interpretation by which elites decide what is and what to do about it.

**Reflexive:** describes the power of actors in social beings to reflect upon events and alter actions and practices to strengthen reproduction and maintain autopoiesis, the reflection being both cognitive and emotional; i.e., actors think about and feel effects of being.

**Regions, macro-:** notions referring to structural characteristics of entire social beings.

—, **meso-:** notions referring to actors operating within social beings.

—, **micro-:** notions referring to structures within actors that operate on the actors, who operate in their social being.

**Relaxation:** movement of a contradiction away from its limits.



**Reproduction:** generally, the re-creation of form; specifically, the re-creation of social forms.

—, **simple:** re-creation of form with no growth; value extracted by elites at subsequent times roughly equal to that at antecedent ones.

—, **extended:** re-creation of form with growth; value extracted by elites at subsequent times exceeds that at antecedent times.

**Reproductive fix:** the relaxing of contradictions

**Reproductive vulnerability:** situations where contradictions have moved toward limits, possibly causing reproductive problems.

**Shultzian Permission:** the granting by security elites of consent to exercise violent force to fix vulnerabilities once they believe nonviolent fixes have failed.

**Shape-shifting:** transformation of social form.

**Social constitution:** transformation of hermeneutics into public *délires*, whose implementation results in social forms.

**Social form:** any structural unit in human being: practices, institutions, systems, social beings.

**Social reflexivity:** how humans achieve autopoiesis by solving hermeneutic puzzles during hermeneutic politics that results in public *délires*.

**String:** a series of events where cultural messages have choreographed force resources to make the events occur.

**Systems:** actions articulated into practices that are part of institutions connected with other institutions.

**Tasks:** strings and practices occurring in informal institutions.

**Technical culture:** learned and shared information about how to achieve certain powers. E.g., recipes are part of the technical culture of cooking, which is about making the power of different dishes to eat.

**Tenet's Tenet:** the tendency of actors in similar positions to have similar desires and positional cultures

**Windows of authority:** the different situations in which an actor has the right to exercise force resources.

**Worldview:** resembles Gramsci's notion of hegemony. Pertains to large systems of cultural information where much of the information is taken for granted, not contested; for example, the idea in Western culture that there are men and women in the world. Worldviews move toward ideologies when their information becomes contested. In the past it was believed women should marry only men. Now this view has become contested and is part of ideologies for or against homosexuality.

## ABBREVIATIONS

- ACOTA** Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance  
**ACRI** African Crisis Response Initiative  
**AIOC** Anglo Iranian Oil Company (which would become British Petroleum)  
**AMBO** Albanian Macedonian Bulgarian Oil Corporation  
**AOPIG** African Oil Policy Initiative Group  
**AQAP** al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula  
**BP** British Petroleum (began as the Anglo Iranian Oil Company)  
**CENTO** Central Treaty Organization  
**COIN** Counterinsurgency warfare  
**COMECON** Council for Mutual Economic Assistance  
**CPA** Coalition Provisional Authority  
**CPC** Chinese Communist Party  
**CSI** Christian Solidarity International  
**CSNPD** Comité de Sursaut National pour la Paix et le Démocratie  
**DIA** Defense Intelligence Agency  
**DOI** CIA's Directorate of Intelligence  
**ELN** National Liberation Army  
**FAN** Forces Armées du Nord  
**FARC-EP** Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, Peoples' Army  
**FARF** Forces Armées pour le République Fédérale  
**FAT** Forces Armées Tchadiennes  
**FATA** Federally Administered Tribal Areas  
**Fedecámaras** Federation of Chambers of Commerce—Venezuela  
**FON** freedom of navigation  
**FROLINAT** Front de Libération Nationale du Tchad  
**FUC** United Front for Democratic Change  
**GCC** Gulf Cooperation Council  
**GWOT** global war against terrorism

**H&K** Hill and Knowlton Strategies  
**HSM** Holy Spirit Movement  
**ICU** Islamic Courts Union  
**IDF** Israel Defense Force  
**INC** Iraqi National Congress  
**IPC** Iraqi Petroleum Company  
**IPCC** Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change  
**ISAF** International Security Assistance Force  
**ISG** Iraq Study Group  
**ISI** Inter-Services Intelligence  
**ISIL** Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant  
**JFK** John F. Kennedy  
**JSOC** Joint Special Operations Command  
**JSOTF-P** Joint Special Operations Task-Force Philippines  
**KLA** Kosovo Liberation Army  
**KMT** Chinese Nationalist Party—Kuomintang  
**LRA** Lord’s Resistance Army  
**MILF** Moro Islamic Liberation Front  
**MNF-I** Multi-National Force—Iraq  
**MNSTC-I** Multinational Security Transition Command—Iraq  
**NAS** National Academy of Sciences  
**NATO** North Atlantic Treaty Organization  
**NED** National Endowment for Democracy  
**NFAC** National Foreign Assessment Center  
**NFSL** National Front for Salvation of Libya  
**NLA** National Liberation Army  
**NGOs** Nongovernmental organizations  
**NIE** National Intelligence Estimate  
**NSA** National Security Advisor  
**NSC** National Security Council  
**NSDD** National Security Decision Directive  
**NVA** North Vietnamese Army  
**NWG** Nationalities Working Group  
**OECD** Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development  
**OIG** Office of the Inspector General  
**OPEC** Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries  
**OPS** Office of Special Plans  
**OSS** Office of Strategic Services  
**PD** Presidential Directive  
**PFLP** Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine  
**PLF** Palestine Liberation Front

**PLO** Palestine Liberation Organization  
**PMGW** “Pseudo-Maoist guerrilla warfare with a wallop”  
**PNAC** Project for the New American Century  
**PRC** Policy Review Committee  
**PSA** Production sharing agreement  
**R2P** Responsibility to protect  
**RAD** Rebuilding America’s Defenses  
**RDJTF** Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force  
**RFC** Rally of Democratic Forces  
**RMA** “Revolution in military affairs”  
**ROK** Republic of South Korea  
**SAM** Surface-to-air missile  
**SAS** Strategic Air Services  
**SCC** Special Coordination Committee  
**SDI** Strategic Defense Initiative {“star wars”}  
**SLA** South Lebanon Army  
**SNIE** Special National Intelligence Estimate  
**SOFA** Status of Force Agreement  
**SPC** Special Police Commando  
**SPLA** Sudanese People’s Liberation Movement  
**TAPI** Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India (oil/gas pipeline)  
**TARP** Troubled Asset Relief Program  
**TFG** Transitional Federal Government (Somalia)  
**TR** Theodore Roosevelt  
**TSCT** Trans-Saharan Counter Terrorism Initiative  
**UFC** United Fruit Company  
**UFDD** Union of Forces for Democracy and Development  
**UN** United Nations  
**UNEP** United Nations Environment Program  
**UNFCCC** United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change  
**UNITAF** UN-Unified Task Force  
**UNOCAL** Union Oil of California  
**UNOSOM** United Nations Operations in Somalia  
**UNSC** United Nations Security Council  
**UNSCOM** United Nations Special Commission  
**UPDA** Uganda People’s Democratic Army  
**UPDF** Uganda People’s Democratic Force  
**USAID** US Agency for International Development  
**USSR** United Soviet Socialist Republic  
**VC** Viet Cong  
**WHIG** White House Iraq Group  
**WMDs** Weapons of mass destruction

## INTRODUCTION

A peregrination is a lengthy journey, often slogged on foot. *Deadly Contradictions* is such a journey—a walkabout with a Rousseauian purpose, to understand other worlds to better “know our own.” Moreover, the voyage is conducted to help solve two mysteries. The first of these is a murder whodunit. The United States is a Great Power, one the *New York Times* has judged to be “the most powerful country ever” (Herbert 2011). Since the end of World War II American greatness has repeatedly involved the exercise of violent force; which is a way of saying the US has often gone to war in other countries and in so doing has killed many. So a first mystery to be explored is: Why has the US killed so many people in war?

The second, more general and abstract mystery derives from the intellectual infrastructure erected to address the first. To investigate why the US has killed so many in its wars, it was necessary to develop a theory of the particular being that is the US, in all its martial finery. The theory advanced is one of global warring in empires. However, this theory was itself dependent upon formulation of a research framework concerning how in general to analyze human being. This framework is critical structural realism. The second mystery, then, is the puzzle of human being: what it is, how it works or does not. Critical structural realism and its application in global warring theory suggest a solution to this second mystery. Readers, consider yourselves the very best sort of intellectual tourists on an expedition to solve two mysteries. Consider me your humble guide.

### Empires and Modernity

Before describing this journey, I will indulge an aside about why empires, imperialism, and modernity play roles in *Deadly Contradictions*. Dana Priest reports that Donald Rumsfeld, when he was George W. Bush’s defense secretary, commissioned a “private study of great empires” (Priest 2004: 30).

The study was completed just prior to the US invasion of Iraq. Secretary Rumsfeld's intentions in ordering the study are unclear. Perhaps he and his subalterns were curious about how other empires worked and how the US compared to them.

A vast number of attempts to understand imperial social forms had been made prior to Secretary Rumsfeld's, beginning in Enlightenment times with Edward Gibbons's *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776). Demandt (1984) recorded 210 theories to explain Rome's fall alone. Since 9/11 and the US occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan, a deluge of books and articles have debated American imperialism.<sup>1</sup> Why another text focusing on empires and imperialism?

Throughout the twentieth century, from Hobson (1902) to Lenin (1917) to Harvey (2003), scholarly attention has emphasized the economics of imperialism—and usefully so, because empire and economic accumulation *are* conjoined. But, as the pages of this text will demonstrate, empires and imperialism have equally involved the violence of war, and have done so for a very long time. *Deadly Contradictions* argues that imperial social forms have been extremely important since deep in antiquity, and addresses an intellectual black hole in their study by giving the gore of war a theoretical place.

Consider, next, modernity. While debates about modernity may not be as old as those concerning imperialism; they are extensive, often vituperative, and lacking in common sense, with this phrase used in a Peircian manner (Peirce 1955: 290–301); meaning that there is little 'sense' among knowledgeable folk about what modernity might be. Two strands in modernity debates stand out: the first concerns what modernity *is* and, second, whatever it is, has it already passed. Some regard the "is" of modernity as a cultural or a conceptual notion. Jonathan Friedman (2008: 9), for example, considers modernity "the cultural field of commercial capitalism." I prefer not to view modernity as a cultural phenomenon associated with social forms. Rather, it is the reverse: social forms that may be associated with certain cultural systems. So framed, "modernity" is a time whose regnant social forms are capitalist ones articulated by governments within imperial state structures, plus the cultural notions associated with these structures. Modernity has a beginning: around AD 1410 and the Portuguese conquest of Ceuta in Morocco, when the rise of European capitalist and governmental institutions began. In this optic modernity is European in origin, though rapidly spreading to those regarded as others by Europeans. Actually, Chapter 2 will argue that modernity retains an organizational design from antiquity.

If modernity has a beginning, does it have an end? Here is where post-modernists come in. For them, modernity passed like a kidney stone from the body politic into oblivion somewhere around 1979, the year of publica-

tion of Francois Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*. It does not take very deep research to discover that capitalism and states are still very much with us. However, there is reason to believe that the postmodernists may have stumbled upon something, so one of the topics explored in *Deadly Contradictions* is whether these are end times for modernity. With the preceding noted, it is time to introduce a metaphor used throughout out the text.

Imagine the United States of America as a recent version of Hobbes's Leviathan. Hereafter, the trope "US Leviathan" will stand for the structure that is the US. Picture modernity as the seas in which the Leviathan swims. Give this seascape a melodramatic flourish by envisioning those seas as stormy because of contradictory waves sent roiling by the Leviathan's own prodigious force. Finally, add danger to the melodrama by visualizing the tempest as one that might overwhelm and drown the Leviathan, and with it other creatures of the sea of modernity. In this sense, the book's peregrination is an excursion from the highlands where the US Leviathan is theoretically modeled, to the sea, where it is observed sailing the turbulent waters of modernity. Next, readers, I provide the itinerary of your peregrination.

## The Itinerary

In the highlands, at the beginning of the theoretical section, chapter 1 formulates the text's approach to contemporary warfare. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first develops a critical structural realism; the second formulates global warring theory. The chapter's goal is to define the basic concepts of the approach and, in some cases, to reconceptualize them in order to better address the fact that humans are constantly in motion and that those motions occur on an extraordinarily complex, interconnected globe.<sup>2</sup>

I formally introduce the notion of the "social being" to replace concepts of society. The idea is that human social forms are not static structures, but open, reflexive, autopoietic beings in continual motion—now/here, then/there—and shape-shifters, changing their organization like the moving frames in a film. The US Leviathan is a trope of a variety of imperial social being. Social being dynamics are propelled by the interconnected macro-, meso-, and microregions of organization, which collaborate to produce motion. "Macro-regions" pertain to the entire social being; "meso-regions" to individual actors who operate the social being; and "micro-regions" to the structures within actors that operate the actors that operate the social being. Global warring theory is largely formulated on the basis of macro- and meso-concepts that explain the US Leviathan's dynamics.

Theories can be usefully thought of as structures composed of concepts exhibiting two parts: what is explained, the “explanandum”; and what does the explaining, the “explanans.” The explanans is connected with the explanandum because its concepts explain those in the explanandum. Recall the first mystery that *Deadly Contradictions* addresses: Why does the US war and kill so many people? The US Leviathan’s wars will be shown to be of a type termed global warring. The preceding means that the explanandum of global warring theory is a solution to the first mystery, and an answer to the question of why the US so frequently conducts global warring.

The explanans of the theory can be divided into two interrelated parts: one concerning the world actors find themselves in, and the other addressing how actors deal with this world. Thus, the first category of concepts applies in macro-regions. These notions are about the realities actors inhabit and include formulations of ideas about force, power, logic, strings, contradictions, and reproduction. This is because the actualities in which actors reside are those that need to be represented as structures of force and power, riven by contradiction and needing to reproduce. The second part of the explanans involves concepts in meso-regions that account for how actors act upon what is happening to them in their macro-realms. The terms employed here might be said to be those of a hermeneutics—not a literary hermeneutics like Clifford Geertz’s, but a pragmatic variety. The major notions are social reflexivity, hermeneutic puzzles and politics, and public *délires* (elite-instituted desire): actors confront hermeneutic puzzles of force, contradiction, and reproduction with social reflexivity that involves them in hermeneutic politics to create public *délires*.

The actors examined in *Deadly Contradictions* are in a special category of elites—those involved with security, who judge questions of war and peace. The concepts of the first part of the explanans are examined to explain the state of the structures of force and power in which US security elites find themselves. Those of the second part are examined to see how those actors, employing a pragmatic hermeneutics, act upon the structures of force and power in which they find themselves to, among other things, open the gates of global warring hell.

Chapter 2 takes the theoretical tools formulated in the previous chapter and applies them to theorizing imperial social beings. In imperial beings, which exercise different forms of economic and violent force, readers will discover shape-shifting things, Nietzschean “monsters of energy.” Having slogged through theoretical highland, the text’s narrative descends to empirical seas to explore the theory’s plausibility.

How might these seas be imagined? One way is to see them as oceans of space and time upon which human social forms sail. Different empirical space/time places are different seas, there being, very broadly, ancient,



medieval, and modern seas. Two seas are visited in chapters 3 through 10. The first is that of the US Leviathan, roughly from its beginning up to the middle of the twentieth century. Here readers learn of the development and nature of a New American Empire. The second area reconnoitered is the roiling seas of the latter half of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, when the New American Empire is seen in action doing its global warring. Chapter 3 examines the US from its beginnings until the last year of World War II to judge how long it has been an imperial social being. Chapter 4 investigates the five years from 1945 to 1950. The world in 1945 was one of daunting international disorder—old empires dying, America ascendant. This chapter details the actual institution of the New American Empire. Of course, it is not easy being an empire. In chapter 5 the argument travels to observe the disordering contradictions that have vexed the empire since World War II, provoking reproductive vulnerabilities and with them hermeneutic puzzles about how to plot an imperial course in turbulent seas. The chapter identifies two general types of political and economic contradictions provoking reproductive vulnerabilities.

The argument in the next five chapters travels to the violent places of US global warring. The discussion reveals the role of contradiction and reproductive vulnerabilities, showing how security elites wrestle with the hermeneutic puzzles and politics provoked by these vulnerabilities. The fighting considered is more than the conventional conflicts where the US overtly and directly sends troops into combat with enemies. The New American Empire has been a sly Leviathan, fighting covertly and indirectly by sending other countries' boys off to fight and die for it.

Chapter 6 examines US global warring between 1950 and 1974. The chapter includes an overview of the wars of this period, as well as five in-depth examinations of important deadly quarrels: the Korean War, the Iran Coup, the Guatemalan Coup, Cuba and the Bay of Pigs Invasion, and the Vietnam War. Chapter 7 analyzes US global warring from 1975 until 1989. It documents a time of change, especially in the contradictions troubling the empire. In light of these changing contradictions, the chapter investigates US global warring in Afghanistan at the time of the Soviet invasion; in the Iran-Iraq War through the 1980s; and in Libya, also in the 1980s.

Chapter 8 reports on a coalescing and intensification of contradictions facing the US Leviathan after 1990 that resulted in a perfect storm of contradiction. Chapters 9 and 10 document how US global warring, or preparation for such warring, spread after 1990 to become world warring in sixteen violent places in five theaters in the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa, Latin American, and the Pacific. For each case of hostilities, it is argued that imperial America sought to violently fix the vulnerabilities provoked by the storm of contradictions.

Finally, at journey's end, chapter 11 looks back to judge whether the perigrination has offered solutions to the two mysteries that were the reason for the trip in the first place.

## Time and Technique

The time analyzed in the book and the techniques used to study it deserve comment. Fernand Braudel, in his classic *The Mediterranean* ([1949] 1972), proposed that there have been different varieties of time that scholars can explore—specifically, three different “planes”: *la longue durée*, *l'histoire sociale*, and *l'histoire événementielle* (Braudel 1972: 20–21). The *longue durée* was “the slow unfolding of structural realities,” “whose passage is almost imperceptible” (Braudel 1972: 23, 20). *L'histoire sociale* was “the history of groups and groupings” (Braudel 1972: 20), whereas *l'histoire événementielle* was “brief, rapid, nervous fluctuations,” “individual time,” and the “history of events” (Braudel 1972: 21). Two sorts of criteria distinguished Braudel's temporal planes: they involved short or long time periods (i.e., *l'histoire événementielle* versus *la longue durée*); and the actors in the planes could be structures or individuals (i.e., *la longue durée* and *l'histoire sociale* versus *l'histoire événementielle*.) Two questions arise about this conceptualization. Why, if there were long and short temporal planes, was there no medium plane? And when was the object of study in temporal planes likely to be that of individuals, or likely to be that of structures?

To address these questions, one might suggest that history can be studied in terms of seas of space and time that may have short, medium, and long time-frames. “Short time-frames” very roughly correspond to Braudel's *l'histoire événementielle*. They are “moments” of time, occurring briefly, lasting from weeks to a few years. Ethnographers often work in such stretches. Scholars of the Manchester School—one thinks of Gluckman's (1958) fine study of the opening of a bridge in Zululand or Victor Turner's (1957) “social dramas”—were masters of short time-frame ethnographies. Individuals are easily observable in the moment. However, short time-frames are so short that it is difficult to observe structural trends.

“Medium time-frames” have no real Braudelian correspondence. They are periods of decades to a century or so that have within them different “moments.” They have normally been studied by historians or historically inclined social thinkers, and are long enough to allow structural trends to be distinguished, though generally not so long that the results of those trends can be known. Because structural trends are observable in medium time-frame studies, it is possible to analyze how individuals react to them. Even though Braudel did not conceptualize a medium time-frame, his

two-volume *The Mediterranean* is actually such a study of the time of King Philip II of Spain (1527–1598). Walter LaFeber’s *The New Empire* (1963) is a classic medium time-frame account of the rise of US capitalism and empire between 1860 and 1898; while Arthur Schlesinger’s *The Crisis of the Old Order* (1957) is an equally distinguished account of how that capitalism got into trouble between 1919 and 1933. All in all, studies over medium time-frames are “teasers,” in that they indicate the direction in which the story is going but do not actually reveal its ending because it has not yet occurred.

“Long time-frames” correspond approximately to Braudel’s *la longue durée* and *l’histoire sociale* (if observed over centuries). They extend over grand time periods—veritable spatiotemporal oceans—in which structural trends have begun, matured, and finished; and they are composed of the medium time-frames that are themselves composed of different moments in short time-frames. Long time-frame researches have typically been the domain of historians or archeologists. Nineteenth-century evolutionary anthropologists such as Lewis Henry Morgan (1877) and E.B. Tylor (1871), as well as mid-twentieth-century neo-evolutionists like Leslie White (1959) and Julian Steward (1963), conducted long time-frame researches. More recently, Eric Wolf’s (1982) *Europe and the People without History* and R. Brian Ferguson’s (1995) *Yanomami Warfare* each offer long time-frame narratives of the entire world and of that of the Yanomami during modernity. Long time-frame studies often emphasize structural change, as times are so great that individual actions become lost in a fog of the past. However, where individual data is still available it can be interesting to analyze individuals’ responses to structural transformation. Long time-frames can be a gratifying field of study because they contain the “end of the story” both for structures and the persons who compose them.

*Deadly Contradictions*, though it sketches the entire history of the American polity, is concentrated in a medium time-frame—the moments of the US Leviathan between 1945 and 2014. This period might be envisioned as part of the epoch of late modernity, and its examination might be thought of as providing clues as to how the story of modernity might end. Analysis begins in 1945 because a series of changes that were instituted that year transformed the Old into the New American Empire. It terminated in 2014, by which time President Obama had announced that US military strategy “will ... move away from large-scale ground warfare that has dominated the post-9/11 era” (Pilkington 2012), leaving many to wonder: what comes next?

Research for *Deadly Contradictions* was conducted partially through participant observation and primarily through examination of primary and secondary written material. Bronislaw Malinowski’s guidance as to what

constituted proper data analysis is helpful in grasping how both participant observation and written material were analyzed. In *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*, he insisted that “acceptable Ethnographic work” should consist of observations of “the totality of all social, cultural, and psychological aspects of the community” (1922: xvi). He wanted data on the “totality” of a community because its different parts were “so interwoven that one” cannot be “understood without taking into consideration all the others” (ibid.). This codification of the “acceptable” in fieldwork became the ethnographic standard, though different schools have gathered varying amounts of cultural and social information.

It is certainly important to know how things “fit together.” Of course, things that fit together are continually in motion in particular directions. Things change, and observationally ignoring this fact leads to epistemic holes. Knowledge of change requires data analysis that reveals what is connected with what else, but also discloses what came before in some space at some time, what will come subsequently in some space at some time, and how the subsequents and antecedents are connected. As much as possible, *Deadly Contradictions* has sought such analysis.

One sort of ethnographic experience has been very useful for the particular concerns of *Deadly Contradictions*. As a consultant for the United States Agency for International Development (1973–1993), I have known an assortment of US government officials—diplomats, soldiers, administrators. These mid-level operatives (who were mostly men) gave me a “feel” for the officials who man (and now woman) the ship of state.

Primary and secondary written information was gathered at libraries or from the Internet. The Internet has been a remarkable resource. First of all, it holds an extraordinary amount of material. It has allowed people who might otherwise have been voiceless to publish on the web, where it is globally available to almost everyone. Often their data is the most up-to-date account of events. Additionally, a surprising amount of material available online—some from formerly secret sources like the CIA—concerns the thoughts and actions of elites responsible for the US government and economy.

The cases of US global warring analyzed in the text are not derived from random sampling. Such sampling is currently not possible—first because so much US military intervention has been covert and is not known; and second because, as discussed later in the text, I do not believe the US military establishment actually knows how many hostilities it has engaged in. Thus, exactly what universe should be used as a basis for sampling remains unclear. However, the cases analyzed in the text are representative of the type of warring that occurred in each time period investigated.

Readers are no doubt aware that the material used to warrant the theoretical views in this text, and for that matter in any text, comes from people with particular biases, including myself. However, not all prejudices are equal. I am acutely aware that if the information supporting *Deadly Contradiction's* arguments is tendentious, then its conclusions will be rejected. One of my biases, then, is to base arguments as much as possible on evidence that is as reliable as possible. Certain areas discussed, especially those concerning recent hostilities like those in Iraq or Syria, are emotional minefields of conflicting opinion and hidden action. Given this actuality, I have sought whenever possible to make information bias known and to express any opposing views. It is time to begin the peregrination by climbing to the theoretical highlands to build a critical structural realism and global warring theory.

## Notes

1. Harvey (2003: 225–226) provides references to literature concerning contemporary imperialism.

2. *Deadly Contradictions'* concepts are abstract and general and, consequently, sometimes hard to fathom. My rhetorical mentor has been the early novelist Daniel Defoe, who encouraged a "plain style." A glossary of important terms is included in this volume. When concepts are first defined they are placed in quotation marks.



PART I

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# THEORY





# GLOBAL WARRING THEORY

## *A Critical Structural Realist Approach*

A traveler on a journey needs a map to tell her or him where to go. A scientific traveler's map is a theory, which tells her or him where to go to find the evidence that supports the theory. Of course, mapmakers know there are different methods of making maps, just as theoreticians recognize diverse approaches (paradigms or problematics) for constructing theories. This chapter has two parts. The first presents critical structural realism, an approach to formulating theory. The second then applies this approach to construct global warring theory, which accounts for the New American Empire's propensity for belligerence. Crucial to the chapter's intellectual work is the conceptualization of human being in terms of structure and contradiction, with these latter terms reconceptualized in terms of force and power.

### Critical Structural Realism

In the early 1970s, Clifford Geertz (1973: 20) suggested that the heart of anthropology should be "ethnographic description." Actually, anthropological research had utilized such description since Franz Boas, though Boas was careful to encourage the use of other techniques, especially those permitting observation of vast areas over long times. US archeology originated for this reason. But by the mid 1980s, the influential *Writing Culture* crew (Clifford and Marcus 1986) had taken Geertz's suggestion to heart, banishing from the discipline anything that was not ethnographic and further decreeing, "Ethnographic writings can properly be called fictions" (1986: 6). Then, nearly two decades after the publication of *Writing Cul-*

ture, Marcus (2002: 3) noticed something alarming: ethnographies were “objects of aestheticism and often summary judgment and evaluation” that were “judged quickly,” used “to establish reputation, and, then ... often forgotten.” An intellectual discipline whose major production is “often forgotten” is itself in danger of extinction. In what follows, the goal is not to eliminate ethnography but to suggest an additional, more epistemically robust and ontologically macroscopic anthropology based upon critical structural realist foundations to help make anthropology less forgettable.

## Realism

Realism is to be distinguished from positivism. Positivism, which occurs in several varieties, is a philosophy of science that in Auguste Comte’s version holds theology and metaphysics to be imperfect epistemologies, compared to science. *Deadly Contradictions* takes no stand on positivism, though it hardly seems promising to insist theology or metaphysics is a more promising way of knowing reality than science. Realism is equally distinguished from idealism, which holds that being is “dependent upon the existence of some mind” (Fetzer and Almeder 1993: 65). Realism is the belief that reality, or being (the terms are used interchangeably), is ontologically independent of mind (cognitive structures, conceptual schemes, etc.). Scientific realism—supported by Leplin (1984), Niiniluoto (2002), Psillos (2005) and Sokal (2008)—is the view that science has reliable techniques for seeking truth, and that the being explained by scientific approximate truths is the real world, as far as it is knowable.<sup>1</sup>

Realism is of interest due to an ontological underpinning based upon the principle of sufficient reason (PSR). This principle is powerful, controversial, and ancient, with expressions in both non-Western and Western thought. PSR assumed its modern, Western form in the work of Spinoza and Leibnitz (Pruss 2006). It states: Everything must have a reason or cause. If ontology is the study of the nature of reality, then what makes the PSR powerful is its conceptual immensity. Everything—all being, all reality—must have a cause. What makes the principle controversial is that there can be complications in answering the imperative “Prove it.” My own support for the PSR comes from the still older principle that *ex nihilo, nihil fit* (from nothing, comes nothing). Reality is not a universe of nothing: it is full of somethings, and if somethings cannot come from nothing, they must have come from (i.e., be caused by) something else. This suggests that the nature of reality consists in vast structures of somethings connected by causality with other somethings, reaching through all places and all times in all universes. The task of scholars is to seek the approximate truth of this structure of causal couplings. *Deadly Contradictions* undertakes its journey

to explore the structuring of human being. Consider, now, the structure in critical structural realism.

### *Structure, Force, and Power*

It is universally allowed that matter, in all its operations, is actuated by a necessary force, and that every natural effect is so precisely determined by the energy of its cause that no other effect, in such particular circumstances, could possibly have resulted from it. (Hume [1739] 2003)

In the quotation above David Hume announced the view that material things, including people, are “actuated by a necessary force,” a “cause” that has its “effect.” Actually, the Enlightenment-era Hume (1711–1776) was restating the older view of Hobbes (1588–1679; in Champlain 1971) that human power can be understood as the operation of causality. Understanding power as causality is a useful way to rethink structuralism as a method for analyzing structures as phenomena that are always in motion, always dynamic.<sup>2</sup> Let us turn to a French Mandarin of structuralism in order to formulate this reconceptualization.

As the structural Marxist mandarin Louis Althusser (1970: 36; emphasis in original) put it, “*The real*: it is structured,” in the sense that being, including human being, exhibits parts in some relationship to some other parts. This is a realist position. The objects of study in such an ontology are the realities of different sorts of structures. The structures I am interested in are not those imagined by the 1940–1960s French structuralists that, except in the work of the structural Marxists, ultimately concerned structures of the mind.<sup>3</sup>

Instead, critical structural realism studies “human being.” What is such being? Consider the following event, which took place in the American West but could have happened anywhere. An elderly couple who had been married for more than a half century pulled out of a store’s parking lot onto a heavily traveled road. The husband, the driver, did not see that a car was bearing down upon them, and there was a collision. When help arrived at the scene, they found the dying couple holding hands. In all places and in all times, that is what humans do. They hold hands, which is a trope for making connections. In this optic, a connection is doing something together, even if, as in the case of the elderly couple, it is the last thing they do.

“Human being” is a sector of reality—that of humanity, where humans reach out to connect with others. Structures are connected parts. They may be small and intimate—a dying couple reaching out to hold each other’s hands—or vast and impersonal, like transnational corporations’ thrusting of their hands into profit-making in all corners of the globe. In

this reality of human being it is force that has the power to make connection. Force and power are discussed at greater length below; for the moment, understand “reaching out” as the force that has the effect—the power—of “holding hands,” and consider the sorts of connections humans make.

A “social form” is any organization of connections in human being. It is heuristically understood to include practices, institutions, systems, and social beings. Persons using their force to do things in some sequence will be termed “actors” with regard to the things they do, the powers they create. Actors are the atomic parts of social forms. Actors in motion interacting with other actors, doing things, achieving particular forces and powers, will be understood as “practices” (as in surgical or dental practices). “Institutions” are co-occurring, interrelated practices (as in the institution of medicine). “Systems” are actions articulated into practices that are part of institutions connected with other institutions (as in political or economic systems). “Social beings” are the most complex forms of human being. They are articulated systems, whose connections may be within or between state social forms..

The different social forms in human being are generally “open” in that, in some way and at certain times, they interact with other structural units in human being, as well as animate and inanimate structures beyond it. They are also generally “autopoetic” in the sense that they are capable of reproducing and maintaining the social being. Finally, they are “reflexive,” that is, capable of reflecting upon events and altering actions and practices in accord with the information provided by reflection, to effect reproduction.<sup>4</sup> Human reflexivity is social, a point developed further later in the chapter.

*Agency:* Human actors and the structures they operate exhibit agency, here understood as a particular human faculty that attains power. Power is discussed more fully later; it can be provisionally understood here as outcomes, things done. Human power structures are composed of material things: people, living objects, and nonliving objects. A rock is a thing. In the absence of people it just sits there. Rocks do not plan what to do with themselves—to pop in on Granny, or do some shopping. People plan. They scheme—as in, “Let’s throw that rock!”—because they have a type of structure (the brains) that allows them to do this. Things like rocks lack brains and are plotless. Plotting is people’s use of the brain in order to use other materialities—people and things—to do something, that is, to have powers. Reality consists of things with brains and things without them, and it is useful to conceptualize their differences. Agency, a term whose function is to clarify this difference, is the use of the brain to combine different

material objects and humans to create a force that leads to an outcome, a power. Brainless objects lack agency.<sup>5</sup>

Bruno Latour insists that “Objects Too Have Agency” (2005: 63); for him, the domain of objects includes nonliving physical ones. Objectively, this is questionable (at least regarding the nonliving physical objects): by giving such objects agency Latour conflates them with people, obscuring that humans have brains and can plot, whereas nonliving objects lack brains and cannot. A conceptualization of being that eliminates existing difference is not especially accurate. Critically, Latour confuses influence with agency. “Influence” is a more general term; it is any force that can have, or contribute to having, an outcome. Agency is a particular type of influence: force that involves human plotting to achieve its power.

Humans use their agency in choreographing regular and repeated relationships with other people and things. The key term “choreographing” is generalized from its meaning in dance to denote the designing of sequences of movements in which motion of objects, including human objects, is specified in time and space. For example, first I pick up the stone, then I throw it. My relationship to the stone is a structure consisting of two parts (me and my stone) and might be thought of as a force that has an outcome: the power of a stone thrown. Now imagine that I am in some occupied territory amongst oppressed people. Somebody says, “Throw stones at the police.” When this is communicated from one brain to the others, a larger structure and force is created, that of a number of people practicing stoning the police. Objectively put, “agency” is working of human brains to choreograph other actors and their objects together in different spaces, doing different things at different times to achieve some force with some power. Human agency so understood is a condition of human being.

*E-Space, I-Space, and Hobbes:* In this ontology of human being composed of power structures, there are two structural domains: one based upon structures found in “E-space” (often termed the objective), including structures human and otherwise *external* to persons; and the other found in structures observed in “I-space” (alternatively the subjective) including biological forms *internal* to individuals, importantly the nervous system (Reyna 2002a). Though E- and I-space are indeed two structural domains, these domains are something of a monad. This is true because the brain is in the body and the body is out and about in the external world of social forms.

Component structures in this monad can be represented by conceptualization of empirical and theoretical realms of analysis. At the “empirical” level, structural realities are described in terms of what is observed to happen, when in time, and where in space. For example, it might be perceived that in the summer a builder bought two tons of cement, a ton of bricks,

and three workers working forty days to construct a house he sold at three hundred thousand dollars in the fall. At the “theoretical” level, more general and abstract terms should be induced or deduced from happenings observed on the concrete level. One way this can be done with the previous example is to recognize more abstractly that the builder’s action can be explained in terms of capital and labor investments made to achieve a profit. Concepts regarding large amounts of space and time in E-space of an entire social being are macro-regions; those representing individual actors within a social being are meso-regions, and ones concerning what happens within individuals’ I-space represent micro-regions. *Deadly Contradictions* is largely interested in how macro-and meso-regions influence each other.

E- and I-space monads are organizations of force and power. Now it is time to bring Hume’s predecessor, Thomas Hobbes, more fully into the picture to present his view of power (Reyna 2001, 2003b). Hobbes (1651) saw power as the flow of causality in reality, with causes being forces having the capacity to produce effects, powers. An important rejection of such an approach is said to come from postmodernists, many of whom discard causality (Rosenau 1992). However, this was not the case for Michel Foucault, who broke away from Althusser to become essential in creating postmodernism. He claimed in 1975 that “in fact, power produces” and that among other things, “it produces reality” ([1975] 1991: 194). If something produces something else, then it can be said to cause it; and power, in Foucault’s view, “produces” something vast, “reality.” Foucault’s position was shared by the philosopher of science Wesley Salmon (1998: 298), for whom causal events “are the means by which structure and order are propagated ... from one space-time region ... to other times and places.”

Thus, reality is structured (according to Althusser). The structuring is the work of causality (according to Hobbes, Hume, Foucault, and Salmon). Earlier (Reyna 2002a), I argued that in this ontology relationships can be established between cause/effect and force/power. Force (cause) in an antecedent time and space has power (effect) in a subsequent time and space. This is a first property of causality, one that Hume long ago called “constant conjunction” (1739: 657). How is constant conjunction possible? One answer is that what connects cause to effect is something that intervenes between them and has the effect of “producing” (Bunge 1959: 46–48) the conjunction. The ontological significance of the preceding warrants further examination of force and power.

### *Force*

Force, as I use the term, is not necessarily solely physical coercion or violence; rather, it is employed in a more general sense, as cause. But cause, as

I here imagine it, contains within itself those materialities that do the “producing” of conjunction, connecting antecedent causes with subsequent effects.<sup>6</sup> These materialities are “force resources”: in causes what connects with effects. There are five varieties of resources whose utilizations are “exercises of force.” The first involves “instruments”—tools, monies (capital), technologies, and so on—things individuals have devised that, when used, make things happen. The second force resource is “land,” the raw materials that people use when they make things happen. A third force resource is “actors,” individuals performing practical or discursive action. “Discursive” action is use of the body to write or speak. “Practical” action is use of the body, usually with tools, to get something done. Labor, of course, has been a particularly important sort of practical action in economic groups. Actors using instruments on land can make things happen, if they have the fourth and fifth force resources, that is, cultural and authoritative resources, which are discussed next.

### *Culture and Hermeneutic Puzzles*

“Culture,” a fourth force resource, involves signs of the times learned and shared by people. Such signs are representations of being, or representations of representations that may or may not be about being. Humans lacking culture may experience reality but they don’t know it, and what they do not know they cannot communicate to others. Consider, for example, the case of Sarah Palin, the 2008 Republican Vice-Presidential candidate. On one occasion in the 2008 campaign,

members of her traveling party met Palin at the Ritz-Carlton near Reagan airport, in Pentagon City, Virginia—and found that, although she’d made some progress with her memorization and studies, her grasp of rudimentary facts and concepts was minimal. Palin couldn’t explain why North and South Korea were separate nations. She didn’t know what the Fed did. Asked who attacked America on 9/11, she suggested several times that it was Saddam Hussein. And asked to identify the enemy that her son would be fighting in Iraq, she drew a blank. (R. Adams 2010)

The purpose of this example is not to deride Ms. Palin (many people are ignorant of lots of cultural information), but to recognize that she did not know important aspects of her culture—for example, what the Fed (the most important financial institution in the US) does, or who attacked on 9/11 (it being difficult to oppose an enemy if you do not know who it is). The problem with not knowing one’s culture, or parts of it, is that one does not have information about being—of what is or what to do about it.

A distinction (Reyna 2002a) has been made between “neuronal” (I-space) and “discursive” (E-space) culture: the former is “enculturated”

(some now prefer “embodied”), that is, learned and stored in cortical memory networks; and the latter externalized, contained in speech or writing. Further, “perceptual” is distinct from “procedural” forms of neuronal and discursive culture, the former being information about *what is* and the latter being information about *what to do about it*. Cultural signs are assembled to provide information that contains messages. Cultural messages contain both perceptual and procedural cultural meaning, and may be widespread and enduring, or restricted and fleeting in populations. In the Trobriands, the interpretation of a certain necklace as a *soulava* was a perceptual cultural message; giving it away in the *kula* for a *mwali* armband was a procedural cultural message. In the US, a diagnosis is a perceptual message; a treatment is a procedural one. The term desire needs to be introduced because it is closely related to culture.

In Shakespeare’s *Much Ado About Nothing*, a comedy of errors whose protagonists get swept away by their feelings, Benedick, one of the play’s main characters, explains: “for man is but a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion” (1623). Right on, Benedick! Humans are not rational but giddy, for a neuroscientific reason.<sup>7</sup> The invention of functional magnetic resonance imaging enabled observation of the interconnection between cognition and emotion. Damasio (1994) and Rolls (2013) provide an introduction to research on this topic. Two conclusions might be drawn from it. The first is that human behavior does not arise solely from the neural networks that perform inductive or deductive calculation: emotional networks are always there too. Accordingly, “cognition and emotion are effectively *integrated* in the brain” (Pessoa 2009). This means that what a person intends to do is associated with some affect about doing it. Action, in this sense, is not so much rational as giddy. I term this flow along neuronal networks of cognition and affect “desire” (Reyna 2002a).<sup>8</sup> Elsewhere I have termed the particular structure of neuronal networks that produce desire and action a “cultural neurohermeneutic system” (Reyna 2002a, 2006, 2012, 2014).

Because humans are subject to desire, they do not so much “make decisions” as go with the flow. This is because actions are the result of the flow in the cultural neurohermeneutic system of affective and cognitive information along neural and hormonal networks that eventually stream into the motor cortex, whose transmissions move body parts, thereby making actions. Such transmissions, I believe, are accurately depicted as a giddy flow of desire. Consequently, perceptual and procedural culture normally tells you not only what is, but what you feel about it. See a big, furry thing, perceive it as a “lion”; proceed to run away, feeling really scared. Cultural hermeneutics, in this sense, does not understand only the perceptual and procedural meanings of cultural terms, but equally their affective valence. Consider, next, different varieties of cultural messages.



*Three Types of Cultural Messages:* Heuristically, three sorts of messages can be identified: technical, ideological, and world-view. These are distinct in terms of their scope, the social positions of those holding them, the combination of perceptual and procedural cultural messages they contain, the desires these nurture, and the degree to which their messages are likely to be contested or taken for granted. “Technical” messages typically have the lowest scope—that is, they are likely to concern the smallest realms of being, to be held by relatively few actors in small-sized groups; to contain more procedural messages; and not to be taken for granted. Examples of technical messages are administrative procedures of businesses or government; knowledge about how to perform technical processes (a barber’s knowledge of how to cut hair or a surgeon’s knowledge of how to cut bodies). Systems of law tend to be technical messages of broad scope in state systems. Technical messages might be thought of as the largely procedural messages of people in different social positions, be they barbers, surgeons, or lawyers. Actors responsible for implementing technical messages generally desire to do so. Otherwise they know they might make terrible mistakes about which they would feel bad.

“Ideological” messages are those of particular social positions in a population, advocating particular views that they desire to be widely accepted. Ideologies tend to have both metaphysical and epistemological elements; that is, notions about the nature of what is and of how to know what is. These elements tend to set actors’ desires by specifying values, what is good and bad. Certain nationalist ideologies value “my country, right or wrong,” so the adherents of such an ideology desire to support a country no matter what it does. Particular ideological messages may vary in their scope and in the number of groups espousing them. The anti-abortion ideology is of relatively limited scope, as its message is limited to the undesirability of abortion. However, it is an ideology favored by those in a fair number of social positions, at least in the US. Meanwhile, Marxism, an ideology with a vast scope including messages about the nature of natural being, economics, and politics, is favored by relatively few, in a small number of social positions, in the US. Anti-abortionists believe abortion is an evil, and feel really bad about women who have abortions. Ideological messages are likely to be contested. Pro-abortionists think anti-abortionists are misguided; neoconservatives are apoplectic about Marxism.

“World view” (or what some might term cultural hegemonic) messages are those of the broadest scope. Like ideologies, they tend to make ontological and epistemological claims. They are widely shared by groups in different social positions. They may specify procedural detail, but are very much about broad perceptual features of being, especially understanding of the nature of that being. The sociologist C. Wright Mills (1956: 222),

for example, speaking of the 1950s, insisted there was a “military metaphysic”—a “cast of mind that defines international reality as basically military”—that was widespread among powerful Americans. “Metaphysic” is an older term for “ontology”; hence Mills was advocating that a “military ontology” was the basis of the mid twentieth-century US world view, at least among those in powerful positions.

Equally, world views are concerned to stipulate what is valuable in a social form and should constitute its desires, as well as specify the reverse. In the American military world view, being is about winning and losing, you desire to win, and winning is a martial matter. World view messages often have powerful emotional meaning. For example, Americans with the military world view feel terrible about planning not to win a war. Often, though not invariably, world view messages are so strongly believed that they are taken for granted. For example, every modernist knows there are “people” and “animals” in the world. However, the Mundurucu, a people of Brazil’s Xingu River Basin described by Robert Murphy, had a different world view. Mundurucu believed there were “Mundurucu” and “*pariwat*”—huntable creatures, including animals as well as other humans who were not Mundurucu (Murphy 1960). It should be understood that the boundary between large ideologies and world views is not entirely clear. Are science and liberalism ideologies, or are they world views?

Finally, social forms seeking widespread powers in social beings possess and propagate world views and/or ideologies favorable to their positional cultures. For example, I will show how certain powerful actors used the economic crises that started in the 1970s to formulate a neoliberal ideology whose perceptual and procedural cultural messages influenced people in various social positions to perceive and act on these crises in ways that contributed to the economic power of actors in the position of financial elites (Duménil and Lévy 2004: 17). Five cautions need to be recognized concerning these different types of cultural messages.

*The Five Cautions:* First, the messages in technical, ideological, and world-view culture are not invariably consistent. For example, liberal ideologists believe capitalism and equality are great values to strive for, even though capitalism, by its very nature, is a system of inequality. Many with an American world view believe they are fighting for peace, which if not moronic is oxymoronic. Second, different cultural messages are not equally shared. Gynecologists know a lot more about women’s genitalia than do mathematicians specializing in Boolean algebra. Third, cultural messages are not immutable forms of cognitive and affective information. Rather, they are variable. For example, the term “reform” sent a progressive ideological message in the state of Wisconsin in the early twentieth century, when

“Fighting Bob” La Follette was the Republican governor (1901–1906). In the early twenty-first century, the Republican governor of Wisconsin, Scott Walker, was using the same term to send a reactionary, anti-union message.

Fourth, within their I-space people may enculturate cultural messages hailing from different social beings. For example, in Chad some individuals with whom I was acquainted had incorporated a fair amount of a particular Islamic brotherhood. However, at the same time they retained views about witchcraft that originated not in Islam, but from different African groups. Further, in their attire they adhered closely to French messages about what was *à la mode*. Dressed like Parisians, they were orthodox Tidjaniya who held African ideas about sorcery. These people were hybrids, and the attaching of different peoples’ cultural messages in the neuronal culture in a particular groups has come to be termed “hybridity” (Canclini 1995). Some have argued that hybridity is a “cultural logic” of current globalization (Kraidy 2005). I suspect some hybridity is, and has been, widespread in all populations.

Fifth, and most significantly, many people believe their cultural messages to be true. Some anthropologists have even been heard to insist: “If a people believe some cultural item to be true, then it is true.” This oversimplifies matters. Thinking something is true does not make it true. Some cultural information may be true, but other information may be untrue regardless of what the culture bearers happen to think about it. Among Malinowski’s Trobrianders, for example, a *tokwaybagula* was a good farmer, and farmers who worked hard and tilled lots of land were awarded this title (1922: 60–61). Trobrianders also believed that in the development of a newborn, “it is solely and exclusively the mother who builds up the child’s body, the man in no way contributing to its formation” (1929: 3), which ignores the role of the father’s DNA during gestation. Franz Boas, especially through his study of race, made the analysis of the truth of cultural truths a central practice of cultural anthropology.<sup>9</sup> Finally, what is so significant about cultural messages?

Culture is about force. Sending cultural messages is the sine qua non of the choreographing of force resources. This act communicates information concerning what to do about what is from certain actors using their discursive culture, to other actors’ neuronal culture in their I-space. Of course, “what is” are other force resources of action and tools. Cultural messages specify who the actors are, what their tools are, and how to use them, in particular exercises of force. A Chadian Arab sees a *fil* approaching. He yells to a bunch of children, “Fil fi! Jara, jara!” (There is an elephant! Run, run!). *Fil* is the perceptual culture (an elephant); *jara* the procedure (run). Communication of the Arab’s message, “Fil fi! Jara, jara!” choreographs the children’s action, giving the man agency to have the power of making the children run. This example may help to distinguish between the chore-

ography and exercising of force. Transmission of the cultural message is the choreographing of force. The Arab, his choreographing, the children running from one place at an earlier time to another place at a later time—this is the exercise of force. Without cultural force, the other force resources cannot be used. But without the other force resources, cultural force is just babbling in the wind. The contention that cultural messages make choreography of force resources possible raises an additional question: How is it that actors actually come to do their choreography?

One clue to answering this question is to recall Job. Old Testament Job suffered a series of disasters, horrendous puzzles to which he sought understanding. Life out in E-space throws problems at everybody, creating series of puzzles that need solving. Hermeneutics is often considered the interpretation of the meaning of texts, widely defined as everything from comic books to what happens to people. Earlier I have indicated that I take a cultural neurohermeneutic approach to hermeneutics, where what is at issue is not the meaning of texts but how the brain solves the puzzles thrown at it by specifying what is happening, how it feels, and what to do about it. “Hermeneutic puzzles” are the brain figuring out how to solve the problems thrown at it.

To illustrate, consider a hypothetical example. John Ondawain, an actor in decline, is ambling down a street in Barcelona, humming to himself: “The rain in Spain falls mainly on the plain.” John is ideologically a vegetarian. He sees Juan’s Steak House and Conchita’s Vegan Paradise, and makes a perceptual cultural interpretation, “two restaurants.” At roughly the same time his stomach grumbles. He feels “hunger,” an emotional interpretation. These interpretations construct what is; and by doing so they create a puzzle: what to do about what is, or in this instance: Where to eat? To solve this puzzle, Mr. Ondawain turns to a hermeneutic.

A “hermeneutic” is a choreographic message from technical culture, ideology, world view, or—as will be elaborated later—a public *délire*. The choreographic message involves a “perceptual/procedural pair” that inform actors about “what is” and “what to do about it,” thereby forming a desire choreographing force resources in space and time. A hermeneutic is an artifact of analysis that is discovered when a research observer identifies a perceptual/procedural pair in, say, an ideology. In a vegetarian hermeneutic, an important perceptual pair is “perceive vegetarian restaurant/proceed to it.” Remarking Conchita’s restaurant, Mr. Ondawain, choreographed by his vegetarian hermeneutic, desires to enter Paradise. Actors choreograph actors and objects in space and time by solving hermeneutic puzzles. In sum, cultural messages help solve hermeneutic puzzles, thereby allowing choreography of other force resources to produce powers. It is time to discuss the fifth force resource.

*Authority:* “Authoritative” force resources are a particular type of cultural resource. They consist of the right, in some way institutionally granted, to choreograph specific force resources in specific perceived situations. For example, Henry VIII (1491–1547), the very model of a modern major monarch who is said to have executed 72,000 people during his reign (including two of his wives), noticed that the monasteries were corrupt (a perceptual cultural judgment). This posed a hermeneutic puzzle to Bluff King Hal, as he was called: What should be done about the monasteries? Henry authorized their “dissolution” (as king, one of his authoritative resources was the right to terminate institutions). This authorization choreographed a string of events implemented by Vicar-General Thomas Cromwell, occasionally with resort to violent force, which removed the monasteries from church ownership and placed them in private (aristocratic) hands, making Bluff King Hal an early-modern privatizer.

Authoritative resources are unequally distributed in contemporary populations. Many individuals possess few authoritative resources. A few possess such resources in vast abundance. The term “window of authority” denotes the quantity of force resources to be exercised in the number of situations allocated to an actor. Those with lots of authoritative resources possess “large” windows; those with little authority have “small” windows. Generally, the size of actors’ windows of authority relates positively to the level of their positions within an institution: the higher you are, the bigger your window. The window of authority held by a janitor in a bank’s positional basement is tiny, compared to that of its president up in the positional penthouse. Clearly, the larger an actor’s window of authority, the greater is that actor’s agency. Now consider the difference between constructive and violent force.

*Constructive and Violent Force:* Constructive and violent forces can be distinguished in terms of the powers created by force. “Violent” force resources are exercised to have the effect of breaking things, the broken things being human bodies and material objects. Different police and military institutions are the most common variety of violent force. Equally, force resources are sometimes exercised to have the effect of building things. This is “constructive” force. Enterprises that make goods and services, parliaments that make laws, and schools that make educated people are all examples of constructive force. It is tempting to imagine that destructive and constructive forces are completely opposed, but this is not invariably the case. The family that rears children (an exercise of constructive force) may raise them to be soldiers (who exercise violent force). Conversely, sometimes violent force is exercised so that constructive force can become possible. The thirteen British colonies in North America conducted an insurgency

against the English government (1776–1783), an exercise of violent force that made possible the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia (1787), an exercise of constructive force that resulted in the US constitution. It is time now to consider power.

### *Power*

Power is *any* effects or outcomes of exercises of force. The emphasis on “any” is deliberate. Certain renderings of power, famously Parsons’s (1963), emphasize goal attainment. Mann (1986: 6) adopted such an understanding when he said that “power is the ability to pursue and attain goals.” A goal is the intentional side of desire, and it is certainly true that actors exercise force intending to do something (i.e., attain goals). However, sometimes the something attained was unintended, and to ignore these somethings is to condemn a whole category of powers to analytic oblivion. “Intended” powers are effects that were premeditated by actors choreographing the forces that brought on the effects. “Unintended” powers are effects that were unplanned by the actors exercising the forces that brought on the effects. Wellington’s victory at Waterloo was an intended power; Napoleon’s defeat was bitterly unintended.

*Kinetic and Potential Powers:* It is useful to distinguish between the total power social forms may possess and the actual powers they achieve when exercising force. The “potential power” of a social form is the total powers it is hypothetically capable of, given the total amount of force resources it possesses. The “kinetic power” of this social form is the intended powers it achieves when it actually exercises certain of its force resources. Clearly, the US has enormous potential power, France has less, and Chad the least. The relationship between potential and kinetic power is not invariably positive. A social being may have great potential power but not be especially good at exercising force resources to acquire great kinetic power. For example, the US certainly has greater potential power than Finland. However, in a comparative evaluation of the quality of education systems, the US ranked seventeenth among developed countries, while Finland ranked first (“Best Education” 2012). The US’s kinetic powers in education seem less than would be expected, given its overall potential power.

*Strings and Logics:* It is time to introduce a notion of strings and logics into the analysis of power. Strings and logics are the placement in time and space of connected kinetic powers. So understood, strings and logics are history. History at the empirical level is the discovery of strings. At the theoretical level it is the logics of these strings. A “string” is a series of events

in space and time where cultural messages choreograph force resources to make a series of events occur. An “event” is a particular exercise of force that produces a particular power. Humans, then, possess not only the power to make events, but the still greater power of linking events together in strings. Farming might be thought of as a string. In Event 1, cultural messages choreograph force resources (the farmer, a tractor, and a plow) to prepare the land, with the power of producing a field ready for cultivation. In Event 2, cultural messages choreograph force resources (the farmer, the tractor, some seed potatoes, and a planter) to plant the field. In Event 3, cultural messages choreograph force resources (the farmer, the tractor, and a harrow) to weed the field. In Event 4, cultural messages choreograph force resources (the farmer, the tractor, and a potato harvester) to harvest the field.

The motion in social forms, it should be recognized, is their strings. Individual strings of actors are “actions.” A number of recurring strings of individuals choreographed together in different regions of human activity to do something is a “practice.” “Tasks” are strings and practices resulting from procedural culture in informal social groups. An “informal” group is one whose procedural culture is not especially explicit (i.e., standardized and written). “Operations” are strings and practices resulting from authorization by officials in formal groups. A “formal” group is one whose procedural culture is explicit (i.e., possesses standardized procedures that are written). Prior to the 1900s getting married was quite a task among the Nuer (Evans-Pritchard 1951). Now that many Nuer have joined Protestant churches, getting married can be an onerous operation. The strings in co-occurring, interrelated practices may be termed “institutions,” which may be formal or informal; strings in interrelated institutions are “systems”; those in systems coupled with other systems are “social beings.” These are the largest sorts of social beings that humans create, and some of them have global reach.

Certain strings follow a logic of social constitution, a term whose use here differs slightly from that in Malinowski. In *Argonauts* a social constitution is “the rules and regulations” of social life (Malinowski 1922: 11). In this sense of the term, the American constitution is literally the US Constitution. In *Deadly Contradictions* the concept is understood differently, as a particular type of logic that exercises constructive force to institute strings intended to create social order. In Malinowski’s view a social constitution is a fixed set of rules that organize social forms. As understood here, social constitution is not the rules themselves, but the logics that make a type of a rule called a public *délire*. The relationship between the concepts of social constitution and public *délires* is discussed further following the discussion of logics.

“Logics” are abstract accounts of the powers of strings.<sup>10</sup> Buying and selling involves two strings—those purchasing and those vending. Capital accumulation is a logic of buying and selling. A logic of order is one whose strings seek to reduce vulnerabilities, especially those that (we shall later learn) come from contradictions. A distinction can be made between multiple and hierarchical logics.

“Multiple” logics occur when the logics of institutions, or systems, operate to produce more than one power. Families, for example, follow multiple logics of sexual reproduction, enculturation, and consumption. Multiple logics may also be hierarchical; this generally happens in complicated institutional settings where numerous institutions’ powers are integrated into complex systems. In these situations some logics need to be performed for other logics to occur in the system. Logics that are the conditions for the performance of other logics are termed “sub-logics.” For example, consider a firm selling shoes. It needs at least one institution to make the shoes, one to get them to shoe stores, and one to advertise the shoes’ fine qualities; which is to recognize that the firm needs to have institutions performing production, distribution, and marketing sub-logics to achieve its capitalist logic of capital accumulation. The different tasks or operations of different strings that exhibit different logics are choreographed by different hermeneutics in peoples’ technical culture, ideology, or world view to be exercises of force that cause certain powers.

Logics may also be distinguished in terms of the extensiveness and density of their powers. “Power extensiveness” refers to the number of actors other actors have power over. Extensive logics are those where some actors have power over large numbers of other actors. The US Internal Revenue Service (IRS), with the power to extract taxes from more or less every worker in the country, has extensive power. “Lesser” logics are those where some actors have power over small numbers of other actors. Parents in families have power over their children and each other, usually fewer than ten people. Parents are lesser powers. “Power density” refers to the number of powers actors have over other actors. “Dense” logics are those where some actors have many powers over other actors. “Sparse” logics are those where some actors have few powers over other actors. The IRS can only collect taxes. Parents can sleep with each other, educate their children, and endlessly guide and discipline them. Thus, though the IRS has far more extensive power than do families, its power is far sparser. Your local IRS agent cannot go to bed with you. Power extensiveness refers to the size of the social being, whereas power density refers to the number of powers actors have in a social being. The strings considered in this text will largely involve different operations. The logics will tend to be multiple and hierarchical, involving extensive and dense powers of a particular type of social being.



This ends the introduction to structuralism. Its empirical scope ranges beyond Lilliputian narratives of ethnographic fictionalism toward large accounts of social being in all spaces and times. Indeed, the present work, consistent with this project, inspects the most powerful social being ever. Finally, what is the “critical” in critical structural realism?

### *The Critical*

The form of critical thought I fancy hews closely to that of Max Horkheimer (1937) in the Frankfurt School. Critical judgment concerns assessment of technical cultures, ideologies, and world views as well as the social beings found with them, with an eye to knowing them in order to improve them. Without question, such judgment presupposes an ethic: it is good to improve things for all people as much as possible, and it is wicked to improve things for only a small number of already privileged individuals. Making an ethical evaluation is exacting and a bit like solving a murder mystery. A murder has been perpetrated. Nobody knows who did it. There are lots of possibilities. The detective’s job is to figure out exactly what is the case—who did it and why—and only then can the accused be brought to judgment. A more general implication of this situation is that if you do not know what is happening, you cannot know if it is good or bad. This means that the realist practice of truth-seeking is a condition of moral judgment because it allows moral referees to know as accurately as possible what is, allowing them to judge whether it can be improved. Let us leave the empyrean heights of conceptualization for a closer look at a specific instance.

President Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on 10 December 2009. Remarkably, the lecture he chose to give accepting this honor was a justification of war. The president wanted his audience to know: “I face the world as it is, and cannot stand idle in the face of threats to the American people. Make no mistake, evil does exist. A nonviolent movement could not have halted Hitler’s armies. Negotiations cannot convince al-Qaida’s leaders to lay down their arms” (Obama 2009: 1). His general position was that US military killing was good because it could “bend history in the direction of justice” (*ibid.*). He was so enthusiastic about the virtue of war-making that he urged it upon all states, counseling that “all responsible nations must embrace the role that militaries with a clear mandate can play to keep the peace” (*ibid.*). I take Obama’s point—“evil does exist”—but must raise a question addressed in this book: Who are the evil whose practices’ reform will lead to improvement of the human condition?

Having introduced rudiments of a critical structural realist approach, this chapter now turns to applying it to constructing a theoretical map explaining US warfare.

## **Global Warring Theory**

Since 1945, US warfare has occurred throughout the world. So the theoretical map to explain this belligerence is termed global warring theory. Elsewhere (2009b), I have argued that Kajsa Ekholm Friedman's and Jonathan Friedman's perspective is pioneering because for the first time in anthropology, it made global social beings, which they term global systems, the object of analysis by taking concepts from structural Marxism (originally used to analyze modes of production) and applying them to social forms of global dimensions.<sup>11</sup> The social being we are investigating is a creature of global dimensions, which explains why the somewhere that global warring theory comes from is the one explored by the Friedmans.

The starting point of the Friedmans' work was a problem with the mode of production, specifically that production processes were themselves "dependent upon larger reproductive processes" (Friedman 1994: 17) that frequently operated beyond particular countries. This meant that social reproduction provided the theoretical foundations of global systems theory. In fact, worldwide reproductive processes created "global systems" that were "historical systems of shifting accumulation and empire formation" (Friedman 1978: 43); with imperial reproductive systems vulnerable to contradictions, understood "as the limit of functional compatibility between structures" (Friedman 1998: 48). Consequently, they understood "global history" as largely the "history of expansions and contractions of hegemonies, not unusually in the form of imperial organization in which the military component has been crucial" (James and Friedman 2006: xiv–xv). The global warring theory is an addition to global systems theory because it explains global warring in terms of reproduction, contradiction, and empire, concepts at the base of the Friedmans' perspective. However, it differs from the Friedmans' in that it starts from a different problem. Their theoretical starting point was frailties in the concept of mode of production. Global warring theory, consistent with critical structural realism's emphasis on force and power, is concerned with reproductive vulnerabilities due to contradictions.

In order to formulate global warring theory and address the problem of contradiction, it is necessary to elucidate the concepts that compose the theory.

### *Global Warring*

The first of these terms, "global warring," is what the theory explains. It is strings involving overt or covert, direct or indirect exercise of violent force managed by the security elites of an imperial state against a colony,

neo-colony, or region of interest someplace else on the globe. A “global war” is a particular instance of global warring.<sup>12</sup> Global warring is about imperial reproduction and occurs when security elites perceive—correctly or incorrectly—that violent force is useful to create, maintain, or enlarge the imperial state’s dominion, including any and all of its value-accumulating powers. Global warring may include situations where an imperial state conducts a number of global wars simultaneously or near simultaneously. A “colony” is a territory formally incorporated into an empire. A “neo-colony” or a client state is a territory in some way informally incorporated into an empire. Global warring is “colonial” where there is formal imperialism and “neocolonial” where there is informal imperialism.

Global warring is like throwing gasoline into a fire. It is a warfare accelerant that makes small wars bigger, because making global wars moves imperial violent force from the core to the colony or neo-colony. A colony or client may have X quantity of violent force prior to a global war. Then some imperial power moves Y amount of violent force to wage the global war, so that there is now X plus Y violent force, and a small war has grown bigger. Global warring coming from empires with huge accumulations of capital has the power to add enormously to the violent force in a colony or neo-colony. When civil war in Chad began in 1966, it was a small local conflict. The Chadian central government had the equivalent of a few million dollars per year to spend on fighting. I remember one Western diplomat expounding: “The rebels are a thousand kilometers away in Wadai. The government has only four trucks in N’Djamena. Two are broken, and who knows how much gas they have? How the hell are they going to even get there to fight them?” When, as readers will learn in Chapter 7, the Reagan administration intervened in this warring in the 1980s, it was reported to have injected \$100 million, while the French—the US’s neocolonial clients—were said to have supplied about \$500,000 per day from 1983 to 1986 (Reyna 2003b). A small local war had become a greater global war because the tiny X of the Chadian government’s violent force had been enormously augmented by the Y of the imperialists’ violent force.

Some scholars insist that warring only occurs after a certain number are killed (Singer and Small 1972). This seems arbitrary. Why is it that 1,000 rather than 1,001 combat deaths per year separates war from nonwar? If an empire operates to exercise violent force that kills any of the enemy, then it is warring. Occasionally, practices like raiding or organizing coups are not considered warring. But if an empire goes to the trouble of conducting raids or coups that kill people, then it is warring. Additional acts of war include blockades, embargos, or sanctions that kill not with weapons but by denying access to food or medicines. Finally, although some scholars do not include covert, indirect conflicts in accounts of warring, the fact that

killing may be hidden and performed by a proxy does not make it any less a war. Consequently, imperial operations of overt and direct as well as covert and indirect warring that causes fatalities are classified as global warring.

Imperial operations that prepare for overt and direct or covert and indirect combat, but where no fatalities have occurred, will be termed “preliminary global warring.” The building of bases, pre-positioning of supplies, and troop movements are forms of preliminary global warring. Imperial operations that in some way support another country’s warring will be called “secondary global warring.” Provision of different forms of violent force resources—weaponry, intelligence, transportation—is the hallmark of secondary global warring. This brings us to explication of the concepts needed to explain global warring. Discussion begins with contradiction.

### Contradictions

And do you know what “the world” is to me? ... a play of forces and waves of forces, at the same time one and many ... a sea of forces, flowing and rushing together ... out of the play of contradictions ...

—Nietzsche, *Will to Power*

‘... crises exist because ... contradictions exist’

—Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*

This section argues that Marx was correct in his understanding of the relationship between contradictions and crisis. However, before making this argument, I suggest an approach to contradiction that is influenced by Nietzsche and compatible with critical structural realism, which conceptualizes contradictions as a particular “play of forces.” Why propose such a conceptualization?

One reason, a weighty one, is that Marxist dialectics, including the concept of contradiction, are often dismissed as of little utility—a “Hegelian monkey,” as Marvin Harris (1968) opined, on the back of rigorous social theory. Karl Popper (1940) authored a famous dismissal of Marxian dialectics. Jon Elster (1985: 37), a more sympathetic critic who analyzed Marx’s different usages of the dialectic, believed Marx dealt with dialectics in “vapid terms.” Yet the old monkey hangs in there, especially in a version that emphasizes comprehending dialectics in terms of contradictions (e.g., Harvey 2014). It does so even in the ruminations of those who might be expected to be opposed to it.

For example, Barron Youngsmith (2010: 6), no Marxist he, noted when talking about the Soviet collapse in 1989 that it was of course due to “internal contradictions.” Daniel Bell (1976: 10), another non-Marxist, declared

there were “contradictions within society.” Elster (1985: 37) believed that of all the different varieties of dialectics Marx employed, only that which dealt with social contradiction could be “an important tool for the theory of social change.” Structural Marxists who had come to a similar conclusion somewhat earlier than Elster were developing a view of contradiction that they believed coincided with “advanced scientific practice” (Godelier 1972: 90). A version of this view forms the basis of the notion of contradiction used in this text.

Louis Althusser and Maurice Godelier, important developers of the structural Marxist version of contradiction, viewed contradictions as conditions of human structures. Further, Godelier (1972: 90) believed that “what causes a contradiction to appear is the appearance of a limit, a threshold, to the conditions in which a structure does not change. Beyond this limit a change of structure must occur.” From the standpoint being formulated, the “structure” Godelier refers to is the social forms discussed earlier. Such social forms exercise force. In Nietzsche’s terms such exercises are “plays of force” (1885: 12503), but they are a particular type of play that moves social forms toward their limits. The concept of limit employed here is not from calculus but rather denotes some point, edge, or boundary that an action, practice, institution, system, or social being exercising force cannot exceed. “Contradictions,” so imagined, are plays of logic whose component strings move social forms exercising force toward their “limit of functional compatibility” (Friedman 1994: 48), beyond which there is disorder. The notion of “incompatibility” refers to the existence of conditions in a structure of force resources where parts that formerly interacted in exercises of force to produce powers are less and less able to achieve their former power. The parts in a social being are its force resources—land, action, instruments, and various forms of cultural and authoritative choreography—distributed to its component social forms. Parts become incompatible when those formally present disappear; when they become too few or too many; or when they are altered in a way that makes them defective. At the point of incompatibility structures become disordered and are therefore obliged to change.

Marx’s analyses of contradictions have been interpreted (Godelier 1972) as involving emerging incompatibilities during the exercise of forces within and between the productive forces and relations of capitalist systems. Mao Tse Tung (1937) and Althusser (1977) broadened the location of contradictions, extending them into political systems. Here, two important types of contradictions can be distinguished. First are those arising within and between political systems, called “political.” Intra-polity contradictions can occur between a central government and different regions, or between opposing institutional groups. The former existed in the US

prior to 1860, when irreconcilable relations between Washington and the South resulted in the Civil War (1860–1865). The latter exist today in the US between Tea Party groups that favor policies to eliminate government intervention, and liberal groups that support policies involving intervention. Inter-polity contradictions have very often existed between competing empires, when operations in one empire are incompatible with those in others. For example, the Norman Empire’s aspiration to acquire land in the Anglo-Saxon Empire in the eleventh century was incompatible with the English desire for the same land. Contradiction between empires will be termed “inter-imperial.”

The second variety of contradictions, called “economic,” includes those that exist within or between economic organizations. Two sorts of economic contradictions exist in capitalist systems: “cyclical” ones, where the contradiction produces alternation between growth and decline; and “systemic” ones, where the contradiction is such that its intensification threatens the ability of an economic system to reproduce.

When contradictions worsen, moving toward their limits, they “intensify.” They may also worsen because they “coalesce,” which refers to an increasing co-occurrence of contradictions.<sup>13</sup> Coalescence increases incompatibilities by having more strings in more places that hamper each other’s operation in different parts of the social being. Such coalescence may be so extensive that social being-wide incompatibilities emerge. For example, a conundrum of Marxist thought has been to explain why the 1917 revolution against capitalism came in Czarist Russia, the least capitalist of European states. One answer to this puzzle was that Russia was a site of an increasing coalescence of contradictions. There were contradictions pertaining to feudalism (between lords and serfs), to capitalism (between capital and labor), and to colonialism (between imperial core and its colonies) (see Althusser 1977).

Different social beings at roughly the same times may exhibit different collections of contradictions. Equally, the same social being at different times may have different collections of contradictions. The set of contradictions and their degree of intensification at any moment in a social being may be said to be its “concatenation.”

A word about the epistemological status of contradictions: They may be said to be representations of incompatible being at different levels of abstraction and generality. Macro-contradictions are those at higher realms of abstraction and generality in E-space. Meso-contradictions are those at lower such realms in E-space. Micro-contradictions, which occur within I-space, are not considered in this text. Marx’s contradictions—for example, that between labor and capital—are macro-contradictions. Labor and capital are abstract notions, each always seeking to extract as much value as

possible from the other; hence they are in contradiction. Land and capital will be shown to be a macro-contradiction in chapter 5. Meso-contradictions may be less abstract and general instances of macro-contradictions. For example, in chapter 7 an oil company/petro-state contradiction is identified between the enterprises that produce oil and the states in whose lands it is found. The oil companies and petro-states each try to accumulate as much value from oil as possible, meaning the more value the oil company gets, the less the petrostate gets, and vice-versa, which puts the two in contradiction. As will be shown, the oil company/petro-state contradiction is a particular instance of the land/capital contradiction.

So, in sum, contradictions are incompatible plays of force whose logic is toward disorder. In this sense Marx was absolutely correct: crises exist because contradictions provoke disorder. Introducing the notions of reproductive vulnerability and fixes is a first step to understanding how humans respond to crises.

### *Reproductive Vulnerabilities and Fixes*

Reproduction is, generally, re-creation of form, any form. Social reproduction, the type of reproduction considered in this text, is the re-creation of social forms. (Hereafter the term reproduction denotes social reproduction.) Human reproduction is autopoietic. Certain social forms, or parts of social forms, exist to reproduce the larger social whole. Marx ([1867] 1909, Chapters 23 and 24), talking about capitalist systems in the first volume of *Capital*, distinguished between “simple” and “extended” reproduction, the former being economic operations involving no growth and the latter being ones where there is growth. Marx clearly did not see extended reproduction as necessarily freeing economic systems from contradictions—indeed, he argued, on occasion it intensified contradictions. I understand simple and extended reproduction more generally as situations with or without growth or growth in any social form. What links contradiction to reproduction?

This question has a one-word answer: sensation. Actors caught in storms of contradiction sense something is wrong and, fearing they will go down with the ship, desire to relax the storm by fixing it. A notion of a reproductive fix aids understanding of the relaxing of contradiction, but to understand such fixes one has to know about reproductive vulnerabilities. Though structural-functionalists throughout the twentieth century strove to deny it, Marxists knew that social forms got into trouble because intensifying contradictions led to problems in reproducing, which eventually could become disorderly crises. Marx, however, appears to have had no word for reproductive difficulties in general. So when these occur, and when actors sense them, I will call such a difficulty a “vulnerability.”

A social being with reproductive vulnerabilities due to contradictions is not hermeneutically vulnerable (despite being actually vulnerable) until actors in it *sense* difficulties. Actors insensitive to difficulties are hermeneutically blind. Actors sensing reproductive vulnerabilities tend not to interpret them in terms of intensifying contradictions, but to understand them in terms of thoughts and feelings in their neuronal cultural memory that emerge in their I-space due to the sensations they have of the vulnerabilities. For example, certain conservative capitalists dismiss workers in the capitalist/proletariat contradiction as “lazy”; whereas some workers dismiss capitalists as “rich assholes.”

“Reproductive fixes”—what actors do about vulnerabilities—are hermeneutically derived choreographies that actors use to organize force resources to fix vulnerabilities that are sometimes minor and sometimes full-blown crises. Fixes applied to large systems in social beings are not one-off, catch-as-catch-can actions. They are public *délires*, choreographies with authority: policies, programs, laws, administrative pronouncements, imperial orders. For example, one fix for the energy crisis is fracking, a procedure authorized by governmental authorities that involves a complex technical culture of injecting water under pressure into rock formations so they will fracture and release oil or gas trapped within. This leads to a key question: How do actors respond to reproductive vulnerabilities and create fixes? The answer is that they get reflexive.

### Getting Reflexive

“Getting reflexive” is what an actor does by reflecting upon sensations of reality employing already-existing interpretations of it. When actors get reflexive they give social beings the possibility of autopoiesis. “Reflecting” reality is the realm of consciousness—the brain thinking about being, feeling it—and actors think and feel about reality in terms of their neuronal culture, that is, what is already remembered in their neural tissues concerning what to think and feel about being, and what the pre-existing interpretations of it are. Reproductive fixes are choreographies resulting from actors reflecting upon contradictory being, or in other words using hermeneutics derived from their positional culture to organize force resources to resolve plights. Such fixes instituted in some way by elites are public *délires*. Fixes are not invariably formulated once and for all, though this may be the case if the fix works. More often, though, fixes do not initially work, or they work only partially.

In such situations actors, especially elite ones, tend to become involved in “try-and-try-again” situations, or more accurately, reflect-and-reflect-again situations. Long ago Lewis Henry Morgan ([1877] 1985: 258) ob-



served that societies solved their needs by attempting and reattempting ways of addressing them. He called information gained from such repeated attempts “experimental knowledge.” President Franklin Roosevelt was certainly aware of this in 1932, as the US suffered the vulnerabilities of the Great Depression, when he said: “The country needs, and unless I mistake its temper, the country demands bold, persistent experimentation. ... It is common sense to take a method and try it. If it fails, admit it frankly and try another” (in Balz 2008).

Morgan’s experimental knowledge might be rethought in terms of situational and experimental fixation. Certain situations occur and reoccur, and reoccur again. When this happens, the situation tends to cause people to reflect upon it. Reflection upon reoccurring events may be said to be “situational fixation.” For example, if you get a toothache that lasts for ten minutes and then goes away, you do not think much of it. However, if that toothache continues for several days; then it is something you fixate upon and want to do something about. Generally, the more pleasing or painful a reoccurring situation, the more you fixate upon it. “Experimental fixation” is the desire to fix something upon which actors are situationally fixated; for elites such fixing amounts to instituting public *délires*. Generally, the greater the vulnerability revealed in situational fixation, the stronger the experimental fixation. Different procedures to fix the same vulnerability are said to be different “iterations” of public *délires*, and actors involved in such events are said to be “fixated.” For example, as chapter 6 will explain, US military elites in Vietnam who were experimentally fixated on their military’s poor performance instituted a number of iterations designed to win the conflict.

No matter how often actors reflect upon the vulnerability they experience, fixes may fail to work because they involve either hermeneutic deception or blindness. “Hermeneutic deception” refers to interpretations of situations that are intentionally partially or completely incorrect, causing actors to have trouble fixing problems associated with the situations due to erroneous understanding of them. For example, some US politicians interpret the problem of poverty as the result of poor people being lazy, knowing full well that this is untrue. An outcome of this hermeneutic deception is to recommend reduction of welfare programs, which unsurprisingly does not fix poverty. “Hermeneutic blindness” refers to interpretations that are unintentionally incorrect and thus also lead to situations where actors are hard put to fix problems they do not understand. For example, bleeding—long the reproductive fix for many illnesses—was a case of hermeneutic blindness, because its practitioners were blind to the causes of the diseases. Let us proceed to understand how reflexivity is related to reproductive fixes by linking the notion of reproductive vulnerability to hermeneutic puzzles and hermeneutic politics.

*Pragmatic Hermeneutics*: A “hermeneutic puzzle” arises when actors fixate upon any vulnerability they sense needs fixing. Some vulnerabilities may not rise to the level of contradictions. However, others will develop from contradictions, and powerful actors whose windows of authority pertain to them will be obliged to address them. Hermeneutic puzzles are ultimately in I-space, in the realm of conscious brain.<sup>14</sup> They are what actors comprehend about contradictions. The nineteenth-century steel industry titan Andrew Carnegie may not have known that the 1892 Homestead work stoppage was a manifestation of the capitalist/proletariat contradiction, but he certainly knew he was vulnerable to a “strike” and faced the puzzle of how to end it. An “individual” hermeneutic puzzle is anything an actor perceives needs fixing about her- or himself. Billie, a testosterone-drenched teenager, looks in the mirror before his big date with Doreen and comprehends a large pimple. The horror! An individual hermeneutic puzzle stares him in the face. A “social” hermeneutic puzzle pertains to social forms; it is the perception that arises when a particular vulnerability is present due to some contradictory situation. Billie, now a stockbroker, looks into the face of Doreen, now his secretary, who tells him the stock market has fallen five thousand points. *Quelle horreur!* A social hermeneutic puzzle stares him in the face. This leads us to ask how hermeneutic puzzles are solved.

They are solved through politics. “Hermeneutic politics,” generally, are struggles between actors, or networks of actors, over the desirability of different interpretations of hermeneutic puzzles. With regard to the privileged, they are struggles between elites over what public *délirés* to authorize. Global warming, as we shall see later, presents a serious reproductive vulnerability. The puzzle of how to resolve this vulnerability has led to experimental fixation and a hermeneutic politics dominated on one side by those interested in market and on the other by those attracted to government fixes.

Hermeneutic politics tend to hermetically seal actors on opposing sides into particular interpretations. The notion of the hermetic seal, a concept related to that of groupthink or group mind, accounts for why collections of actors think and act alike. Specifically, “hermetic seal” is the operation of strings of events choreographed to enter actors’ I-space and make them think and feel X, in conjunction with the operation of strings of events choreographed to make them ignore not-X. Such strings stimulate desire for thinking and feeling X, and loathing for thinking and feeling non-X. So for example, in the families of US Republicans, children are taught nice and naughty: “It is nice to be a good Republican” and “It is naughty to be a crapulous Democrat.” Consequently, the hermeneutic puzzle of what to be politically for these children is solved; they are sealed into being Republican.

Actors sense the world as their organs of sensation in their I-space represent it. They interpret their sensations in terms of their neuronal cultural

messages. Actors, then, do not generally reflect upon the world in terms of contradiction and reproduction (unless they are Marxists). Rather, they reflect on their sensations in the only terms they can, the cultural messages of the different hermeneutics of the technical cultures, ideologies, and world views into which they have been enculturated. Remember, this enculturation is positional, so people in different positions tend to be hermetically sealed into those positions. A middle-class white cop in Los Angeles and a poor gangbanger are likely to interpret the hermeneutic puzzle of drugs rather differently. Autopoeisis, in sum, involves individual actors solving hermeneutic puzzles by employing their cultural neurohermeneutic systems, and then taking their interpretations into bouts of hermeneutic politics that lead to the instituting of public *délires*.

The interpretation of hermeneutic puzzles leading to hermeneutic politics that result in public *délires* is here said to be “social reflexivity,” about which three points should be stressed. First, social reflexivity—with its production of public *délires* that are tested and retested, and with different iterations of those *délires*—is a procedure (and not necessarily an especially accurate one) for producing knowledge of vulnerability-provoking realities. Second, the cultural neurohermeneutic system, specifically the material structures of the brain that sense reality, perceive what it is, and decide what to do about it, can be studied according to realist canons of neuroscience. Finally, human autopoeisis, being reliant upon social reflexivity, involves a “pragmatic hermeneutics” in which what is at issue is not the meaning of texts, but the effectiveness of practical action.

Clearly, not all actors bring equal powers to pragmatic hermeneutics. Contemplating privileged actors with more force resources at their disposal leads to a discussion of elites.

### *Elites as Tip of the Class Spear*

C. Wright Mills (1963: 25) observed that “the history of modern society may be readily understood as the story of the enlargement and the centralization of the means of power—in economic, in political and in military institutions.” Mills’s “means of power” is our “force resources.” What might the persons authorized to determine operations of force resources in important institutions be called? Mills (1956: 3–4) understood elites to be actors “whose positions enable them to transcend the ordinary environments of ordinary men and women; they are in positions to make decisions having major consequences.” Though I am comfortable with this definition, which is consistent with critical structural realism’s emphasis on force and power, it seems helpful to elaborate on how is it that elites come to have “major consequences.” In this optic, “elites” are actors who

enjoy substantial agency because they occupy positions authorized to choreograph operation of large amounts of force resources, including those resources constituting fixes to resolve reproductive vulnerabilities. So they are the actors with the largest windows of authority in a social being, who address major hermeneutic puzzles.

It has been argued that elite and class analysis were opposed (see Higley and Pakulski 2009). Certain classic elite thinkers—Pareto (1900), Mosca (1897), and Michels (1915)—saw themselves as anti-Marxists, believing that actors did not become elites for reasons of class, and that elites governed society. Others, however, have argued for the convergence of elite and class theory (Etzioni-Halevy 1997: xxvi). This is the position adopted here: elites are considered to be class actors though the notion of class used is broader than that in classical Marxism, which restricts it to only economic actors. “Class” relations in the present perspective are those that exist between actors because of differences in their control of force resources (not just Marx’s productive ones). Upper classes control the greatest amount of force resources and use this control, among other things, to direct as much value as possible to themselves. Elites are those members of the upper class whose positions give them authority over the largest amounts of force resources. Lower classes are those with the least control over these resources, who struggle for as much value as possible with their lesser force resources.<sup>15</sup> Consequently, classes are in contradiction, and the “elites” who control vast amounts of force, are the tips of the upper classes’ spears in class conflict.

Classic Marxist thought insisted upon a complex relationship between class, consciousness, and action. Specifically, it held that a class position produces class consciousness, which in turn is responsible for class action. There is an enormous literature on this topic, a fair portion of it negative. Max Weber (1958) warmed liberal hearts with his critique of Marxist class analysis. Erik Olin Wright (1997) has presented a skilled Marxian class analysis. My understanding of the relationship between class and consciousness is based on the judgment of a CIA chief. George Tenet (2007: xxi), the CIA Director during the Clinton and Bush II administrations, once quipped, “Where you stand on issues is normally determined by where you sit.” Those sitting in the same situation sense similar actualities. These will impose on them certain desires, which will be expressed in broadly similar positional culture. This, then, is Tenet’s Tenet—the ex-CIA director’s recognition that the Marxists were right about class and consciousness.

Apologists for the wealthy often treat class warfare as something restricted to the revolting, meaner masses. Yet, it is the upper classes, sitting in their positions controlling most of the forces resources, who consequently have the wherewithal to wage class war. With this in mind, “class war” is understood to involve elites exercising force, fixing reproductive

vulnerabilities in ways congenial to their class—especially regarding the copious movement of value to themselves, as ordinary people eventually come to resist such predations.

Upper classes in contemporary social beings are capitalist elites regulating economic institutions (CEOs, CFOs, CFOs, Vice-Presidents, etc.); official elites regulating political institutions (presidents, dictators, ministers, parliamentarians, senior bureaucrats); educational elites (Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors, senior professors) regulating various institutions of schooling; cultural elites (religious, museum, and media heads) regulating cultural institutions; and, bluntly but accurately, killing elites (generals, admirals, chiefs of police) regulating military and police institutions. Elites with authority or influence over the killing elites control enormous force to inflict violence. Called “security” elites, these latter play a central role in the arguments that follow.

Finally, let us remark a category of elites loitering with intent amongst other elites in contemporary social beings. These are hermeneuts. Hermes was the Greek god who, on winged feet, brought messages from the higher gods to lower mortals. “Hermeneuts” are specialized educational or cultural elites who bring messages on the winged feet of media from the godlike highest elites to illuminate the I-space of others. Hermeneuts attach themselves, limpet-like, to these most powerful of elites, from which position they bring higher elites’ messages to other lesser elites or to lower-class masses. The messages hermeneuts bring are credible because they are specialists in producing persuasive communications. Their credibility results from their rhetoric or science. “Rhetoric” means that what they espouse just feels “true,” the way a piece of fiction does. “Science” means that what they argue appears “true,” because it appears supported by facts.

As rhetoricians or scientists they illuminate the consciousness of others. A preacher like Jerry Falwell was for the most part a hermeneut to the middling or poorer sort, whose ability to illuminate derived from his mastery of “unifying interpretive conventions” governing fundamentalist rhetoric (Harding 2000: xi). A military analyst like Albert Wohlstetter was a hermeneut to security experts, whose ability to illuminate concerned the need to derive “more effective ways” of “using” violent force (Bacevich 2005: 154) from his manipulation of the interpretive conventions of science. Elites produce a particular type of fix, which is discussed next as the narrative returns to the topic of social constitution and public *délires*.

### *Social Constitution and Public Délires*

So far the fixing of reproductive vulnerabilities is understood as a consequence of people becoming fixated and utilizing their hermeneutic selves

to solve the hermeneutic puzzles posed by their fixation. When a solution has arisen to the level of being generally approved in public discourse, it may be termed a public desire. The desires of elites become something else called public *délires*, and it is these that they employ to fix contradictions. Let us first discuss similarities between public desires and *délires*.

Both are “means of interpretation” helping actors know what to do about what is, that is, to choreograph being. This is because both desires and *délires* have their hermeneutics: they contain certain perceptual/procedural pairs informing actors “what is” and “what to do about it.” Public desires and *délires* do not always correspond, and it is an empirical matter to show when the two diverge. Public desires and *délires*, as means of interpretation, are “focus” prompters.<sup>16</sup> Reality is messy. Lots of things happen, and what to concentrate upon and when are not clear. Moreover, humans confront cluttered reality with a noisy clamor of differing hermeneutics from technological, ideological, and world views with often incompatible messages. Public desires and *délires* focus attention on a selected number of perceptions and procedures.<sup>17</sup>

Public *délires*, to distinguish them from desires, are *authorized* desires to choreograph what elites desire to be done to fix something. However, their implementation normally involves not only elites but also larger numbers of ordinary people, called the elite’s “public,” throughout different systems in a large social being. Further, elites fortify authorization by allocating force resources to implement the desire. Ordinary actors may not want elite *délires*, but want them or not, *délires* are going to be forced upon them.

Authorization of public *délires* may take many forms. They may be laws voted in by legislatures, administrative decrees from top management in business, executive branch orders, dictators’ dictates, the Pope speaking *ex cathedra*, Islamic clerics declaring fatwas. Because elites’ desires are so powerful, they are not simple desires. They are *über*-desires, authorized choreographing of many peoples’ desires in conformity with elite desires. They are full-blown “frenzies” or, in French, *délires*.

Elites do two things with public *délires*: institute them and implement them. The institution of a public *délire* is its social constitution. When elite hermeneutic politics occur to understand how the reproductive vulnerabilities of contradictions are to be perceived and fixed, the winner in the politics creates the public *délire*. During droughts in the US, for example, local elites sometimes face a contradiction in the use of water: irrigating lawns is in contradiction with using water to do other things, such as irrigate food crops. If lawns are watered, then agriculture becomes reproductively vulnerable, posing the hermeneutic puzzle: What to do in times of drought? In this situation, social reflexivity oftentimes operates in the town council deliberations that lead to the voting in of ordinances regulating

the public's water use. Usually these ordinances enjoin the public from watering their lawns, and people who do receive a stiff fine. Such ordinances are public *délire*s. Their hermeneutic is perceptual, in that unlawful water use is perceived; then procedural, in that fines are imposed upon ordinance violators. The voting in of the ordinance is the social constitution of the *délire*, and sending police to enforce rules about citizens' water use is its implementation. What public *délire*s are instituted depends upon who wins in hermeneutic politics.

How elites engage in hermeneutic politics and who wins depend upon the specifics of the social being determining institution of *délire*s. These specifics vary from case to case and need research to be theorized. However, it might be noted that in monarchies the sides in the politics might be court factions, and the winner might get a royal proclamation. In a democracy the sides would likely be different parties or factions within the parties, and winning often occurs via elections, legislative votes, and/or executive orders. In a business enterprise the sides might be composed of partisans of different bosses, such as the CEO versus the CFO, and winning might be by administrative decree. In contemporary social beings more generally, the winning fix is the one whose partisans persuade the actor or actors with the highest authority to institute public *délire*s that theirs is the better hermeneutic.

Public *délire*s vary in their scope, ambiguity, and degree of compulsion. A *délire* is low in scope and ambiguity if its perceptual/procedural pair refers to small amounts of social being and does so without vagueness. A *délire* is high in scope and ambiguity if its perceptual/procedural pair refers to large amounts of social being in ways that are perceptually or procedurally unclear. The degree of compulsion of a public *délire* is the extent to which elites whose windows of responsibility open on the social being covered by the *délire* are obliged to implement its procedures. A law specifying that a stretch of road will have a speed limit of 30 kilometers per hour is a public *délire* of low scope and ambiguity. The Monroe Doctrine (1823), announced during a State of the Union address by President James Monroe, forbid European attempts to colonize land or otherwise interfere with states in North and South America, and further warned that such interference would be perceived as aggression that the US would eliminate. Clearly, the scope of the Monroe Doctrine is vast—European meddling in the Western hemisphere. Equally clearly, it contains ambiguity—what constitutes “interference” in the New World? Ambiguity allows US governmental elites some freedom in judging whether to proceed to eliminate European meddling. For example, nineteenth-century US authorities turned a blind eye to the UK's intervening via heavy investment in certain South American countries.

Immanent in the hermeneutic puzzles and politics just presented is an underlying Nietzschean play. Recall from the quotation that opened this section that Nietzsche, in his posthumous work *The Will to Power* (2012), asked, “And do you know what “the world” is to me?” and responded that it was a “play of forces ... a sea of forces flowing and rushing together.” Human being is subject to a continual play of forces. The first play is of the logic of disorder, marching according to the dictates of contradiction. The second play is of the logic of social constitution, counter-marching according to niceties of social reflexivity.

It might be appreciated that this play is reactive and iterative. Contradictions strengthen, provoking new social vulnerabilities. Logics of social constitution operate. Security elites reflect, and reflect again and again, fixated upon hermeneutic puzzles posed by recurring vulnerabilities. Hermeneutic politics emerge and re-occur, making new iterations of old public *délires*. Actors are jiggled this way and that as new iterations are instituted and implemented. All this gives the play of human being a herky-jerky quality. Attention turns now to some nasty play: elites getting violent as part of the logic of social constitution.

### *Getting Violent*

Neither elites nor anybody else is innately, solely violent. Human biology makes people capable of both peaceful cooperation and bloody violence (Fry 2006). Actually, up to a point, elites seem a bit like the central character in Munro Leaf’s classic children’s book *The Story of Ferdinand* (1936). Ferdinand was a big, strong bull, but he did not enjoy fighting. He liked to sit under a tree, picking the flowers. Elites, like Ferdinand, enjoy relaxing in the shade of privilege, smelling the flowers of their valuables, and generally having a swell time. In part this is because raging bulls incur high costs and big risks. The bulls running post-9/11 wars are said to have spent trillions upon trillions of dollars. Of course, the key risk is that violent bulls can lose the family jewels and find themselves without valuables, dead, or injured. Normally, there are tried and true peaceful fixes for reproducing elite valuables. Generally, when you go to war, the expenses of violent force are added to the expenses needed to acquire valuables. So, to diminish risk and cost, elites first try peaceful reproductive fixes. However, make no mistake, elites are not total Ferdinands. They can rage, especially when their privilege and valuables appear threatened. When this occurs it is time to kill.

Elite violence so understood may be treated as a function of the elimination of the usual, peaceful ways of reproducing elite classes. Nonviolent experimental fixations are likely to be perceived as faltering when contra-



dictions intensify and coalesce. This suggests the following relationship between elite reproduction and violence: the more security elites produce peaceful iterations of reproductive fixes that miscarry, the more such fixes become perceived as unworkable, and the greater the *délire* for violent fixes. The intensification and coalescence of contradiction is perceptually a situation where different iterations of reproductive fixes are understood to falter, leaving as the alternative violent ones; so, lacking peaceful alternatives, what else can they do?

George Shultz (1993: 678), one of President Reagan's secretaries of state, put the matter baldly when commenting on an occasion when the Reagan administration resorted to violence: "If nothing else worked, the use of force was necessary," the "force" here being understood to mean violent force. Let us call this "Shultzian Permission"—the principle that security elites will transform themselves into raging bulls, granting themselves permission to exercise violent force as a reproductive fix, when peaceful fixes appear to have failed.<sup>18</sup>

Shultzian Permission is granted when the actors granting it *believe* that peaceful fixes have failed, not when this has actually been demonstrated to be true. Belief that nonviolent fixes have been futile is normally established through hermeneutic politics, where elites offer varying interpretations of attempts at peaceful fixes. Hermeneutic deception and blindness may operate in the fixing of belief. For example, on 2 and 4 August 1964, the US Navy reported that it had been attacked by the North Vietnamese Navy in the Gulf of Tonkin. These attacks, which appear to have been deceptions, nonetheless led to the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution (7 August 1964) that authorized President Johnson to enormously escalate global warring in Vietnam. The fictitious Gulf of Tonkin incident was a hermeneutic deception warranting the granting of Shultzian Permission. There may be no formal moment when Shultzian Permission is granted; rather, security elites may just all come to the same understanding: "We tried peace. Now it is time for war." When a polity enters an ongoing war, Shultzian Permission tends to be granted because the fact of hostilities means that nonviolent fixes have failed. So why is global warring likely to occur? This leads us to the theory.

### *The Theory*

Contradiction, reproduction, and global warring are a theoretical system because they are joined in a relationship such that alteration in the first variable produces alterations in the others: Increased intensity and coalescence of contradictions results in more severe reproductive vulnerabilities, which cause global warring. Hermeneutic politics and public *délires* link the first two concepts to the third. They are reflexive concepts in

a double sense: first, they involve imperial elites reflecting upon contradictions in order to create public *délires* to fix vulnerabilities provoked by the contradictions; second, they involve these same elites in hermeneutic politics over whether particular situations can be interpreted as requiring implementation of particular public *délires*. The more peaceful fixes are perceived to fail, the more Shultzian Permission will prevail. War is the failure of peace, in this optic. Peace often fails in empires because, as later chapters will show, empires are vulnerable to contradiction. So finally, the *telos* of global warring theory is forbidding. Lots of people die.

Expressed more formally, the theory consists of six statements:

1. Intensification and coalescence of an empire's political and economic contradictions increase its reproductive vulnerabilities.
2. The greater these vulnerabilities, the greater the hermeneutic puzzles they pose and the more the hermeneutic politics of imperial elites create hermeneutics and public *délires* whose choreography fixes the vulnerabilities.
3. Because of the high costs and risks of violent fixes, initial fixes are likely to be peaceful, but the more there are fixless peaceful reproductive fixes, the more the hermeneutic politics of imperial elites grant Shultzian Permission to institute public *délires* that exercise violent force to achieve the reproductive fix.
4. The selection of a particular public *délire* to implement is aided by a hermetic seal favoring that *délire*.
5. The instituting of violent public *délires* turns colonies, neo-colonies, or regions of interest into violent places, producing global warring.
6. When the spatial dimensions of intensifying and coalescing contradictions grow, then the number of violent places throughout the globe grows, producing increased incidence of global warring.

It is important to recognize that not all actualities involved in the violence of global warring are analyzed in the text. Any warring involves a number of social beings as opponents in the violence. Consider the example of the French and Indian War (1754–1763), when the Iroquois allied with the British against the Hurons, Abenakis, and French. Complete analysis requires observation of *all* the different protagonists in the violence—a daunting empirical enterprise. This book's explanatory scope is not so ambitious. The concern is rather to understand why the US did the violent things it did, and whether this was consistent with the theory of global warring. This chapter has formulated the theory of global warring, which concerns imperial social beings. It is time now to think theoretically about such beings.

## Notes

1. Reyna (1994) has argued that no better way of knowing reality than science has been found, and has suggested ways (2004, 2010) that approximate truth might be found.

2. Regarding causality and power, Hobbes said: “correspondent to *cause* and *effect*, are *power* and *act*” (italics in original, in Champlain 1971: 68). Bourdieu conceptualized structure in terms of power (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 97–99). However, rather than call this text Bourdieuan, one should note that both Bourdieu and Reyna are Hobbesian.

3. Marshall Sahlins has said the present is an “anti-structural age” (2013). It may be, but Bruno Latour (2005) has nonetheless published a book about *Reassembling the Social*. Concepts like assemblage, network, rhizome, and social machine are ultimately structural ideas.

4. The terms open, autopoietic, and reflexivity come from systems theory (see Luhmann 1995). Maturana and Varela (1973) introduced the notion of autopoiesis. The reflection in reflexivity involves brain operations of inputting information from external reality and then processing it emotively and cognitively.

5. Animals with developed central nervous systems have agency, but to a lesser degree than humans.

6. The forces analyzed in the text always involve humans. As such they are “social” as opposed to inanimate force. When readers read “force” on a page, it really means social force.

7. Economists have been abandoning the sinking ship of human rationality. For example, Akerlof and Shiller (2009), Nobel Prize winners in economics, recently argued the importance of “animal spirits” in economic behavior.

8. Deleuze and Guattari emphasize desire in *Anti-Oedipus* (1983). However, the understanding of desire in this text is not theirs but comes from neurobiology, which understands desire as brain operations producing intention and the feelings associated with intention.

9. Let us reject one view of culture: that of Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803). He articulated the view that a *volk* (a “people”) has a single, uniform culture shared by effectively all its members (Herder 2002). Precisely put, this means one people, one culture, and (for racists) one race. However, recognition of the four attributes of cultural messages discussed in the text play havoc with Herderian culture. They indicate it is inaccurate to insist that each people has its culture. There is no Trobriand culture and there is certainly no American culture. What peoples have is a plethora of changing cultural messages—some technical, some ideological, some world view—often hybrid. The consequent recommendation is not to follow the Herder.

10. Widespread in social thought, the term logic is sometimes ambiguous. As used in this text, logic concerns powers: it is an abstract way of representing the powers of strings. Formal logic is an argument that goes in a certain direction, the conclusion. In critical structural realism, logic is the direction taken by the powers attained by different strings. E.g., the direction taken in the logic of capitalism is capital accumulation.

11. On the left, Ekholm Friedman and Friedman began formulating their global systems theory in the 1970s at roughly the same time that Immanuel Wallerstein (1974) was developing world systems theory. Eric Wolf’s *Europe and the People Without History*, published in 1983, sought to explain the sweep of modern history throughout the globe in terms of Mandel’s views on capitalism. David Harvey’s *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1990) investigated the global implications of a post-Fordist capitalism practicing flexible accumulation while experiencing space-time compression. Globalization became a topic among liberal thinkers in the 1990s. Thomas Friedman’s *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (1999) popularized it as a good thing.

12. Modelski and Morgan (1985) introduced the notion of global war, making it roughly equivalent to world war. I prefer the definition of the term offered in the text because not all global wars are world wars. Paskal (2010) also employed the term, apparently unaware of its earlier use.

13. The notion of the coalescence of contradictions owes something to Althusser. Following Lenin, he spoke of the “fusion” of an “accumulation” of contradictions producing rev-

olution (1977: 99). It is observed that contradictions often co-occur. When they do, they accumulate, which means that problems provoked by each contradiction add to those of every other co-occurring contradiction, i.e., they are fused together. This is coalescence, which produces a variety of instabilities that may include revolution.

14. The term consciousness is “loaded with fuzzy meanings” in part because although it is known that consciousness is the result of brain operations, what these are is not clear (Dehaene 2014: 8). However, the consciousness brain generates sensation, perception, cognition and emotion.

15. The text’s approach to class is a broadening of orthodox Marxism, in which class is about command over the economic means of production. However, in the present approach the means of production are but one sort of force resource capable of producing power. A complete investigation of power requires consideration of all force resources in E-space capable of producing powers. Classes in this optic are categories of persons controlling different types and amounts of force resources.

16. Symbolic interactionists might observe that public desires and *délires* “frame” situations. I agree but emphasize that this framing process takes place as part of a political struggle to control interpretation.

17. The notions of public desires and *délires* resemble Goffman’s (1974: 10) notion of frames as “the definitions of a situation.” Public desires and *délires* do define situations, in the sense of interpreting them. However, Goffman’s frames tend to be located in “subjective” realms (ibid.). Public desires and *délires*, though they may have been created in I-space, exist in E-space as discourse and behavior containing understandings.

18. Other US security elites have articulated the need to seek Shultzian Permission. After the Second Gulf War, for example, General Colin Powell (2012: 210) said: “War is never a happy solution, but it may be the only solution. We must exhaustively explore other possible solutions before we make the choice for war. Every political and diplomatic effort should be made to avoid war while achieving your objective.”

## IMPERIALISM

### *“A Monster of Energy”*

I cut their throats like lambs. I cut off their precious lives (as one cuts) a string. Like the many waters of a storm, I made (the contents of) their gullets and entrails run down upon the wide earth. My prancing steeds harnessed for my riding, plunged into the streams of their blood as (into) a river. ... With the bodies of their warriors I filled the plain, like grass. (Their) testicles I cut off, and tore out their privates like the seeds of cucumbers. (Description of Assyrian Emperor Sennacherib’s [704–681 BC] military exploits. In Belibtreu [1991: 11].)

The severed hand on the metal door, the swamp of blood and mud across the road, the human brains inside a garage, the incinerated, skeletal remains of an Iraqi mother and her three small children in their still-smoldering car. ... Two missiles from an American jet killed them all—by my estimate, more than 20 Iraqi civilians, torn to pieces ... (Chronicle of civilian deaths following the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, roughly 2,700 years after, but not so far from, the scene of Sennacherib’s military triumphs. [Fisk 2003]).

imperialism and empire: A system of domination of states and peoples maintained and extended by another state. Imperialism often involves territorial expansion but can also imply less direct forms of economic and political domination. ... A consensus among scholars on the precise characteristics of imperial systems has been more elusive. (Calhoun 2002)

Contemplate the above quotations. The chronicler of Assyrian Emperor Sennacherib’s reign recorded that the emperor “tore out” the “privates” of his slain foes like “seeds of a cucumber.” A chronicle of civilian deaths during US warring in Iraq 2,700 years after Sennacherib’s rule, but not so far from it, has children “incinerated, skeletal remains.” Warring, with all its violence, is what imperial elites do, from Sennacherib to George W. Bush. This chapter offers an understanding of empires and imperialism, which, as Calhoun above reports, has been “elusive.”<sup>1</sup>

Specifically, I propose a critical structural realist approach to empire, first by presenting basic components of the term; next by distinguishing premodern from modern imperialisms to give readers some idea of the diversity of imperial domination; and finally, having established some knowledge of imperial variety, helping readers to discover a particular matter that has been absent from recent understandings of empires and their imperialism. This discovery leads to Friedrich Nietzsche.

## Imperialism as a Dynamics of Domination

One reason imperialism is so hard to pin down is that there were, and are, many sorts of empires and imperialisms.<sup>2</sup> The ancient imperialisms of the Assyrians and Romans or the Shang Dynasty in China come to mind, as do the medieval imperialisms of the Carolingians in France, the Ottonians in Germany, the Plantagenets in Britain and France, as well as the more powerful Ottomans in the Middle East, Moghuls in India, or Yuan and Ming Dynasties in China. After AD 1400, the European modern imperialisms included the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French, German, Italian, and British Empires, upon which it was said that the sun never set (though it did after 1945). Following World War II, a “new” imperialism arose, with the US the key example. Let us begin at the beginning.

In roughly BP 6000, no place on the globe was under imperial domination. People were organized into different forms of bands, tribes, and chiefdoms. By 1900 the entire world was effectively under, or had been under, imperial domination. This clearly shows the importance of imperialism in the strings of events that twist through human history. Mills, as we saw in the last chapter, observed that modernity was about the “enlargement and centralization” of economic, political, and military institutions. But it is possible to be more precise and suggest that since the invention of the state soon after BP 6000, the major power dynamic has been the “enlargement and centralization” of force resources in the economic, political, and military institutions of different empires. The preceding brings us to a complaint concerning Michel Foucault’s notion of power.

Foucault had it exactly wrong when he said, “Power is everywhere; not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere” (1990: 93). “Comes from everywhere”—a fine thunderbolt of rhetorical melodrama! However, did the gentleman really mean “everywhere”? Power may *be* everywhere, but does he not know that power *comes* from somewhere; that the somewhere is the location of the force resources that somebodies in the somewhere control, and that these somebodies are normally the elites in the economic, political, and military service of imperial

states? If one wishes to study the power dynamics of the most powerful social being in E-space over the last six millennia, one must study the somewhere—the social forms of imperial governance—that are the abode of elites with the force to dominate, which brings us to domination and value.

### *Domination, Force, and Value*

There have been different sorts of imperialisms, but all the variants share one attribute. All are systems of force and power in which one state has the force to achieve the power of “domination,” as Calhoun pointed out, over other “states and peoples.” Here “domination” is broadly understood as structures where some (dominating) actors or social forms have some powers over other (dominated) actors or social forms. This power is far from complete, especially in earlier empires, where domination tended to be extensive but not especially dense, which is to say that such empires tended to dominate relatively large numbers of people in few areas of their lives.

In empires, the state is the social form whose operations perform domination. The state doing the dominating is “imperial.” It is the empire’s “core.” States and dominated peoples are the imperial state’s “dominion” (or empire). Less dominated states and peoples are said to be on the “periphery.” Empires tend to have “fused” (Harvey 2003: 23) economic and political systems and thus may be termed social beings. Domination is not automatic. Agents of domination—elites and their myrmidons—work day in and day out in imperial institutions to insure domination. Hence, the strings of empire are exercises of force with a specific logic aimed at achieving the power of reproducing domination, raising the question: What gets dominated in imperial systems?

In this area matters get elusive. In non-Marxist understandings of the term empire what tends to get dominated is the politics. For example, Michael Doyle (1986: 12) defines imperialism as a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the “effective sovereignty” of another. Marxist understandings stress the economics of domination (Brewer 1980). Lenin, for example, insisted that “imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom” ([1917] 1963). More generally, Marxist understandings of domination stress that it involves the power to extract economic value from the dominated and its accumulation by the dominators, imperial elites. As understood here, imperial domination is the ability of states to reproduce by exercising force to have power over other states or territories; also understood is that one of the most important of these powers is that of extracting force resources.

Monies, assets, and equities possessing use and/or exchange economic value are understood as the type of force resource earlier termed instruments. If “use-value” is the needs satisfied by a thing and “exchange value” is what can be acquired for that thing, then it follows that the more that value is possessed, the more things can be acquired to satisfy more needs. Because economic value can be exchanged for the other forces resources, facilitating imperial reproduction, it is an especially attractive instrument for imperial elites.

This suggests that imperial dynamics require two systems: economic ones based on institutions with force resources that have the power to produce economic value; and political ones based on institutions with force resources that have the power to ensure that economic extraction is supported, whether by peaceful or violent means. In the premodern world, economic and political institutions were often undifferentiated and centered on logics that extracted value largely from agricultural enterprise. An empire’s elite extracted surplus agricultural labor and products, employing different revenue institutions. That very same elite also provided the support to ensure that revenue extraction proceeded smoothly. The modern world witnessed imperial differentiation with the emergence of economic elites running capitalist institutions to extract money-value from the economic system, supported by and distinct from government elites in state regimes in the political system. In this view empires are social beings doing domination especially in other countries and other regions, as their elites amass force and, with force, power.

Imperial dynamics, then, are about force administration, whose managerial work can be expressed as follows:

1. Imperial operations involve logics with the power to produce domination by states over other states or territories;
2. Achievement of domination produces extraction of force resources, controlled by elites;
3. Extraction of force resources requires prior exercise of force resources;
4. Thus, imperial dynamics involve the production and reproduction of force.
5. The more the reproduction of force is insufficient to produce previous force levels, the greater the imperial reproductive vulnerability

Imperialism, so comprehended, is the dynamics of empire—the production and reproduction of imperial social beings, with elites doing whatever it takes to keep them going (simple reproduction) and, when possible, to grow them (extended reproduction).



*Violence in Empires*

As already noted, the work of domination is the conduct of exercises of force. Two sorts of exercises of force can be distinguished: those that do not utilize violence, and those that do. Nonviolent force is likely to achieve its intended powers when those to whom the force is applied desire what is intended for them, or at least do not oppose it. But when those who are to be dominated do not desire what is intended for them, they are likely to resist. In such situations, when nonviolent ways of making actors do what they resist have failed, violence is the recourse. It works by either eliminating those resisting domination, or terrorizing them into submission.

Now, if you make something you generally want to keep it, and do with it what you want. This suggests a generalization: actors who create value normally desire to keep it, exchange it for other valuables, or enlarge it. Elites within imperial social beings extract value from those who made it. Because what these elites do is take from those who made, they base their domination on frustration of the dominateds' desires. Follow the reasoning here: imperial reproduction involves value extraction, threatening the desires of the dominated. Frustrated desire is likely to provoke resistance against those doing the frustration. Resistance can threaten the dominators' value extraction, intensifying the dominator/dominated contradiction, raising the specter of reproductive vulnerability. This means that empires are subject to a fundamental contradiction: a dominator/dominated contradiction, where the more value dominators get, the less the dominated get, and vice versa. Between empires there is an imperial contradiction, in which different empires seek to dominate and extract value from each other. This is actually a version of the dominator/dominated contradiction in which the social forms doing domination and being dominated are empires.

When imperial elites' force extraction is threatened, they work to relax the dominator/dominated contradiction, sometimes by reducing the extraction, often by devising ideological and world view messages to hermetically seal the dominated into the view that they really desire the extraction of their value, which is a bit like convincing people they really enjoy extraction of their teeth. But if resistance continues, at some point such messages become unconvincing, and other nonviolent means of reducing their vulnerability fail. When this occurs, it is time for imperial elites to become raging bulls and violently oblige submission. In order to do this they must evolve structures for the exercise of violent force—standing armies, potent navies, ferocious weapons, specialized killers to work the weapons. Consequently, imperial social beings may have peaceful institutions of value extraction (buying and selling or systems of taxation), and they may have peaceful institutions of desire manipulation (religious or other forms of

mass media). But if they are to reproduce for any substantial period, they must have enduring institutions of violence.

Thus, the basics of imperialism are fivefold: (1) state domination of other states or regions (2) by elites in political and economic institutions in the dominating state, so that (3) the political and economic institutions of the dominating state reproduce through the extraction of value, (4) creating a dominator/dominated contradiction that, (5) when intensified and resistant to peaceful means of relaxation, requires dominator elites to exercise violence. In this view of imperialism, violence is not just something that happens when you have empires. It is a part of the anatomy of the social being—what it does some of the time to reproduce. With this in mind, let us develop a more complete account of imperial diversity, distinguishing the imperialism found in modernity from its premodern predecessors.

## **Imperial Diversity**

When considering modern empires, it is helpful to contrast them with their premodern counterparts and then describe their transformation. To do so, consider the premodern exemplar of England during the time of Plantagenet rulers (1154–1485).

### *Premodern Imperialism and Its Transformation*

The Plantagenets began with Henry II, included his sons Richard the Lionheart and John Lackland, and died out in the dynastic struggles of the Wars of the Roses.<sup>3</sup> There was the empire itself, and places beyond it. The empire itself consisted of a hierarchy of vassals in reciprocal relations. Monarchs invited members of their entourage to swear fealty and gave those so swearing a fief (a territory) in return; or nobles held fiefs by virtue of inheritance. Such nobles (dukes, barons, earls, etc.) were the king's vassals. Vassals with large fiefdoms created their own vassals by offering fiefs from their own lands to favorites from their retinue. At times sub-vassals found sub-sub vassals whom they enfeoffed. Vassals, sub-vassals, and sub-sub-vassals owed allegiance and military service to their lords, who in turn provided vassals with protection and advancement. The system expanded territorially—that is, experienced expanded reproduction—when the monarch or some large vassal organized their vassals into armies that were used to acquire territory from places not in the empire. Under the Plantagenets these places were in France or on the Celtic fringes of the British Isles, and the resulting empire, at its height under Henry II, included much of the current UK and Western France.

The empire extracted and accumulated force resources in the form of goods and labor service deriving from the land. In principle, the monarch was the landowner, with his rights of ownership conferred on his vassals. Those who farmed the land did so either as free laborers or as serfs bound to a particular vassal's lands. All vassals, by virtue of being landowners, were entitled to some portion of the agricultural produce and/or labor of the agrarian laborers. Fees paid for the use of a natural resource are a rent. Land is a natural resource. The amount of agricultural products or labor provided to nobles by an agrarian worker was a rent. Generally, the more land a monarch or vassal had, the more agrarian laborers he or she had, and the greater the rent that could be accumulated. Crucially, the units of government were those that accumulated rent. Political and economic systems were undifferentiated.

But this was not the whole story. Premodern empires also had markets where goods and services could be exchanged. When a seller received a sum of money for a product or service in excess of what it had cost, then that seller had made a monetary profit, that is, had accumulated capital. So premodern empires had two forms of value accumulation: rents and capital, the former predominating.

However, a reversal of the dominant form of value accumulation began with Western European imperial expansion in the fifteenth century. At first, when warring overseas, the Portuguese and Spanish attempted to transplant their medieval institutions of rent to newly acquired colonies, which generally withered. They then, like the Dutch, English, and French who followed, increasingly sought to accumulate force from other sources. Initially, this was through what Marx ([1867] 1909: 784–866) in *Capital* had termed “primitive accumulation”: the taking of objects with exchange value, especially gold and silver, by uneconomic means. Thereafter, force was increasingly acquired through trade from the sixteenth through the early eighteenth centuries. This time, sometimes called the Mercantilist Period, involved an expanding commercial capitalism based on great trading companies (such as the British East India Company and Dutch East India Company).<sup>4</sup> This meant a proliferation of nongovernmental enterprises whose sole business was capital accumulation, which produced the differentiation of the economic from the political system.

The late eighteenth century saw the start of huge amounts of capital accumulating via an expanding industrial capitalism and the emergence of great industrial empires, especially those of the English, Germans, and Japanese.<sup>5</sup> Next, as first recognized by Rudolf Hilferding ([1910] 1981), emphasized by Lenin ([1917] 1963), and seemingly borne out by recent financial history, starting in 1900 increasing quantities of capital were accumulated by expanding financial enterprises. This meant the economic

system was increasingly differentiated into commercial, industrial, and financial capitalist branches. In sum, whereas in premodern imperialisms elites managed undifferentiated governmental and economic systems that extracted force in the form of agrarian rents, their modern replacements directed highly differentiated economic and governmental systems to extract force as either commercial, industrial, or, increasingly, financial capital.

There is an implication here that needs to be made explicit. Bruno Latour (2012) has written a clever book, *We Have Never Been Modern*, whose title contains its thesis. I think him correct, though for reasons he might not recognize. If modernity, as defined in the introduction, is a time of concatenation of capitalist and state systems; and if these systems are imperial; then the human being of modernity is the hurly-burly of empires going about their business of force extraction. But, as the reader grasps, the history of pre-modernity since the origin of the state has equally been that of the vicissitudes of imperialism. So, make no mistake about it, Latour's claim of the non-modernity of modernity is spot on because something ancient—empire—is part and parcel of modern states, with their differentiated economic and political systems and their commercial, industrial, and financial forms of capitalism. Further, it is helpful to recognize that modern imperialism, suffused with antiquity, has had either formal or informal structural alternates.

### *Formal and Informal Imperialism*

The term “formal” was explicitly introduced into social thought by Max Weber when he wrote that a “formal organization” is “an association (*betriebs*) with a continuously and rationally operating staff” (1922: 52). By “staff” Weber meant the personnel of bureaucratic organizations. By “rationally” he understood a staff operating according to written governmental or administrative rules. John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson (1953) famously distinguished between formal and informal imperialisms. “Formal” imperialism concerns making “colonies”: territories with imperial administrative staffs governed by executive, legislative, and administrative laws incorporating them into the empires' governance structure as either core or colonial officials. Gallagher and Robinson developed the notion of informal empire based on their interpretation of the UK's economic and political activities in South America during the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. “Informal” imperialism has perceptively been termed the “oblique mode” of empire making (Kiernan 1978: xv)—oblique because such imperialism does not directly and formally institute colonies, but rather organizes “neo-colonies” (“client states”), that is, territories that are not incorporated into core states' structure but whose political

economy is controlled to facilitate cores states' domination, especially with regard to force extraction. This, Gallagher and Robinson observed, was exactly how Great Britain dominated nineteenth-century South America.

Formal empire is more transparent than its informal counterpart. Its administrative apparatus of domination is out there for everybody to see. There are ideological messages that glorify the domination. There is a Colonial Office. There are colonies that say they are colonies, with showy parades of plainly visible imperial soldiers, police, administrators, capitalists or their compradors, judges, missionaries—all colorful, all privileged, all dominating, all the time.

Of course, as already observed, formal domination stimulates the desires of the dominated. Many of the dominated loathed their dominators and learn from them how to revolt, intensifying the dominator/dominated contradiction. Since the American Revolutionary War (1776–1783), the contradictions of formal empire have been pretty revolting. Latin America followed the US into revolution throughout the nineteenth century. During the first half of the twentieth century much of the rest of the world developed nationalist or socialist independence ideologies—some violent (Chaliand 1989), others not (such as Gandhi's Quit India campaign)—directed against imperial dominators.

Informal empire is opaque. Nobody calls dominated states colonies any more. They have their “independence” and “sovereignty.” There is no panoply of formal imperial institutions and actors. Imperial elites are withdrawn from the colonies, so everyday life appears untouched by their meddling. Consequently, a dominated state looks like any state, with its particular politics, its own economy, colorful stamps, a nice flag, and a rousing national anthem.

However, a closer look reveals them to be “neo-colonies,” a term coined by Nkrumah (1966), the first president of Ghana, after he recognized that the formal independence graciously being granted by the old imperial powers in the 1960s was just a new form of the old domination. Some scholars prefer the term “client state”; Gavan McCormack (2007), for example, has called Japan a client state of the US. Client states or neo-colonies are countries in which the imperial core has an enduring interest because the country is in some way useful to the core's reproduction.

As elites well know, no trip would be agreeable without the assistance of luggage handlers to manage the baggage over there. When economic and political elites, themselves in the core of informal empires, deal with client states, these elites may be imagined as a sort of high-class baggage handlers. Their job is to handle the “baggage” in dominated countries to the satisfaction of the core. Let us call these persons “imperial handlers.” In economic systems they are the high executives in business, finance, and

the media; and in the governmental systems they are senior-level government officials, ambassadors, and military officers. Equally, there are economic and political elites in the dominated countries themselves whose chore is to assist in this domination. The elites in client states or neocolonies who assist imperial handlers in their domination occupy key positions in the dominated country's economic and political institutions as presidents, prime ministers, generals, and the like. They are termed "subject" elites, because they are subject to their handlers. Many subject elites are "hybrid" actors, a notion discussed in chapter 5. In Afghanistan in the summer of 2010, for example, President Hamid Karzai was a subject elite supervised by three main handlers—Karl Eikenberry, the US ambassador to Kabul; US Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke; and General David Petraeus, commander of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. There is no formal institution of subject elites and their handlers in informal empires. Rather, subject-elite/handler networks are designed ad hoc to handle each particular situation.

Subject elites tend to receive handsome rewards from their imperial handlers. Consider, for example, the case of President Kurman Bakiyev (2005–2010), former president of Kyrgyzstan in Central Asia. Bakiyev became something of a US client following the "Tulip Revolution" in 2005 that brought him to power, in which US involvement was reported (Spencer 2005). Despite competition for Bakiyev's services from Russians seeking his assistance to re-establish influence in their former Central Asian territory, the US successfully recruited him because "Washington just bought up the Bakiyev family lock stock and barrel" (Bhadrakumar 2010). It did this by making "the Bakiyev family ... a huge beneficiary of contracts dished out by the Pentagon ostensibly for providing supplies to the US air base in Manas near the Kyrgyz capital, Bishkek." Some estimates put "the figure that the Pentagon awarded last year (2009) to businesses owned by members of the Bakiyev family as US\$80 million" (*ibid.*).

Subject elites who rebel against their imperial handlers are punished. This was the fate of Ngo Dinh Diem, president of South Vietnam in the 1950s and early 1960s. The administration of President Kennedy became increasingly disenchanted with his ability to prosecute the war against North Vietnam. Accordingly, with the support of the CIA, a 1963 coup was planned with elements of the South Vietnam military, and Diem was "terminated with extreme prejudice" (the CIA's euphemism for assassination).

Informal empire became more sustainable in the twentieth century because of "space-time compression" (Harvey 1990). Economic and government elites are now able to communicate instantly and to move various forms of economic or violent force rapidly to areas of the world as needed. Such a technology increased informal empires' practicability, as political

and economic elites do not have to be there all the time. They can get there “just in time.” Increased sustainability made informal empires preferable because they were—and are, as earlier indicated—more nearly invisible and hence less susceptible to rebellion. The world never really knew that Saddam Hussein had been something of a US client. Then, when he began to act independently, the Bush I regime was able to rush in just in time with “shock and awe” to replace him.<sup>6</sup> Thus, since the end of World War II the lesser visibility of informal empires, conjoined with greater powers of space-time compression, made them appear more sustainable than their formal counterparts. The reconceptualization of imperialism is almost complete. Nevertheless, something important requiring emphasis will lead us to Nietzsche and a monster.

### Nietzsche and a Monster

This world: a monster of energy.

—Friedrich Nietzsche, *Will to Power*

What is missing in our understanding of imperialism is the obvious thing. Sennacherib went around tearing out the “privates” of his foes in the Middle East. Twenty-seven centuries later, US imperial generals in the same area went around leaving its children “screaming and crying.” Everywhere and at all times in empires, according to Burbank and Cooper (2010: 2), “Violence and day-to-day coercion were fundamental”, because everywhere and at all times imperialism, as Timothy Parsons (2010: 4) put it, involved “a conquering power.” Why?

When the state was invented, as we saw, institutions that specialized in inflicting violence were developed in the governmental system. What an invention these violent institutions were. They combined large numbers of specialized ferocious actors (warriors) and large numbers of violent instruments (swords, lances, axes, etc.) with a specialized technical culture that conveyed knowledge of how to choreograph violent force resources. Armies were born, and a real appreciation emerged: killing people with such institutions was an excellent way to acquire valuable force and lots of it, even if those who created it did not want to give it up. You attacked a people, you defeated them, you took some of their wealth, and you kept on taking. If they didn’t give, you killed some more, and then they gave. Missing, then, from the understanding of imperialism is recognition of the connection between killing and force extraction. The invention of military institutions controlled by governmental elites made killing a force resource with the power to acquire, maintain, or expand force extraction.

Now Nietzsche enters. Added violent force is an instrument easily combined with other force resources to make added power. Power can be used to make more force. More force, more power. There is no social form better able to make more force and power than the fused economic and governmental systems of an empire. Of course, force and power get things done in social beings, so they are the “energy” that Nietzsche spoke of in the quotation that began this section. “This world” is “a monster of energy” because empires seek to continually add force and power.

Empires have been around for a long, long time, their imperialisms operating far back into antiquity. And empires do what empires do. Among other things, they kill lots and lots of people so that a few elites can control enormous value, force, and power. This means we have never really been modern. Rather, since invention of the state, human being has been in thrall to a social form that is a thing whereby elites dominate everybody else. As such, empires might be imagined as monsters of Nietzschean energy—Leviathans swimming in the seas of human being.

Finally, it has been posited that these Leviathans swim in contradictory seas. But does the empire itself, doing what it does, create those contradictions? Are empires social beings that, in constructing themselves, deconstruct themselves? *Deadly Contradictions* aims to address this question, and will do so by moving from the theoretical highlands guided by the map of global warring theory into empirical seas, in order to see whether the US Leviathan is observed to do what it is theoretically supposed to do. The two chapters in the next section, *Plausibility I: The New American Empire*, argue the plausibility of American empire.

## Notes

1. One reason imperial understanding has been “elusive” is that the concept is highly contested. Another reason is that imperial phenomena are complex, and definitions have been opaque.

2. Timothy Parsons (2010) and Burbank and Cooper (2010) have investigated empires throughout the globe from ancient to modern times, discussing their emergence, logics, cultures, and conflicts. Darwin (2008) provides an overview of modern empires from 1400 until the present. Owen and Sutcliffe (1972), Mommsen (1980), Chilcote (2000), Harvey (2003), and Callinicos (2009) are theoretically useful.

3. A useful overview of Plantagenet England can be found in Prestwich (2005).

4. Wallerstein (1974) insisted that the seventeenth century witnessed the beginning of the replacement of imperial systems with that of single world system. This assertion is implausible. The rise of European imperialisms over larger and larger spaces of the globe began in the seventeenth century. Different empires were the structural units within and beyond which space was globally organized.

5. The degree of capital accumulation in premodern empires is a subject of debate. It is true that the great fairs of the thirteenth-century Europe were important mercantile enter-



prises. It is equally correct that some medieval empires, such as that of the Vikings in the early middle ages or the Venetians in the later middle ages, emphasized trade. However, these empires flourished due to trade between great empires that themselves were largely based upon agrarian rents. Thus, the Viking empire in the east connected Northern Europe to Russia and the Middle East, while the Venetian empire was part of a world system that connected the Occident with the Orient (Abu-Lughod 1991).

6. Roger Morris, a National Security Council staff member during the administrations of Presidents Johnson and Nixon, wrote that “according to the former Ba’athist leader Hani Fkaiki, among party members colluding with the CIA in 1962 and 1963 was Saddam Hussein” (in D. Morgan 2003).



PART II

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**PLAUSIBILITY 1:  
NEW AMERICAN EMPIRE**



## A REAL SHAPE-SHIFTER

### *American Empire 1783–1944*

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

—Jesus, Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:14–16

For we must consider that we shall be as a city on the hill, the eyes of all people on us ...

—John Winthrop, ‘A Model of Christian Charity’. 1630

America is a shining city upon a hill whose beacon light guides freedom loving people everywhere.

— President Ronald Reagan, ‘Farwell Address’

And thus has suddenly arisen in the World, a new Empire stiled the United States of America.

—William Henry Drayton, 1776, ‘A Charge on the Rise of the American Empire’. (In Van Alstyne 1960: 1)

This chapter and the next make the case for US empire, from its very beginning at independence in 1783 up to the present. But our story begins much earlier with the Sermon on the Mount, in which Jesus told his followers that they were a “light” and a “city set on a hill,” endowing them with a holiness. John Winthrop, the first governor of the small Massachusetts Bay Colony, in what amounted to a early form of the tweet, appropriated this sanctity, telling followers on the *Arabella*, the ship bringing them to the New World, that the realm they would build would be “as a city on the hill.” That utterance is said to be the beginning of US “exceptionalism,” that is, the conviction that America was something sacred that emanated the holiness of the Sermon on the Mount. President Reagan, a Hollywood entertainer become Washington performer, continued this

exceptionalism, confirming that the country that sprang from John Winthrop's colony was indeed a "city upon a hill" whose "beacon light guides people." This chapter and the following address the question, What is this American social being that asserts a holiness to "guide"?

In 1776 the Honorable William Henry Drayton, Chief Justice of South Carolina, had an idea about this. Even before the fighting that would make the thirteen colonies a country started, Drayton had decided that they were a "suddenly arisen ... new Empire." Later, after the US had been around for a few centuries and there was some record bearing upon this possibility, the editors of *Life*, *Time*, and *Fortune* magazines in 1942 and scholars in their academic tomes (Williams 1959; LaFeber 1963; Kiernan 1978; Harvey 2003) declared the honorable judge had got it right—the US has a "new Empire." I concur.

But this chapter's argument is that America was an old, formal empire for two-thirds of the nineteenth century and then, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, experimented with both formal and informal empire. To make this argument, let us situate it in the context of debates over the US's imperial status and explore what is meant by shape-shifting.

## Empire Deniers and Shape-Shifting Empires

No imperial designs lurk in the American mind. They are alien to American sentiment, thought, and purpose. Our priceless principles undergo no change under a tropical sun. They go with the flag. (McKinley 1898, in Eland 2004: 1)

We have no desire to dominate, no ambitions of empire. (Bush II, 2004 in Eland 2004: 1)

US presidents occasionally deny any American empire, sometimes at awkward moments. For example, President McKinley declared that America's "priceless principles" precluded "imperial designs" as the US was invading and annexing Cuba in 1898. Similarly, President Bush II repeated this denial after he invaded Iraq in an attempt to make it into what certainly looked like a neo-colony in 2003. Many American political scientists rallied to profess their denial of empire, especially in the 1950s through 2001, when they either ignored or rejected the possibility of empire.<sup>1</sup> The US, they said, was "hegemonic" if it was anything (for a review of hegemony literature see Webb and Krasner 1989). States that were hegemonic were those that had global "control over raw materials, control over sources of capital, control over markets, and competitive advantages in the production of highly valued goods" (Keohane 1984: 32). A hegemonic stability theory was proposed, positing that financial and other sorts of stability de-

pendent upon their being a single hegemon (Kindleburger [1973] 1986; Keohane 1980). This was the empire deniers' finest moment, because it released the US from the opprobrium of being an empire while affirming that it brought global stability. Thank you, American hegemon—"city on a hill"—for guiding humanity to peaceful stability.

Since 9/11 and the "city on the hill's" subsequent belligerence, scholars of all political stripes have begun to argue for, or against, the existence of US imperialism. Actually, at least one of the central hegemonic theorists recognized its possibility even earlier. This was Robert Gilpin (1981: 23), who insisted "a theory of international political change must of necessity also be a theory of imperialism," it being understood that any such theory included the US. Later on the right-wing historian Niall Ferguson (2003) reviewed the case for US hegemony versus empire in the foreign policy elites' preferred journal, *Foreign Affairs*, and came down on the side of empire. So even though empire denying is an enduring pastime among US political hermeneuts, there is reason to explore the legitimacy of such disavows. The following analysis shows how America was a shape-shifting empire from its very beginning. However, prior to making this argument the notion of shape-shifting needs exploration.

One black evening in an Arab village in the Chadian bush, we men and boys sat in a circle around a glowing charcoal brazier, speaking of hyenas, donkeys, dogs, and sorcerers. Feeling frightened in the immensity of the dark night, I told how I had heard the hyenas howling late, far out in the bush, challenged by the braying of the donkeys at the edge of the village, whose braying was answered by the village dogs barking from their places guarding the villagers' thatched huts. "It makes me feel safe," I announced. Old Umar thought a moment, as if weighing the effect of disabusing me of my comfort, and answered: "Not safe! The hyenas are close to the village. They are sorcerers. Evil things, they shift their shapes from men to hyenas. Cut into their stomachs, you will find the rings they wore as men." Donkeys braying and dogs barking were not sounds of reassurance but warnings of shape-shifting evil lurking in the darkness. "Shape-shifting," the transformation of social form, is frightening when something becomes something else again.

Shifting from sorcerers to states, recall that the historian Walter Nugent (2008: xv), in his *Habits of Empire*, concluded that America "has always been an imperial nation, and [remains] so, but the shape of empire has shifted over time." A curious amalgamation: America and hyenas, both shape-shifters, with the US shifting to different structural varieties of empire. Nugent (2008: viii) distinguished three shapes of empire: old, new, and old/new. His "old" empires are what we earlier termed formal ones; his "new" ones were called informal.

Formal empire, according to Nugent, occurred in the years between the founding of the US (1783) and the acquisition of Alaska (1867). It was a continental empire from the Atlantic to the Pacific in North America, instituted in certain ways along Roman lines. Next, informal/formal empire took shape more or less in the years after the Civil War through the Great Depression in the 1930s. Following a hermeneutic politics over what sort of empire fitted America, this imperial flexibility first led to the instituting of a formal, Caribbean and Pacific off-shore empire, and then to its abandonment during the Great Depression. Finally, a new shape of informal US empire emerged after World War II and continues through the present; it is discussed in the following chapter. The present chapter begins at the beginning of US imperialism.

### “Calculated ... for Extensive Empire”

The American War of Independence (1775–1783), an expression of the dominator/dominated contradiction, began in the violence of terrorist groups like the Sons of Liberty (P. Davis 1996) and was resolved due to timely French military interventions in favor of the American rebels (Dull 1975). It resulted in a rare structural moment. Independence meant that American elites—that is, commercial elites in the northern colonies like John Hancock and John Adams together with slave-owning gentry in the southern colonies like George Washington and Thomas Jefferson—who were formerly dominated by British elites, were free to institute a new organization for the thirteen rebel colonies. Violence had granted them a particular agency and constructive power—that of structuring a social being. The question, of course, was what it would be like.

At this point an ideological inconsistency appears. On the one hand, the victorious elites understood their new state as something sacred. On the other, they were influenced by a prevailing, largely secular ideology. The US had gained its independence at a time when central Enlightenment hermeneuts challenged the view that reality was simply divine. Rather, they argued, nature was the product of natural forces, and that reason and science could help humans control nature, thereby giving humanity godly powers to achieve progress, as the title of Frederik van Leenhof’s book expressed it, in the form of *Hemel op Aarde* (*Heaven on Earth*) ([1703] 1704). The term “Founding Fathers” is commonly used to designate those elites who seized the structural moment and instituted the nascent US government in the 1780s in order to build van Leenhof’s Heaven on Earth. They were moved by an Enlightenment hermeneutic voiced by Benjamin Franklin, whose perceptual understanding was that the world was a place of



matter, which imposed the procedural ethic of choreographing the “power of man over matter” (in Kiernan 2005: 4). The problem was, what sort of government brought Heaven on Earth?

At its official founding (1783), the nascent US was a democratic republic. However, David Ramsey, a member of the Continental Congress from South Carolina, at an Independence Day celebration two years after the Declaration of Independence in 1776, mused: “What a substratum for empire! Compared with which the foundation of the Macedonian, the Roman, and the British sink into insignificance” (in Maier 2006: 1). George Washington, the first president, referred to the US in a 1799 letter to John Quincy Adams as “this rising empire” (1999: 321). Second president John Adams (father of John Quincy), wrote in a 1755 letter to Nathan Webb, a cousin, of his view about historical cycles:

If we look into history, we shall find some nations rising from contemptible beginnings, and spreading their influence till the whole globe is subjected to their sway. When they have reached the summit of their grandeur, some minute and unsuspected cause commonly effects their ruin, and the empire of the world is transferred to some other place.

Of course, a major question was, where would empire be “transferred” in Adams and his cousin’s times? “It looks likely to me,” Adams speculated, that there would be a “transfer” of the “great seat of empire into America” (1961, I: 31).

Other important Founding Fathers agreed with the first two presidents. Patrick Henry, one of the more radical advocates of the American Revolution, distinguished by his cry “Give me Liberty, or give me Death!” is less well remembered for his plea “Some way or other we must be a great and mighty empire, we must have an army, and a navy” (in Tucker and Hendrickson 1990: 20). Alexander Hamilton, the first secretary of the Treasury, wrote in the first *The Federalist* Paper that the US was “in many respects the most interesting ... empire ... in the world” (in N. Ferguson 2004: 34). Thomas Jefferson (2004: 169), the third president, confided to James Madison, the fourth president, that “we should have such an empire for liberty as ... never surveyed since creation: and I am persuaded no constitution was ever before as well calculated as ours for extensive empire ...”.

These imperial *délires* were not kept a secret among elites. Rather, they were widely communicated, often by ministers or educators. For example, in 1789 Jedediah Morse, a Puritan minister from Boston, published *American Geography*, which sought to bring knowledge of the newborn country to ordinary citizens. Reverend Morse explained that the reason for writing his geography was that the United States “have risen to Empire,” so citizens should not rely on Europeans for knowledge of their own country

(in Van Alstyne 1960: 9). Hugh Henry Breckenridge, perhaps America's first novelist, educated readers through his various writings. At Princeton University's commencement in 1771, he recited a poem co-authored with fellow student Philip Freneau, "The Rising Glory of America." It promised a united country that would rule North America from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Seventeen years later, when that country had emerged, he told readers, "Oh my compatriots ... you are now citizens of a new empire: an empire, not the effect of chance ... but formed by the skill of sages. ... Who is there who does not spring in height? ... For you have acquired superior strength; you are become a great people" (Maier 2006: 1–2).<sup>2</sup>

Certainly there were revolutionary leaders, like Samuel Adams and Thomas Paine, who believed the US ought to be a democratic republic and nothing more, but the preceding has revealed a enthusiastic current of opinion among the founding elite that America should be, in Jefferson's terms, "calculated ... for extensive empire." Implicit in this discursive *délire* was the view that the Enlightenment ideal of Heaven on Earth could be achieved with an "empire for liberty." Jefferson seems not to have been bothered that the conjoining of empire and liberty was something of an oxymoron. After all, empires were, and are, places of domination, and those dominated lack liberty. However, as opposed to contemporary empire-deniers, the Founding Fathers were hermeneutically sealed into a *délire* for empire. They got their wish, as we shall see, in a formal, Roman shape.

### *Territorial Expansion (1783–1867)*

American history from the Treaty of Paris (1783), when the British Crown and parliament formally granted the United States its independence up to the acquisition of Alaska (1867) involved territorial expansion, by military force or negotiation, from east to west against Native Americans or European imperial powers including Great Britain, France, Russia, and Spain.<sup>3</sup>

Why was there territorial growth? This might be laid at the door of a territorial hermeneutic of Enlightenment statecraft: perceptually, if there was a state to govern, then procedurally, as Tucker and Hendrickson (1990: 24) put it, "the fundamental rule of governments' was 'the principle of extending territories.'" Different presidential administrations instituted policies to expand, and to the degree they did so the territorial hermeneutic became a public *délire*. For the nonelite remainder of the populace this meant there was a procedural cultural message legitimating expansion. To explicate this message, note that in the summer of 1845, when the burning issue of the day was whether to welcome Texas into the Union, the popular New York paper the *Democratic Review* addressed the Texas issue by

urging, “It is time now for opposition to the annexation of Texas to cease” because its addition to US territory embodied “the fulfillment [sic] of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions” (in D. Howe 2007: 703). Manifest Destiny in this optic is an iteration of the Enlightenment hermeneutic that understood perceptually that “Providence” provided a “continent” on which, procedurally, Americans were to “overspread.”

However, there was a qualification to this expansionism. John Quincy Adams—eighth secretary of State and sixth president—was a cosmopolitan gentleman who had grown up largely overseas, traveling with his father, second president John Adams, on diplomatic business. John Quincy was not averse to the empire’s expansion in continental America, but he was reluctant to support US involvement in overseas wars and warned the young country not to go “abroad in search of monsters to destroy.” His fear was that if America did seek foreign “monsters,” then “she might become the dictatress of the world” (1821). John Quincy’s warning might be called the “John Quincy Adams Exception” to the hermeneutic of territorial expansion.

Expand the US did, though respecting, at least for a while, the John Quincy Adams Exception. During 1782 negotiations in Paris over the terms of new country’s independence, Jefferson, Franklin, and Jay demanded it include an area called Transappalachia. At the time, there were few colonists on this land between the western side of the Appalachian Mountains and the eastern bank of the Mississippi River. The Americans had not captured it during the fighting. It was only ambiguously part of the original thirteen colonies. Nevertheless, the American negotiators claimed these western lands, and in the Treaty of Paris the British acquiesced. Consequently, technically, the US territorially expanded even before it had a territory to expand.

Next Jefferson, a “pacific imperialist” (Tucker and Hendrickson 1990: 3) because of his policy of territorial growth by diplomatic negotiation, purchased Louisiana from France in 1803 in an illegal deal (whose corruption is documented in Nugent 2008: 63–69). This added a huge territory—23 percent of the current US—from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains. Subsequently, General Andrew Jackson ravaged the two Spanish colonies of East and West Florida, which led to the Florida Purchase from Spain in 1819. The same year witnessed the signing of the Transcontinental Treaty with Spain, negotiated by John Quincy Adams, which for the first time extended US territory all the way to the Pacific Ocean. The Annexation of Texas (from Mexico) in 1845 was followed by the Oregon Treaty (and the annexation from England of much of the Northwest) in 1846. The year 1848 saw acquisition of much of the southwest US and

California following war with Mexico, and in 1867 the Alaska Purchase (from Russia) was negotiated. By the late 1860s the US had achieved its North American continental core boundaries.<sup>4</sup>

### *A Roman Logic*

This expansion occurred in a sequence of events that exhibited a Roman imperial logic. First, American settlers would move into an area. Next the area would be acquired. For a time thereafter the region did not have status as a full-fledged “state” in the US. Rather, it had a distinct legal and administrative institutionalization as some sort of “territory” and was in effect a colony, making the US a formal empire. At different times there were the Louisiana Territory, the Texas Territory, the Oregon Territory. More settlers would move into new territories from existing states in search of inexpensive land, replicating the governance structures of their home states.<sup>5</sup>

Settler colonialisms involve migration of imperial core peoples to the colonies, with the core migrants given preference for ownership of the colonies’ resources. Such colonialisms tend to be cruel (Wolfe 2006), as indicated by British Mau Mau troubles in East Africa in the 1950s, French predicaments in Indochina and Algeria during the 1950s and 1960s, and white repression in Rhodesia and South Africa through the 1990s. In the US case, settlers in the new territories found themselves in conflict with Native Americans.

After all, the land that settlers acquired was expropriated from Indians because the nascent US government continued the British practice of regarding Native American lands as *terra nullis*—free and ownerless. These conflicts led US military authorities to “pacify” the “savages.” By the early nineteenth century, due to depopulation from disease and earlier wars, Native Americans were only about 3 percent of the population (N. Ferguson 2004: 35). Additionally, they were generally poorly armed. So with the exception of occasional defeats, notably General Custer’s 1876 debacle at the Little Big Horn, fighting was calamitous for the Indians—a “holocaust,” according to Stannard (1992), of terrible mortality rates, removal from their lands, and concentration in reservations. Then, with the “savages” pacified and governance structures in place, the settlers would petition for statehood. Their petitions were eventually granted, and new states were welcomed into the country.

At any given time during the 1782 to 1870 continental expansion, the US consisted of an eastern core with settler colonies on its western periphery. As time went on, the core gradually expanded and settler colonies became fewer. Those familiar with the ancient Mediterranean will recognize that this process of expansion resembled that of the Roman Empire, which evolved from an original core around Rome by first acquiring territories

by either negotiation or conquest and making them into “provinces” (*provincia*, *provinciae* [pl.] in Latin) with formal Roman provincial laws and governmental apparatus. Over time Rome gradually incorporated provinces into the core by granting their inhabitants Roman citizenship. Consequently, at any point in time the Roman Empire was a core surrounded by colonies being gradually incorporated into a core (Le Glay et al. 2009: 312–313; M. Mann 1986: 254). In this way, the original US empire followed a Roman logic of formal imperialism, one that submitted Native Americans to holocaust, excluded women from the vote, and enslaved enormous numbers of blacks. It is time to begin exploring the extended reproduction of value in this empire.

### *Extended Reproduction in the Nineteenth-Century Territorial Empire*

As defined earlier, extended reproduction involves growth of social forms; including that of an increase in value extracted. Territorial expansion facilitated extraction of value in a number of ways. For example, with regard to Transappalachia,

By the 1740s ... the lands over the mountains beckoned as investment opportunities for ... speculators or developers. Colonial governors ... Franklin himself and the movers and shakers of Philadelphia, the Livingstons and Jays of New York, Washington and other Virginia planters, even some investors in New England, dabbled and planned and chartered land companies of huge extent in the Ohio Valley. (Nugent 2008: 22)

Hence, by acquiring Transappalachia, Franklin increased his and other developers’ speculative *délîres*, allowing them to increase value extraction by increasing their opportunities for land speculation.

The Louisiana Purchase was more about the realization of value of agricultural commodities by Americans who used the Mississippi River to transport their products for sale in New Orleans. Value is realized when a product is sold. If products cannot be sold, then value cannot be realized, and a reproductive vulnerability appears. Jefferson recognized New Orleans’s importance for value realization when he said in 1802, “there is on the globe one single spot, the possessor of which is our natural and habitual enemy. It is New Orleans, through which the produce of three-eighths of our territory must pass to market” (in Nugent 2008: 58). In October 1802, Napoleon closed the port of New Orleans to Americans, meaning their products could not be sold, nor value realized. How could the farmers continue if they could not sell their crops? Here was a true reproductive vulnerability. Jefferson fixed it by offering Napoleon a deal he could not refuse and buying New Orleans in 1803.

Jefferson had another reason for wanting to use the government to territorially expand. It had to do with overproduction and its effect on the realization of value. This was evident in 1788 in a letter to George Washington expressing concern about what would happen when the production of American commodities exceeded European demand for them—in other words, what would happen if they overproduced. What would occur, he suggested was that the surplus producers would “be employed, without question, to open by force, a market for itself with those placed on the same continent with us, and who wish nothing better” (Jefferson 2004, XIV: 328). In effect Jefferson was saying that one reason for the government to acquire territory was to find markets to address overproduction and thereby increase the realization of value. In the late eighteenth century Jefferson’s worry about this problem was hypothetical, but a century later it would not be.

Of course, the government boosted value acquisition significantly through the territory acquired. The original thirteen colonies’ territory of 360,000 square miles had grown ten and a half times to about 3,790,000 square miles by 1867. This expansion in the force resource of land was so great that it provided “unrivalled natural resources” (North 1961: vi). Land could be, and was, choreographed with myriad other economic force resources to produce enormous quantities of goods and services. In fact, “on the eve of the Civil War the United States had already achieved rapid and sustained economic expansion” and was “an industrial nation second only to Britain in manufacturing” (North 1961: v).

In return, growth in the economic system supported the governmental system by providing it with revenue—the force resource of capital—from various forms of taxation. The governmental elites used this capital to augment governmental violent force, among other things. A comparison of the military resources available to the US government at the time of the Revolution and the Civil War (1861–1865) indicates the extraordinary growth in violent force. The Revolutionary Army was an underfed, underarmed, ragtag organization that numbered 16,782 men at its largest. During the Civil War the Union Army enlisted 2,666,999 men (Weigley 1967: 42). Further, at that time the US government instituted the “first large-scale military application of three technological advances, telegraph, the railroad, and the rifle” (ibid.: 233). The Quartermasters Department’s water transportation expenses likewise point to the magnitude of growth in violent force. These expenses included purchase and construction of 183 ocean steamers, 43 sailing vessels, and 86 barges, as well the rental of 753 ocean steamers, 1,080 sailing vessels, and 847 barges (Weigley 1967: 222). US government violent force during the Civil War was on the level of large-scale, semi-industrial warfare.

In sum, the original territorial empire flourished in a time of extended re-production, during which the US governmental system grew the economic system with huge increases in land force resources while the economic system grew the governmental system with enormous increases in revenues that vastly developed its violent force. The two fused systems operated to acquire so much constructive and violent force that it seemed imperial America would never approach its limits. The US Leviathan appeared to be building an imperial social being with so much force and power that it would be unfettered from any contradictions. But this was not to be.

### **Old/New: Shape-Shifting Empire, 1870s–1930s**

I am an exporter, I want the world. (Charles Lovering, in Williams [1959] 1972: 27).

Who would have guessed it: starting in the 1870s, imperial America began to experience a long-lasting toothach due to pain from jolts of contradictory distress. In response, US elites developed a situational fixation on this contradictory vulnerability and became involved in a hermeneutic politics over the shape of empire to be implemented by public *délire*. The elites in the politics in the six decades between the 1870s and 1930s became involved in experimental fixation, first proposing an informal imperial iteration; then instituting the beginnings of an old, formal imperial iteration; and just as quickly abandoning it. This time might be characterized as one when the US elites were shape-shifting Hamlets muttering “to be, or not to be” over which imperial iteration would choreograph fixes to the contradictory toothache. First documented is the toothache.

#### *Overproduction*

After the Civil War, Jefferson’s concern about overproduction became a reality. By 1870 the US was in the midst of rapid capitalist industrial growth, having achieved “takeoff” in the 1840s and experienced rapid industrial development (North 1961) by the end of the Civil War in 1865. It would become the world’s largest economy by the early twentieth century (Hughes and Cain 2010). At this time, according to the historian Walter LaFeber (1963: 407), “the nature of American expansion ... [began] to change. Under the impact of the industrial revolution Americans began to search for markets, not land.” These were markets where US capitalists could either purchase necessary raw materials for manufacturing, or sell agricultural or industrial goods. Markets tended to be beyond the bound-

aries of the US, hence “off-shore,” and were progressively more crucial to burgeoning US capitalism. For example,

By 1870 the American economy depended so much upon foreign markets for the agricultural surplus that the ups and downs for the next thirty years can be traced to the success or failure of marketing each year’s wheat and cotton crop. No matter how many markets could be found, more always seemed to be needed. (ibid.: 9–10)

By the end of the century, commercial elites were urgently expressing their desire for markets. A reporter in *Iron Age* stated in 1877, “As our manufacturing capacity largely exceeds the wants of home consumption, we shall have to curtail the same by shutting up a great many establishments or we shall have to create a fresh outlet through exports” (in Williams 1972: 47). Two decades later in 1898, the US State Department was aware of the problem reported in *Iron Age*, announcing, “It seems to be conceded that every year we shall be confronted with an increasing surplus of manufactured goods for sale in foreign markets if American operatives and artisans are to be kept employed the year round” (in Williams [1959] 1972: 28). The New York State Banker’s Association reiterated the problem in the same year,

Our capacity to produce far exceeds our capacity to consume. The home market can no longer keep furnaces in blast or looms in action. That capital may earn its increment and labor be employed, enterprise must contend in the markets of the world, for the sake of our surplus products. (In May 1968: 194)

The key phrase in this quotation is “our capacity to produce far exceeds our capacity to consume.”

Hence, by the 1890s certain post–Civil War economic elites in both the government and the economy had sensed a disjunction between production and the realization of the value of production through its sale. They had encountered the overproduction that Jefferson had worried about. “Over-production” is “a situation in which various individual capitals ... experience difficulty in selling their entire output leading to a general condition in which total output exceeds total demand” (Bottomore 1983: 358). It is a characteristic of over-accumulation because it occurs when there is “a surplus of capital relative to opportunities to employ that capital. Such a state of over-production of capital is called the ‘over-accumulation of capital’” (Harvey [1982] 2006: 192). Over-accumulation is a manifestation of a contradiction where the need to produce much to make profits leads to producing too much to realize good profits, as evidenced by declining rates of profit that indicate an enterprise is moving toward its limits of accumulation.



The long-running litany of complaints documented in the previous paragraphs suggests that by the end of the nineteenth century, US economic entrepreneurs sensed that over-production hampered their enterprise. Were their beliefs accurate? Duménil and Lévy (2004) collected information about US business from 1870 through the early 1900s and found that these years exhibited a declining profit rate, that is, an indicator of over-accumulation. Caught in contradiction, capital was reproductively vulnerable. US capitalist titans knew they had a toothache and situationally fixated upon it.

Hermeneutic politics over how to fix the vulnerability flourished. The Massachusetts textile tycoon Charles Loring captured the emotional *délire* of such a situation when he wailed, “I am an exporter, I want the world” (in Williams [1959] 1972: 27). To gratify such a “want,” Loring and other US capitalists had to go off-shore. Preston A. Plumb, senator from Kansas in the 1880s, showed willingness to assist Loring on the part of at least some in the political establishment when he said, “We are now on the threshold, in my judgment, of a development outward, of a contest for the foreign commerce of the world” (in *ibid.*: 20). Part of these debates concerned whether informal or formal offshore imperialism would or would not provide the needed reproductive fix. By the 1890s the debates were resolved in favor of a formal empire. Mr. Loring, the old Yankee capitalist, was to be given his want—“the world,” or at least a chunk of it. However, certain unintended consequences of the fix led to a retreat from the formal imperialism by 1934. Let us examine these debates. They will lead to a forgetting of the John Quincy Adams Exception and a new imperial ideology with an associated public *délire*.

### *Forgetting the John Quincy Adams Exception*

US extended reproduction had thrived on territorial expansion. So the hermeneutic politics about how to fix overproduction led the US to more territorial expansion; this time overseas—“going abroad in search of monsters.” Critical participants in these politics were Carl Schurz, Albert J. Beveridge, Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, Walter Page, and John Hay—respected gentlemen at the highest levels of the US official and military elite in the late nineteenth century. Schurz was a popular writer, politician, and secretary of the interior (during the administration of Rutherford B. Hayes)—author of the patriotic credo “My country, right or wrong”—who helped conceptualize American attitudes toward expansion. He put the matter as follows in an 1893 article in *Harper’s New Monthly Magazine*,

There is little doubt that we can secure by amicable negotiation sites for coal-ing stations which will serve us well as if we possessed the countries in which

they are situated. In the same manner we can obtain from and within all sorts of commercial advantages ... [And] all this without taking those countries into our national household on an equal footing ... without assuming any responsibilities for them. (in LaFeber 1963: 201)

Schurz was clear. During expansion, there was to be no taking of “countries into our national household,” meaning there were to be no colonies. Expansion would occur by “amicable negotiation.”

Albert J. Beveridge was a senator from Indiana in the 1890s, another leading champion of US foreign expansion. He recognized that “American factories are making more than the American people can use.” Here was blunt recognition of US capitalism’s reproductive difficulties. He suggested a fix, declaiming,

Fate has written our policy for us; the trade of the world must and shall be ours. ... We will establish trading posts throughout the world as distributing points for American products. ... Great colonies, governing themselves, flying our flag and trading with us, will grow up about our posts of trade. ... And American law, American order, American civilization, and the American flag will plant themselves on shores hitherto bloody and benighted, but by those agencies of God henceforth to be made beautiful and bright. (In Niall Ferguson 2004: 43–44)

Beveridge was proposing much the same thing as Schurz, though in more extroverted terms. He was imagining a global commercial domination—“the trade of the world ... shall be ours.” It would result from the setting up of trading posts. Beveridge’s “trading posts” are Schurz’s “coaling stations ... with commercial advantages.” But note that although Beveridge calls these trading posts “colonies,” they would be “governing themselves”—they would not be formal colonies. Schurz and Beveridge proposed a global empire where expansion would be achieved through “amicable negotiation.”

Admiral Alfred Mahan, celebrated for his insistence on the centrality of naval force in imperial states in his *The Influence of Sea Power on History* (1890), wrote about what to do if amicable negotiation was not fruitful. LaFeber, summarizing Mahan’s position, says he believed that

the foundation of an expansive policy is a nation’s productive capacities that produce vast surpluses; these surpluses should preferably be sold in non-colonial areas in order to lessen political irritations; and sea power in the form of battleships enters the scheme to provide and protect lines of communication and to settle the conflicts which inevitably arise from commercial rivalry, thus ensuring access to markets for the surplus goods. (1963: 93)

In this quotation, Mahan indicated that any “conflicts” arising during international trade should be addressed with “sea power” that would take

“the form of battleships,” the most technologically advanced violent technology of its day. In effect, Mahan recommended violent force to substitute for colonial administration as a means to “settle conflicts” in ways beneficial to US capital accumulation.

The following conversation between British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey and Walter Page, the American Ambassador to London at the time, gives a further clue as to how some elites imagined utilizing the US military. The two gentlemen had been discussing how the American government might respond to situations it did not approve of in Latin America. Their conversation went as follows:

Grey: Suppose you have to intervene, what then?

Page: Make 'em vote and live by their decisions.

Grey: But suppose they will not so live?

Page: We'll go in and make 'em vote again.

Grey: And keep this up 200 years.

Page: Yes. The United States will be here for two hundred years and it can continue to shoot men for that little space till they learn to vote and rule themselves. (In Niall Ferguson 2004: 53)

There is an authoritarian tenor to the ambassador's discourse about how to treat people in foreign countries. He will “make 'em” do things. Grimmer, he says the US will “shoot men” for “two hundred years” until they do the right thing. The thing they are supposed to do is “rule themselves,” but the tone of Page's language is that they had better do so in the American way.

Hay—the gentleman remembered for enthusing about the Spanish-American War as a “splendid little war”—had been Lincoln's secretary during the Civil War and later a diplomat and journalist who became President McKinley's (1897–1901) secretary of state. As secretary of state, he had to address the commercial rivalries the US experienced in China with more firmly entrenched, older European empires (England and France) and newly emerging Eurasian empires (Germany, Russia, and Japan). Hay's way of doing so was to offer in 1899 what became known as the Open Door Notes, which were policy protocols concerning Chinese trade. The Notes stated all countries should “enjoy perfect equality of treatment for their commerce and navigation” to “safeguard for the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire” in order to “preserve Chinese territorial and administrative entity” (Hay 1899).

The Notes expressed views like those of Schurz and Beveridge but went one step further, effectively taking these from the realm of mere *délire* and making them US government policy, public *délire*. China's “territorial and administrative entity” would be preserved. It would not be incorporated

into anybody's formal empire. Further, in order for any country to do business in China, there must be "perfect equality"—meaning "equal and impartial trade" for all countries—to Chinese markets. In fact, no other nation formally agreed to Hay's *Open Door Notes*. But as US government policy, the *Notes* were a public *délire* and a gauntlet thrown down to European imperialisms in the business of formal empire. The US would do without such empire by insisting on opening the door to free markets. William Appleman Williams argued in *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* ([1959] 1972: 50–51) that this Open Door policy has shaped US global economic policy since the 1890s. Fifty years later Callinicos concurred (2009: 165). The next few paragraphs will draw the pieces of this informal imperialism together.

In a 1900 speech to the US Senate, Beveridge enthused: "God has ... made us the master organizers of the world to establish a system where chaos reigns. He has given us the spirit of progress to overwhelm the forces of reaction throughout the earth" (in Lotta 1984: 172). Talk of being the "master organizers of the world" meant that American elites were forgetting John Quincy Adams's warning and going in search of monsters. In our terms, their discourse concerned an elite ideology to achieve a reproductive fix, one designed to bring Enlightenment "progress."

What was their ideology? First, as expressed by Schurz and Beveridge, the US, which needed to expand due to overproduction, would *not* do so by making a formal empire. Rather, second, expansion would occur via informal empire, by implementing the Open Door policy. Third, as voiced by Mahan and Page, if need be America would use its available violent force to support its enterprises' profits. The hermeneutic of this ideology was perceptually that the US faced overproduction, which procedurally should be fixed by informal empire.

Critically, this iteration of empire was "new," because although informal empire had been practiced earlier, it had been only a sideline to formal empire. Thus, whereas the UK practiced an informal imperialism in parts of Latin America, throughout the rest of the globe its elites worked to establish a formal empire upon which the sun "never set." Only some Yankees—Beveridge and company—imagined running a purely informal imperialism. Contrarily, however, imperial hermeneutic politics took other US elites with other ideas back to a future of old empire—at least for a time.

### *Old-Time Formal Empire (1898–1934)*

Some American elites might have fancied new imperial social beings; but it should be remembered that during the last part of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century the old empires were dominant, wealthy, and expanding, so they too had their attractions. Further, it was a time of in-

creasing rivalry between these old empires, driven by a series of depressions occurring in the US in 1873–1878, 1882–1886, and 1893–1897. Everyone agreed that the fix for the depressions was to expand external markets; and formal empires expanded markets the old fashioned-way, by adding territory through procurement of colonies by conquest. While the Americans might imagine an open-door policy, their competitors had been practicing closed-door policies as each empire tended, legally or otherwise, to exclude its competitors from its own territories. Alex Callinicos (2009: 152) reports that “European colonial possessions rose from 2.7 million square miles and 148 million inhabitants in 1860, to 29 million square miles and 568 million inhabitants in 1914.” By the end of the nineteenth century the imperial competitors had conquered most of the world with only a few exceptions, like Afghanistan, Thailand, and Japan. So by 1900, US capitalists found themselves disadvantaged in the search for markets. Otherwise put, they were having trouble getting their fix, according to the “new empire” hermeneutic.

Consequently, there emerged among some US elites a fixation upon formal imperialism instituted in violent fashion. One important member of this group was the young Theodore Roosevelt (TR), scion of the New York Establishment and Harvard University, where he was a member of the Porcellian Club, the most prestigious of Harvard’s exclusive clubs. TR allowed that “No triumph of peace is quite so great as the supreme triumph of war” (in Beale 1956: 40). Concurrently he insisted, “There is no place in the world for nations who have become enervated by soft and easy life, or who have lost their fiber of vigorous hardiness and manliness” (in Beale 1956: 40). Equally belligerent was his Boston Brahmin friend, Senator Henry Cabot Lodge (also Harvard and Porcellian), who in 1895 announced, “We have a record of conquest, colonization and expansion unequalled by any people in the Nineteenth Century. We are not about to be stopped now” (Lodge 1895; in Williams 1966: 345).<sup>6</sup> Here was an “old empire” hermeneutic politics. Perceptually it was a world in which there was “no place” for nations that had lost their “vigorous ... manliness”; further perceptually, the US had an “unequalled” history of “expansion”; so procedurally, that history of “conquest, colonization” should continue.

These manly elites, like Roosevelt and Lodge, in collaboration with war-mongering hermeneuts, most stridently William Randolph Hearst and his *New York Journal*, convinced President McKinley to declare war on Spain in 1898 over its colonial possessions in the Caribbean and the Pacific. This conflict, the Spanish-American War, ended in a few short months (April through August 1898). Spain was humiliated and ceded much of the remainder of its empire to the US. Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, and part of Samoa became American territory. In the years that fol-

lowed these territories were formal colonies of the US for different periods of time. For brief periods the US also ruled Panama, Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic as formal colonies. Consequently, by the early twentieth century the US government was practicing administration of, in Rudyard Kipling's words, "new-caught sullen peoples, half devil and half child" (1899). Otherwise put, it was running an old empire. Here was a second iteration of American empire.

Old empire meant "gunboat diplomacy" (Healy 1976) and frequent US military intervention, usually naval involving the Marines, in both formal colonies and informal client states. According to one source, Washington "sent gunboats into Latin American ports over 6000 times" (Grandin 2006: 3). The Marine General Smedley D. Butler, who commanded US occupation troops during this period, remembered how closely the fighting was intertwined with the government system supporting the capitalist one:

I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen central American republics for the benefit of Wall Street. ... I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909–1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. I helped make Honduras "right" for American fruit companies in 1903. (1935)

Such interventions were especially calamitous in Nicaragua (1927–1933) and the Philippines (1899–1913). Indeed, the Nicaraguan insurgency led by Augusto Sandino, employing hit-and-run guerrilla war tactics, fought the Marines "to a draw" (Grandin 2006: 31). The Philippine-American War, conducted on a larger scale, equally relied upon a peasant guerrilla strategy. This conflict, according to Niall Ferguson, went through seven "phases of engagement":

1. Impressive initial military success
2. A flawed assessment of indigenous sentiment
3. A strategy of limited war and gradual escalation of forces
4. Domestic disillusionment in the face of protracted and nasty conflict
5. Premature democratization
6. The ascendancy of domestic economic considerations
7. Ultimate withdrawal (Ferguson 2004: 48)

Perhaps the key phase in Ferguson's discussion of the US's engagement in the Philippines is the seventh and last: "ultimate withdrawal."

Furthermore, although formal imperialism was intended to back capitalist business, it was costly for government. For example, according to William Pomeroy, "It would no doubt be safe to say" that in the Philip-

piners, “military costs of conquest, suppression, fortification, and garrison maintenance totaled at least \$500 million by the time an Independence Act was voted by the US Congress” (1970: 221). In 1901 Massachusetts Senator George Hoar—a Harvard University graduate and proponent of blacks’ rights and the vote for women—put the figure higher, at \$600 million (*ibid.*). The Old Imperialism was costly for frugal US elites.

Moreover, even as the US government found formal imperialism expensive, it was actually practicing the new, informal imperialism, especially in Latin America and the Caribbean. Consider, for example, the case of Mexico. Greg Grandin reports, “In the years after the Civil War, both the US government and private US interests supplied arms and money to help Mexican economic liberals consolidate power and transform their country into a modern, capitalist state” (2006: 28). These “economic liberals” were, in the terms defined in the last chapter, the subject clients of their elite capitalist handlers back in America. Mexican clients working with

New York and Boston financiers bankrolled the construction of roads, rails, and ports, opening up the country’s rural hinterlands to development. By the first decade of the twentieth century, more than a billion American dollars had been invested in Mexican oil, agriculture, mining and ranching, as well as in public utilities like urban electricity. ... To continue to attract capital, the Mexican government cut taxes, allowed high rates of profit repatriation, and repressed labor organizing. (Grandin 2006: 29)

This was the new imperialism in action. It worked. American enterprise flourished in places like Mexico (J. Hart: 2006). Further, American capitalists’ operations there became a something of a model showing how to find overseas regions with accommodating elites, inexpensive labor and resources, and gratifyingly large profits.

Hay’s Open Door public *délire* was expanded in the early years of the twentieth century because during Theodore Roosevelt’s presidency (1901–1909), notwithstanding his attachment to “manliness,” the policy was extended from China to Africa (Beale 1956). During Woodrow Wilson’s presidency (1913–1921), especially under the guidance of Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, the Open Door policy became a way for US elites to imagine US foreign relations in all places (A. Griswold 1938). It was part of President Wilson’s Fourteen Points communication to Congress on 8 January 1918. This speech was intended to assure nervous Americans that World War I was being fought for a just cause and for postwar peace in Europe. Its emphasis on self-determination, both for colonies and for Russia, then undergoing the Bolshevik Revolution, did not sit well with Wilson’s old empire allies (Georges Clemenceau of France, David Lloyd George of the UK, and Vittorio Emanuele Orlando of Italy). Consequently,

it thrust America into Great Power diplomacy at the end of World War I, issuing an American challenge to their old, formal imperialism.

Finally, during Franklin Delano Roosevelt's (FDR's) presidency (1933–1945) under his Secretary of State Cordell Hull, the Open Door policy, now conceived of as applying to the entire world, was championed as a way of helping US capitalists through the crisis of the Great Depression of the 1930s, which some thought had resulted from overproduction (Eckes 1973). This is because, as Callinicos explains it, Hull and those of a similar mind believed “the solution” to the depression

lay in constructing a liberal international order where US capital and commodities could freely flow and from which European Great Power rivalries had been banished. The key obstacle to achieving this objective lay in the protectionist blocs established by the other leading capitalist states and most notably the British Empire. (2009: 167–168).

Importantly, the Open Door policy implied an informal imperialism, where the US dominated not by creating formal colonies, but by having its superior capitalism control client states' economies. In the hands of FDR and Cordell Hull, the Open Door policy choreographed the confrontation with the older, formal imperialisms, a conflict made explicit in the Atlantic Charter (1941), an agreement between the UK and the US intended as a post–World War II global blueprint. The charter promised a global capitalist system for all, with all peoples afforded the right of self-determination (i.e., old colonies would be given their independence), with victors seeking no territorial gains (i.e., there would be no new colonies), and trade barriers lowered. What had happened to the Open Door public *délire* was the expansion of its window of authority. Originally, under Hays, it applied only to China. But TR, Wilson, and FDR expanded its applicability to the entire globe. It became the public *délire* that was imagined as able to solve the reproductive vulnerability facing the US and, at the same time, establish a global informal empire for Washington.

Thus, in the years roughly between 1898 and the start of FDR's administration, US elites received a progressive education—progressive in John Dewey's (1916) sense of “learning by doing,” which in terms of hermeneutic politics meant experimental fixation upon old and new imperial iterations. Capitalists, officials, and military elites spent time “doing” both the old and the new imperial iterations and, if the Philippines and Mexico can be imagined as exemplars of the old formal and the new informal imperialisms respectively, then the Philippines led to “ultimate withdrawal” while Mexico led to “high rates of profit repatriation.” So by the onset of FDR's administration and the coming of World War II, many of the Establishment would agree with what FDR told his son:



The colonial system means war. Exploit the resources of an India, a Burma, a Java; take all the wealth out of these countries, but never put anything back into them, things like education, decent standards of living, minimum health requirements—all you're doing is storing up the kind of trouble that leads to war. All you're doing is negating the value of any kind of organizational structure for peace before it begins. (In E. Roosevelt 1946)

Secretary of State Cordell Hull confided to the Japanese ambassador in 1941, in what was really a summation of the US experience with the old imperialism, “In the past we ... stationed some soldiers in central America, and left them there as long as ten years, but the results were bad, and we brought them out” (in Gardner 1971: 47).

## Overview

Imagine a camera high in the sky, overlooking the New World and filming what happened between 1783 and 1944. The resulting film would show a rapidly changing US. Starting small, pinned against the eastern seaboard, it would first grow and grow, always westward, like an old Roman sort of continental empire. Next, at the end of the 1800s, experimentally fixated on overproduction in the youthful ardor of its “manliness,” it began a time of rapid experimentation with different shapes of empire: a first iteration, that of informal empire; a second iteration, that of formal empire; and a third iteration, back toward informal empire. An observer of this film might comment that the US was a real imperial shape-shifter.

This observer might also have noticed the presence of the Open Door public *délire* by the 1930s. Contemplate its implication by recalling how the founding father President John Adams speculated there would be a “transfer” of the “great seat of empire into America.” Now recognize the sheer audacity of US governmental elites just prior to World War II. Their Open Door public *délire* sought to impose an American way of doing business upon the entire world. After World War II, John Adams’ “transfer” occurred, and Washington became the “seat of empire” for the entire globe. That story is told in the following chapter.

## Notes

1. Hardt and Negri (2001) on the left argue that empires are a thing of the past; advanced capitalism is organized both politically and economically on transnational lines, making states effectively obsolete and conflict between them a thing of the past. Elsewhere I argue that Hardt and Negri (Reyna 2002b) are neither correct nor incorrect, but incomprehensible.

2. Some might object that the term “empire” was employed differently two centuries ago. Those quoted referring to empire in the text were citizens, subjects, and often employees of

the British Empire. When they used the word they had in mind something like Albion's empire, which in our terminology is an example of a "formal" empire.

3. Nugent (2008) provides a history of US expansion from 1782 to 2000. Weeks (1996) provides a concise discussion of US expansion between 1780 and 1970. Daniel Howe's *What Hath God Wrought* richly describes US expansion between 1815 and 1848. Its bibliographic essay is useful concerning US growth during the entire period (2007: 856–878).

4. Tucker and Frederickson (1990) explicate Jefferson's contribution to the building of an "empire of liberty," especially with regard to the Louisiana Purchase. Remini (2001) discusses Jackson's warring and its role in the addition of Florida. Weeks (1992) considers John Quincy Adams and the Transcontinental Treaty. Winders (2002) can be consulted for questions of territorial expansion in the southwest, including Texas. Stuart (1988) details US expansion against British lands, especially in the Oregon Territory; and Jensen (1975) is useful with regard to Russian lands and Alaska.

5. Van Alstyne (1960) points out that it is inaccurate to insist that the young US went only west. As it drifted westward the US also went south toward Florida, the Caribbean, and Mexico; and north to Oregon, Washington, and Alaska.

6. Theodore Roosevelt is a complex case—part thug, part progressive. Edmund Morris's three-volume biography (2010) is good place to start to understand him.

## “PRESENT AT THE CREATION”

### *Constituting the New American Empire 1945–1950*

In a sense the postwar years were a period of creation. (Dean Acheson, 1969)

The dapper and witty Honorable Dean Acheson, a gentleman’s gentleman and President Harry Truman’s secretary of state (1949–1953), held the highest positions in US diplomacy during and after World War II. The postwar years he refers to in the quotation above are roughly the five years following the end of the war in 1945. They “were a period of creation,” of finding the parts and fitting them together in a colossal structural project to constitute the postwar US social being. This chapter, then, explores the exercise of force to achieve constructive powers, specifically those creating the post-1945 iteration of American Empire.

First, this chapter documents who did it; next it details the features of global human being as Acheson and his peers reflected on it, in doing their constitution. This postwar human being, inhabited by a Bear that was a Leviathan (an oddity explained later), presented US elites with a menacing hermeneutic puzzle. This puzzle, one of a political contradiction, is documented. The chapter goes on to show how the hermeneutic politics to resolve the puzzle engendered a series of public *délires* and institutions that constituted a novel social being—a three-tiered rental empire, called the New American Empire. Let us begin with actors, specifically the security elites who did the constituting.

#### Security Elites 1.0

The “River families” were born to this spacious sense of tradition and of leisure. Their world opened up to them, a solid and pleasant place, in which

their task was to carry on and fortify standards they inherited from their father. They moved with assurance in the outside world as well. (Schlesinger 1957: 327–328)

In the culture of postwar Washington, “security” generally referred to the military well-being of America. “Security elites” from economic, political, and military backgrounds headed government agencies that dealt with foreign affairs and defense. Generally they were, and are, referred to as “principals,” because their windows of authority gave them strategic command over foreign and military affairs. Principals were the agents of postwar US imperialism. Presidents, vice presidents, secretaries of state and defense, generals, admirals, intelligence chiefs, and all their senior officers—all were “present at the creation.”

Important members of the security elite after World War II came from the “River Families” in New York or their equivalents in other northeastern cities. They resided in splendid manors along the Hudson River, elegant mansions along the Philadelphia Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad, or gracious townhouses on Boston’s Beacon Hill and Commonwealth Avenue. The Boston Brahmins thought of themselves as most eminent. They were the first American aristocracy, rich from pre-revolutionary commerce (including the slave trade) and ever so proper, with a Puritan rectitude absent in brash New Yorkers. Whether from New York, Philadelphia, or Boston, all were the Establishment, and though they were not proper nobility in the sense of English lords and ladies, they had something their British compatriots lacked: money—lots and lots of it—derived from ownership of capitalist enterprise.<sup>1</sup> Women, blacks, Italians, Orientals, and Hispanics need not apply, though a few Irish Catholics like Joe Kennedy, the future president’s father, hung around the fringes. Some Jews were tolerated, especially if they practiced ethnic self-cleansing. For example, Sam Laposki, a Polish Jew, changed the family name to the posh sounding Dillon, helping his boy, Clarence Dillon, make it all the way to the top of US finance as head of Dillon Read and Company, an investment-banking powerhouse. The Establishment tended to circulate. Members moved from one elite position to others in business and government.

Military elites were less likely to be from the Establishment. Generals Eisenhower, George C. Marshall, George S. Patton, and Douglas MacArthur, as well as Admirals Chester W. Nimitz, William “Bull” Halsey, and William D. Leahy, were from comfortable but not extraordinarily wealthy families that had long sent sons into the military. A fair number came from southern backgrounds. The majority were educated at military academies such as the Naval Academy, West Point, or the Virginia Military Institute. After retirement they generally joined companies doing defense work.

Establishment elites—including President Franklin Delano Roosevelt as well as such high office holders as Dean Acheson, Charles “Chip” Bohlen, Averill Harriman, Robert Lovett, George Kennan, James Forrestal, Paul Nitze, Edward Stettinius, Henry Stimson, and Sumner Welles—came from families that shared experiences, as “their lives had intertwined from childhood and school days, from their early careers on Wall Street and in government” (Isaacson and Thomas 1986: 19). These were “solid and pleasant” experiences full “of tradition and of leisure.” President Harry Truman and Paul Nitze were the exceptions to these northeasterners. Truman came from a comfortable but not rich Missouri family and never graduated from university. Nitze, a professor’s son, hailed from Chicago, though he went “back” east to Hotchkiss and Harvard, where he joined the Porcellian, the most prestigious of Harvard’s clubs.

Education was important in getting the Establishment “intertwined.”<sup>2</sup> Traditionally, boys in the ruling class who became “old boys” had attended private “prep” high schools (e.g., Andover, Exeter, Groton, Hotchkiss, or Taft), and then gone on to Ivy League universities (preferably Harvard, Yale, or Princeton).<sup>3</sup> Prep schools were Spartan. For example,

Groton had been founded on the British model, entering its boys in forms, with seniority maintained through a system of student prefects. The students lived in tiny cubicles, took a cold shower every morning, washed in black soapstone sinks and tin basins. . . . The curriculum was classical, taught always with efficiency and sometimes with devotion. But it was above all the Rector who put his stamp upon the school, infusing the routine and discipline with an awful moral significance.

Endicott Peabody was . . . dedicated with passion to the idea of Groton School as a community—if not, indeed, as a family—that would produce Christians and gentlemen. (Schlesinger 1957: 330–331)

Headmaster Peabody, like other private school headmasters, was trying to turn out “muscular Christians.” This was a late Victorian movement that sought to inculcate in young men cultural messages of vigorous masculinity wedded to the pursuit of Christian ideals in private and public life. An old boy had to be physically hard, intellectually responsible, and in the service of Christianity (Putney 2003). Such a person, as expressed in *Tom Brown at Oxford*, had a “body . . . brought into subjugation” for “the subduing of the earth which God has given to the children of men” (Hughes [1861] 1885: 106–107). Old boys were into “subduing.”

Ivy League universities were the old boys’ next stop. The African-American philosopher W. E. B. Du Bois, who attended Harvard in the 1890s, marveled that these universities were temples where “Wealth was God” (Du Bois 1968: 26). Thus, in the theology of their muscular Christianity,

the trinity was replaced by the quatrality of Father, Son, Holy Ghost, and Money, and by the time they got to university the old boys had got their hands on the latter, prompting a lively hedonism in replacement of their earlier austerity. Old boys tended to join clubs like Harvard's Porcellian or Yale's Skull and Bones and Scroll and Key, in which they congregated exclusively with others in their set. At the Porcellian, for example, "Nitze drank martinis with his fellow club member Charles "Chip" Bohlen and kept a bottle of rum in his room's chimney. Members adhered to the club's motto, *Dum vivimus vivamus* ('While we live, let's live')." (Thompson 2009: 29)

While at university some old boys discovered social Darwinism, a late Victorian ideology that justified their wealth (Hofstadter 1955). Social Darwinism was Herbert Spencer's problematic extension of Charles Darwin's thought into social life, where it became a "new philosophy to justify" the economic elites' "political and economic dominance" (Dye and Zeigler 2009: 59). It was championed in the US by William Graham Sumner, John Fiske, and John Burgess. Social Darwinism's basic tenets were that all of life—biological or social—was struggle, which led to the "survival of the fittest." Because those that survived were the "fittest," they were "selected" for preeminence. Sumner (1963: 157), for example, justifying millionaires, asserted, "There is the intensest competition for their [millionaires'] place and occupation," and because of this rivalry, "millionaires are a product of natural selection, acting on the whole body of men to pick out those who can meet the requirement of certain work to be done. . . . It is because they are those selected that wealth . . . aggregates under their hands." Sumner taught at Yale, John Fiske at Harvard, and John Burgess at Columbia, so old boys, having acquired muscular Christianity in prep school, were then dosed with social Darwinism at university. Medieval knights lived for plunder after their opponents' defeat, and they learned how to go in for the kill in jousting yards and tournaments. Old boys learned to go in for their kills in prep schools and universities; and their plunder consisted of elite opportunities seized and exploited in a social Darwinian, muscular Christian manner.

Paul Nitze—whom we shall meet later as director of policy planning in the State Department (1950–1953)—explained how the fight for elite opportunities was waged when reminiscing over a dinner at his soon-to-be in-laws' New York mansion:

It was an elegant dinner party; another guest was Sir Montagu Norman, a distinguished British gentleman and governor of the Bank of England. . . . [H]e said that the Great Depression was the result of universal overproduction. I was not over twenty-five years old, but that did not stop me from voicing my disagreement.

"Overproduction is not the problem," I said. . . .

There was a moment of silence as my impertinence hung in the air ... but Sir Montagu was interested. ... Our debate dominated the rest of the evening’s discussion. (Nitze, Rearden, and Smith 1989: xix)

Relatively few young Americans, and certainly none from the slums of New York’s Lower East Side, got to challenge the governor of the Bank of England about overproduction. Young Paul remembered that his debating got Sir Montagu “interested,” and getting people interested was of course a way of creating elite networks and opportunities.

What a world old boys lived in. Consider one tête-à-tête young Paul had with Clarence Dillon on a drive through the countryside:

Clarence Dillon took an interest in me and invited me to spend the weekend at Dunnwalke, his estate in New Jersey. On the drive out in his Rolls-Royce, I asked him whether we were headed for a recession. “No,” he said, “it will be the end of an era. ... we will not have a recession, we will have a depression.”

...

That is why, he continued, he was disbanding the company’s entire national distribution network and would retain only a core of people. ... He said he had given notice to some four thousand well-trained, good, able people employed by Dillon, Read and Co. (Nitze et al. 1989: xvii–xviii)

One does not know whether Clarence was trying to impress young Paul as they drove in the big Rolls out to the 1,200 acres of Dunnwalke in the New Jersey hunt country, but Clarence certainly indicated one of his powers—bringing depression early to “four thousand well-trained, good, able people.”

The Achesons, Dillons, Nitzes, and their set made the postwar world. Their prep schools and Ivy League universities embedded in their neuronal fiber the world view that if they were tough, the world was theirs for the “subduing.” Concerning their achievements, Nitze confided, using himself as an example, “I have played some role in the affairs of state, working with others to bend what otherwise might have been called the ‘inevitable trends of history’” (Nitze et al. 1989: ix). Meanwhile, his boss in the State Department, Acheson (1969: xvii), reported that “the postwar years were a period of creation” in which, he modestly admitted, “I shared with others some responsibility.”

What accomplishments: “bending ... history” and “ordering” the world. It is time to present the essentials of the world the Security Elites 1.0 “ordered” as they went about creation.

### **Their World at Creation: “The whole structure and order ... was gone”**

The period ... 1941 through 1952 ... was one of great obscurity to those who lived through it... The significance of events was shrouded in ambiguity. (Acheson 1969: 3)

The old boys discovered that the years around the end of World War II, as Acheson makes clear in the preceding quotation, were ones of “ambiguity” and “obscurity.” What was this world? Why the ambiguity and obscurity?

On 20 October 1944, as World War II turned decisively against the Germans and Japanese, FDR (alumnus of Groton and Harvard) gave a speech in his fourth, final campaign for the presidency. He declared:

The power which this nation has attained ... has brought to us the responsibility, and with it the opportunity, for leadership in the community of nations. In our own best interest, and in the name of peace and harmony, this nation cannot, must not, and will not shirk that responsibility. (In Sherwood 1948: 817)

FDR was articulating what the old boys knew: They ran the most powerful economic and military institutions in the world.

After all, at war’s end, roughly 50 percent of world manufacturing was in the hands of American firms. Its “industrial production was more than double its annual production between 1935 and 1939. The US was producing more steel than Britain and Russia combined. The US economy was producing half the world’s coal, two thirds of the world’s oil and over half the world’s electricity” (Rees 2006: 41). Its industry produced munitions at vastly faster rates than any other country. For example, airplane production went from 6,000 in 1939 to over 96,000 in 1944 (*ibid.*: 40, 42). As Sumner Welles bluntly put it in 1945, “The United States [is] the greatest Power in the World today” (1945: 115). Importantly, FDR had articulated impending US domination as a matter of “responsibility” and, as a muscular Christian, declared that the US would “not shirk that responsibility.”

However, the old boys also knew that just before the war the US, and the world, had experienced a Great Depression. First, as Clarence Dillon was letting his employees go, the stock market collapsed in October 1929. Both in the US and globally, market failure triggered a decade of high unemployment (reaching 25 percent in the US), poverty, low profits, deflation, plunging incomes, shrunken international trade (reduced by one-half to two-thirds), and lost economic growth. All US industries suffered, but the most affected were construction, agriculture, shipping, mining, and logging, as well as durable goods like automobiles and appliances. The economy bottomed out in the winter of 1932–1933; then came four years of modest growth, followed by the Recession of 1937 until the beginning of 1939, and a return to 1934 unemployment levels. By 1939, though it was not clear the depression was over, it was clear that World War II had begun.

The novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald confided during this time to fellow novelist Ernest Hemingway that, “The rich are different than you and me.” To



which Hemingway wisecracked, “Yes, they have more money.” Of course the rich still had more money during the Depression; they just had less of more. Some had lots less of it and threw themselves from windows as bankruptcies multiplied. To many it seemed as though capitalism was failing, which created a time of terrible reproductive vulnerability. Here was a great hermeneutic puzzle that elites’ were vexed to fix—as Nietzsche’s dinner debate with Sir Montague, referred to in the previous section, illustrates. Overproduction, high consumer debt, poor market regulation permitting overoptimistic loans by banks and investors, the lack of high-growth industry, and growing wealth inequality—all were said, sometimes alone but usually in concert with each other, to be causes of the calamity.

Moreover, the old boys never fixed the Great Depression. It just ended. Hoover and FDR, with differing hermeneutic politics, did everything they could to fix it. They failed. War followed, and when it ended the depression was over. Clearly, depression threatened capitalism, and the fact they capitalists did not have the power to fix it was depressing. The old boys might “have more money” now, but depression was shrouded in “obscurity,” and maybe they would not always have more money.

### *Collapse of the Old Empires*

The US had leadership not only because it was so economically powerful, but also because formal empires had buckled (further documented in chapter 6). The greatest of these, the British Empire, was terribly overstretched by 1945. Actually, some American elites had long realized that imperial England was in difficult place. In 1900, Brooks Adams told Henry Cabot Lodge, “England is sad—to me very sad,” to which Lodge responded, “Like you I hope she may revive, but I admit my hope is faint” (in Beale 1956: 450).

By the end of World War II, other old boys were aware Great Britain was in decline because their English counterparts had told them so. Lord Beaverbrook, publisher of the *Daily Express*, at that time the world’s most widely read newspaper, in a letter to Harry Hopkins, FDR’s close confidant, lamented,

Here in Britain we are passing through a strange place in public life. For the first time the English are not absolutely sure of themselves. They are anxious about their future. And this in some measure is due to the extent to which they have had to rely on outside assistance in the war. (In Sherwood 1948: 828).

The UK had accumulated external liabilities five times its prewar levels, liquidated most of its foreign assets, and lost much of export trade (ibid.: 92). On V-J Day (Victory over Japan Day), the US unilaterally terminated

the Lend-Lease program that had loaned supplies to US allies during World War II. The UK had received by far the largest part, fully \$31.4 billion. The termination of Lend-Lease threw Britain into even worse economic misery, with Lord Keynes declaring, it a “new Dunkirk” (Campbell and Herring 1975: 180).

President Truman reported how the British came requesting assistance, pretty much hat in hand, because “the postwar ‘austerity’ had forced the British economy to cut back to bare essentials ... and, as [Prime Minister] Attlee put it, ‘we can’t cut back much more; we don’t have any fat to sweat off’” (Truman 1956. Vol I: 429). Dean Acheson summarized the situation brutally: “Great Britain has lost an empire, and has not yet found a role” (1963: 162). Winston Churchill informed Acheson “that the hope of the world lies in the strength and will of the United States” (in Acheson 1969: 729). The old imperial lion Churchill’s communication indicated that the UK had found its new role. Its “special relationship” to the US was to be that of lapdog.

The situation was worse for the other formal empires. Germany and Japan were bombed-out, occupied ruins lacking basic necessities. Average caloric consumption in parts of Germany was reported at 1,050 calories per day per person in early 1947. Cannibalism was reported (Thompson 2009: 71). Other European empires were little better off, for the most part. Dean Acheson remarked, “In both Indochina and Indonesia colonial rule was beyond the power of either France or the Netherlands” (1969: 257). Summarizing this global landscape, President Eisenhower said, “Western Europe, as a result of the war, found itself in a state of economic collapse” (1963: 79), while “in the Far East the defeat of the Japanese Empire left chaos ... China itself was in a state of confusion” (ibid.: 30). What an opportunity for the Security Elites 1.0: the whole world for creation. This brings us to the bear that was a leviathan.

### *A Leviathan Named Bear, and What to Do about It*

On 29 August 1949, Joseph Stalin (“Uncle Joe” to FDR’s coterie), General Secretary of the Communist Party (1922–1953), announced detonation of Joe 1 (as the Americans called it), the Soviet Union’s first atomic bomb. Senator Arthur Vandenberg—a Republican who helped formulate Cold War legislation—captured some of Washington’s apprehension about this explosion when he said, “This is now a different world” (in LaFeber 2002: 91). The next few paragraphs explore the significance of Vandenberg’s observation.

The exploration begins by contemplating German military prowess. At the beginning of World War II, the Wehrmacht (army), with its *blitzkrieg*

procedural culture combining infantry, tanks, and air support, was arguably the most formidable offensive land force ever seen; however, it depended on oil, of which Germany had no domestic source. In Western Europe in 1940, the Wehrmacht overwhelmed the French and sent the British fleeing to their island refuge. In June 1941, Hitler turned east and attacked the Soviet Union with 4.5 million soldiers in Operation Barbarossa, in part to secure Caspian Sea oil. Bad move.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1941, the Red Army fought defensively, gave ground, and, though rarely, ceded strategic places such as the Baku oilfields. Then, in December at Moscow, the Germans were stopped and set back. They were beaten once more in 1942 at Stalingrad, defeated yet again in 1943 at Kursk, and devastatingly routed in 1944 in Belarus. Approximately 3.5 to 4 million German soldiers were killed on the Eastern Front, while another 3 million became prisoners (Overmans 2000: 265). Consequently, when the Americans and English initiated their 1944 Normandy offensive they faced a Wehrmacht already shattered by the Red Army (L. Hart 1968). Accordingly, the US military had every reason to be respectful of the Soviet military. They knew who had destroyed the Wehrmacht, whose ruin had made their Normandy invasion possible.

Yet the Soviet Union came out of World War II with enormous losses: roughly twenty million military and civilians killed, and the economy severely damaged and in desperate need of recovery funds. So whereas the Soviets were militarily strong, they were economically needy. The US, for its part, was about to become militarily vastly stronger. The first atomic device was tested in July 1945 in a desolate spot of New Mexico desert. At this test, J. Robert Oppenheimer, scientific director of the Manhattan Project that built the bomb, remembered a colossal flash of light on detonation, followed by a booming reverberation. Some observers laughed, others wept, most were still. “Oppenheimer himself recalled at that instant a line from the Bhagavad-Gita: ‘I am become death, the shatterer of worlds’” (in Stannard 1992: ix). Pugnaciously giddy at the US’s newly demonstrated strength, Truman told a visitor “that the Russians would so be put in their places; and that the US would then take the lead in running the world in the way that the world ought to be run” (in Williams [1959] 1972: 240). Truman was betraying something momentous. He intended to “run the world”; which of course was why Vandenburg had said, when the Russians detonated Joe 1, that it was “now a different world.”

Consider this world. If postwar human being is imagined as a sea, then the other formal imperial Leviathans were floundering or gone from it; save for the Soviets. The “Bear” is often used as a metonym for Russia. So out there in the sea of human being was another “shatterer of worlds”—the Soviet Bear, an ursine impediment to the old boys “running the world.”

This posed a hermeneutic puzzle, and with it a hermeneutic politics: How should the USSR be treated?

An old, deep antipathy to the Soviets went back to the Bolshevik Revolution. As President Wilson's Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby expressed it in 1920:

The Bolsheviki ... an inconsiderable minority of the people by force and cunning seized the powers and machinery of government ... and have continued to use them with savage oppression.... Their responsible statesmen ... have declared ... the very existence of Bolshevism ... depends upon revolution in all other countries including the U.S.... The Third International ... has for its openly avowed aim the promotion of revolution throughout the world. (In Hoover 1953: 360).

Colby represented the opinion of a Democratic administration. President Herbert Hoover expressed the view of a Republican administration several years later when he announced that, from the Soviets' "own books, speeches, and actions," the administration had "detailed knowledge as to Soviet aggressive intentions to destroy the free world" (ibid.: 361).

President Franklin Roosevelt had a different, less apocalyptic understanding. He did not believe the Soviets were "trying to gobble up ... the world" or that they had "any crazy idea of conquest" (in Gaddis 1972: 6). "Keenly aware of the realities of power," as John Lewis Gaddis (1972: 6) puts it,

Roosevelt knew that the United States and the Soviet Union would emerge from the war as the world's two strongest nations. If they could stay together, no third power could prevail against them. If they could not, the world would be divided into two armed camps, a prospect too horrible to contemplate.

In order to "stay together," Roosevelt came up with what the journalist Forrest Davis (1943) termed a "World Blueprint" that, as he explained to his *Saturday Evening Post* readers, was a plan to collaborate with the USSR in organizing the postwar world. The hermeneutic politics among the old boys revolved around the question of the USSR's appetite: Did it or did it not plan to "gobble up" the world?

One side in this politics followed FDR, tending to interpret the Soviets' intentions charitably. Chip Bohlen, who had served in Russia prior to and during World War II and thus had firsthand experience of the USSR, assured his security elite colleagues that the Soviets were not interested in expansion (Nitze et al. 1989: 98). General Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe, "still felt warmly about the Russians" (Bohlen 1973: 222). Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal (1944–1947), later the first secretary of defense (1947–1949), also believed "Uncle Joe"

to be a “fine, frank, candid, and generally delightful fellow”(1951: 14). In February 1945 Edward Stettinius, FDR’s secretary of State at the end of the war, reported “a high degree of cooperation on the part of Stalin” (Campbell and Herring 1975: 262).

There was another side to the politics. Nitze believed that Chip—his old drinking companion from Porcellian days—had it wrong, and that the USSR was bent “on extending the Kremlin’s domination as far outward as practicable” (Nitze et al. 1989: 96). Forrestal (1951: 47) ran into Averill Harriman, the ambassador to Russia at the end of the war (1943–1946), who—contradicting Bohlen, his predecessor in Moscow—stated “his strong apprehensions as to the future of our relations with the Russians. . . . He said the outward thrust of Communism was not dead.” Forrestal came to have second thoughts on the Russians. The editors of his diary report that at the beginning of 1946, he “had been filling up his diary with reported instances of Soviet aggression and domineering” (ibid.: 127). Even FDR, at the very end of his life, became exasperated. Forrestal (ibid.: 50) reported that “the President said . . . he felt our agreement with the Soviet Union so far had been a one-way street . . . if the Russians did not wish to join us they could go to hell.” A few months later on 12 April 1945, FDR suddenly said, “I have a terrific headache” (Sherwood 1948: 869) and died. Now the old boys were on their own. They would not finally solve the hermeneutic puzzle of what to do about the Soviets until 1949/50. How they would make the solution depended in some measure on their understanding of violence, which is discussed next.

### *The Old Boys Reflect on Violent Force*

The world built by the ancestors of the Security Elites 1.0 was violent: “Within no more than a handful of generations following their first encounter with Europeans, the vast majority of Western Hemisphere native peoples had been exterminated” (Stannard 1992: 2). After the Civil War, lynching of blacks and other minorities with elite connivance was commonplace (Brundage 1993). Factory owners and their government allies repressed industrial unrest with brutal efficiency from the 1880s through the 1930s (Goldstein 2010). During the time of US experimentation with formal empire at the turn of the twentieth century, warfare was continual in the Caribbean and Pacific. Theodore Roosevelt (TR) was matter-of-fact about the need for violence: “In the long run civilized man finds he can keep peace only by subduing his barbarian neighbors; for the barbarian will yield only to force” (1899, in “Special Friday Dead Racist Blogging” 2007). The core message of what TR was saying at the turn of the twentieth century was “peace depends upon violent force.”

The old boys were hermetically sealed into TR's understanding. As FDR put it in 1944, "Peace ... can succeed only where there is a will to enforce it, and where there is available power to enforce it" (in Sherwood 194: 817). Stimson, speaking to Congress in 1945, was clearer about the matter: "I realize only too well, the futility of what the Chinese call 'spears of fire' and 'swords of ice.' In this disordered world, for decades to come, the success of a program for peace will depend upon the maintenance of sufficient strength" (Stimson and Bundy 1947: 597–598). And he was quite clear that what he meant by "sufficient strength" was "the use of force ... to prevent the depredations of an aggressor" (ibid.: 598). Eisenhower (1963: 445), writing in the early 1950s, said even more unambiguously that "to be prepared for war is one of the most effectual ways of preserving peace." However, he added one caveat when he insisted that "the United States on its own initiative would never start a major war" (ibid.: 446). Note that Eisenhower was talking about "major" conflicts. He did not swear the US off minor wars. Finally recall, at the turn of the twenty-first century, that when accepting his Nobel Peace Prize, President Obama said, "all responsible nations must embrace the role that militaries ... can play to keep the peace." How are these security elite statements to be grasped?

At the entrance to Auschwitz, Nazi officials put the phrase "Arbeit macht Frei" (Work makes you free), when work at the concentration camp actually made people dead. At the entrance to their geopolitics, Security Elites 1.0 effectively placed the sign "Gewalt macht frieden" (Violence makes peace). Note the hermeneutic of this world view: perceptually, it is a vicious world; procedurally, violence makes peace. True to the hermeneutic, on 6 and 9 August 1945, the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were attacked with atomic bombs. The military had cute names for their nuclear weapons: Hiroshima got Little Boy and Nagasaki, Fat Man. President Truman, in a radio speech on the day of the Nagasaki attack, told Americans, "The world will note that the first atomic bomb was dropped in Hiroshima, a military base: That was because we wish in this first attack to avoid, in so far as possible, the killing of civilians" (Truman 1961: 212). Both Hiroshima and Nagasaki were civilian targets. Violence does make peace—that of the grave.

Consider the human being the old boys were in. The formal empires were disappearing. East and West muddled along in "chaos" and "collapse," in whose whirl there were two special eddies of "obscurity." What would the Bear do? What about the return of depression? But what a systemic moment: "Only slowly," Acheson put it, "did it dawn upon us that the whole structure and order that we had inherited from the 19<sup>th</sup> century was gone" (1969: 726). A "whole structure" gone meant a world to be made, and America was "the greatest Power." Its old boys would do the making,

and they would inflict violence. James Burnham (Princeton and Oxford), a significant postwar intellectual who had worked for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS, the CIA’s predecessor) during the war, predicted that “a World Empire has become possible, and the attempt will be made to establish a World Empire” (Burnham 1947: 58–61). In a 1942 joint statement, the editors of *Fortune*, *Time*, and *Life* magazines suggested who should run this empire when they called for a “new American imperialism” that would “promote and foster [US] private enterprise” (in Panitch and Gindin 2004: 29). The next section follows the Security Elites 1.0 as they confronted a political contradiction and the reproductive vulnerability it produced along the way to creating the social being, the New American Empire, that fought the Cold War and beyond.

### Imperial Contradictions

Recall that imperial contradictions are one form of political contradictions. Imperial contradictions come in two main alternatives: dominator/dominated, and inter-imperial. These alternatives are distinguished from each other by antagonistic structural units. “Dominator/dominated” contradictions are those where the units in contradiction are elite dominators pitted against dominated subjects over distribution of the shares of value produced in the empire. Such contradictions occur *within* empires and often intensify to the level of warring, as in revolts, revolutions, or insurgencies. The American Revolution was an example of such a contradiction: the dominated colonists in the thirteen colonies revolted against elites at the core of King George III’s monarchy, largely disputing who was going to get how much of the spoils of commercial capitalism. Later, in a further example of an acute dominator/dominated contradiction, Native American insurgency against encroaching settlers and their protecting cavalry during the US’s westward imperial growth was a struggle over who was going to get how much of the land. Often these insurgencies were suppressed with grim violence. However, as the following chapter documents, the years after World War II were a time of especially successful revolt for the dominated.

“Inter-imperial” contradictions are those in which the units in the contradiction are the empires themselves and the conflict is *between* empires competing to accumulate value. The Punic Wars between Rome and Carthage (265–146 BC)—according to one source, the largest wars to have occurred up to that time (Goldsworthy 2007: 13)—were an example of such a contradiction: the expanding Roman Empire collided with the already existing Carthaginian Empire over domination of the western Mediterra-

nean, allowing the Romans to accumulate enormous quantities of force resources. The spoils of inter-imperial war can be sweet, to the winner. There are such quantities of force resources and so much value at stake that for the winners, the question of when to war may come any time in a logic of warring to expand, expanding to war more, and so on.

Such a dynamic leads, if successful, to “universal empire”—dominion over the entire globe, a dream of imperialists since time out of mind. Sargon of Akkad (2270–2215 BC), one of the world’s first emperors, thought he had it in the third millennium BC; however, he suffered from a poor geographic understanding and had only a few towns and cities in what is now southern Iraq. Alexander the Great came closer to such an empire. Below I show how an inter-imperial contradiction emerged and intensified after World War II between the US and the Soviets, provoking serious reproductive vulnerability. The following section explores a reproductive fix that, when implemented, constituted the New American Empire and set it sailing toward universal empire.<sup>4</sup> It focuses on documenting a US/USSR inter-imperial contradiction.

*The US/USSR Inter-imperial Contradiction:* The US, as we have established, had emerged from the Great Depression as by far the strongest economy in the world. However, memory of the depression was never far from leaders’ minds; nor was the belief, which as we saw began as far back as the 1870s, that economic expansion was necessarily the fix for problems like overproduction that provoked downturns. The historian William Appleman Williams expressed this mindset when he observed, “By the end of 1946 ... even government spokesmen warned that the US might ‘produce itself into a bust’ if it did not obtain more foreign markets and overseas investment opportunities” ([1959] 1972: 267). These same “spokesmen” judged that “Open Door expansion ... was the answer to all problems” (ibid.). These spokesmen were correct in the sense that areas that fell within the Soviet Empire’s orbit turned out to be largely closed to Western economic activities. By 1947 the Soviets, believing the Truman and the Marshall Plans were designed to frustrate their own expansion even in Eastern European territories where the Red Army was stationed, sought to institutionalize their expansion into Eastern Europe. Stalin’s wily Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov remembered of this time that “we were on the offensive” because “they (the West) hardened their line against us, but we had to consolidate our conquests. We made our own socialist Germany out of our part of Germany, and restored order in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, and Yugoslavia ... to squeeze out capitalist order. This was the Cold War” (in Gaddis 1997: 30). For Molotov in those days, Cold War in Eastern Europe was “to squeeze out capitalist order.”



Unsurprisingly, a perceptual cultural message that hostilities against Russia were possible circulated among the US ruling elite. William Bullitt Jr. (Yale University, Scroll and Key Society), first US ambassador to the USSR and onetime boss of Kennan, expressed this view in a 1947 speech when he said, “The final aim of Russia is world conquest” (in Ambrose and Brinkley 1997: 77). By the end of the 1940s the National Security Council, located in the president’s Executive Office, had become the preeminent security institution in the US. Its seventh directive, NSC 7 (1948), reinforced this perceptual cultural message, judging that although the USSR wanted a period of peace to build up its strength, it “might resort to war if necessary to gain its ends” (in Jervis 1980: 565). Military elites chimed in: General Lucius Clay, who during the Berlin Blockade had faced the Russians as they denied road and rail access to Berlin to the Americans and their allies (June 1948–May 1945), declared that war could come with “dramatic suddenness” (in Jervis 1980: 564). General MacArthur, US military commander in East Asia, said: “Here in Asia is where the Communist conspirators have elected to make their play for global conquest. Here we fight Europe’s war with arms” (in Jervis 1980: 124–127).

Importantly, there was a conviction that one US defeat could provoke a chain of other defeats. A Truman administration spokesman, testifying before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1947, expressed this as follows:

Anything that happens in Greece and Turkey inevitably has an effect on the rest of the Middle East, in Western Europe, and clear around into the Pacific because all these people are watching what the US is doing. . . . If the countries of the world lose confidence in us they may in effect pass under the Iron Curtain. (In Jervis 1980: 573)

This was the “domino theory” interpretation of conflict with the Soviets: if one country fell, others would follow, like a line of dominos. Was the interpretation valid? By 1950 the Russian Empire (1917), Eastern Europe (1945–1949), and China (1949) had fallen. Each of these areas had tumbled to violent force. The USSR had 21.4 million square kilometers, Eastern Europe (Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, East Germany, and Romania) had 878,000 square kilometers, and China had 9.6 million square kilometers. Between 1917 and 1949 a total of 31,830,912 square kilometers had become Communist. The total landmass of the earth is on the order of 148.9 million square kilometers. Accordingly, by 1949 approximately 21.5 percent of the world’s landmass had fallen to Russia and its allies, and on average in the thirty-two years between 1917 and 1949 about 994,716 square kilometers of land were lost for capitalist enterprise every year, with all the territorial losses resulting from exercise of Communist

violent force. The domino theory seemed not so much theoretical speculation as frightening fact.

In sum, the expansion of the Soviet Union and its communist allies occupied 21.5 percent of the globe in the three decades between 1917 and 1949. This, to old boys peering out of their windows of authority, was a hard-to-miss intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction. They responded in muscular Christian fashion with a reproductive fix that constituted the New American Empire and, in so doing, added a “gargantuan” quantity of violent force to its governmental system.

### **The Fix: Onward Security Elites, Marching as to [Cold] War**

Before marching on, let us explore what was, during the 1950s and 1960s, a heated academic hermeneutic politics about causes of the Cold War that is relevant to understanding how the Establishment fixed the inter-imperial contradiction at the New American Empire’s creation. Two sides engaged in this politics. On one side were Arthur Schlesinger Jr. (Exeter, Harvard, and a member of President Kennedy’s administration) and John Lewis Gaddis (Yale’s doyen of Cold War scholars). These two hermeneuts of the US academic Establishment held that the Cold War was the Soviets’ fault, and more specifically that the problem was Uncle Joe. Forrestal, who as mentioned above considered Stalin a “generally delightful fellow,” was not alone: “no American policy-maker in the mid-1940s seems to have perceived Stalin’s paranoia” (Hoffmann and Fleron 1980: 214). Nevertheless, Schlesinger suddenly discovered him to be insane in 1970 (in Gardner, Schlesinger, and Morgenthau 1970: 72–73). Gaddis supported Schlesinger and, when the Cold War was over, wrote *Now We Know* (1997). What we now knew was that Stalin was a man of “brutality” who suffered from “paranoia” (ibid.: 8).<sup>5</sup> So, Gaddis queries: “Did Stalin therefore seek Cold War? The question is a little like asking: ‘does a fish seek water?’” (1997: 25).

Opposing the Establishment’s heavyweights were leftist scholars—importantly, the University of Wisconsin historians William Appleman Williams ([1959] 1972) and Walter LaFeber (2002)—who argued that the Cold War was the Americans’ fault. Their central point was that elite US governmental policy makers shared an overarching concern with maintaining capitalism, and it was this anxiety that had provoked the conflict. What are we to make of these two views?

Schlesinger and Gaddis proceeded to argue by calling their opponents names. First Schlesinger went after Williams, red-baiting him as “pro-communist” in 1954 during the McCarthy era (Grandin 2009). Then

Schlesinger and Gaddis went after Old Joe, denouncing him as a “bad” paranoid (Gaddis 1997: 294). A. J. P. Taylor, the magisterial historian of *The Origins of the Second World War* (1961), argued that blaming this conflict, or any conflict, on the actions of an evil maniac oversimplified the complex interplay of causes. Schlesinger and Gaddis’s position explains away the sources of the Cold War by making it literally a freak show produced by a bad, mad Stalin.

For their part, Williams and LaFeber take the analysis into the realm of the actors controlling the institutions with the most political and economic force resources, and hence agency, at their disposal. These actors—sane old-boy security elites—were indeed desirous of supporting capitalism. They did so by instituting nonviolent and violent institutions and practices to facilitate its reproduction; thereby constructing the social being, the New American Empire. Examining the actors with the authoritative resources to choreograph other US force resources seems a useful way of examining how the Establishment fixed the inter-imperial contradiction and built the social being that waged the Cold War. What follows is such an analysis.

### *The Hermeneutic that Solved the Unbearable*

Hemingway and Fitzgerald had thought the old boys were different. In certain ways, they were a lot like everybody else. They had to rise and shine in the morning, shuffle off to their ablutions, go to work, sit at their desks, and face the day; for, as Acheson preached, “Always remember the future comes one day at a time” (Acheson n.d: 1). Here is where the differences began. The offices of the Security Elites 1.0 featured outsized windows of authority that gave them responsibility over vast domains of events. Peering into the “chaos” of the postwar world through the windows of their authority, one of the things they noticed was the Russian Bear, and as Acheson said, “We groped after interpretations of them” (1969). Their groping finally resolved the hermeneutic puzzle of the Bear, resulting in a hermeneutic that began the march to the new empire and [cold] war. Let us follow this string, starting with the Yalta and Potsdam Conferences in 1945.

*Yalta and Potsdam:* Acheson had said, “the future comes one day at a time.” Of course, what “comes” is what security elites directly see as they peep out of their windows of authority. The Yalta Conference (4–11 February 1945) and four months later the Potsdam Conference (17 July–2 August 1945) were important because in their course, US security elites looked out their windows to see their Soviet counterparts staring directly back at them. Though there was still fighting, the war had been won. The conferences

were about how to establish a postwar world or at least start the process. The conference leaders were the heads of the three victorious states—the USA, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. At Yalta, a frail FDR, Churchill, and Stalin presided. FDR was pleased with the results. His concern had been, as much as possible, to ensure that the Atlantic Charter formed the basis of planning. An agreement was reached to reconstruct occupied countries in ways that, according to the Protocol of the Proceedings of the Yalta Conference, would allow them “to create democratic institutions of their own choice. This is a principle of the Atlantic Charter—the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live” (“Protocol of the Proceedings” 1945: 1569). Trade barriers were to be removed, and the Open Door policy instituted. The Soviets too had hopes. Advisers to Stalin, such as his chief economist Eugen Varga, assumed that the capitalist countries would return to their prewar conflicts over trade and colonies. Further, Varga believed there would be a return to overproduction and a consequent recession, inducing the US to offer the USSR assistance as a way of investing their way out of overproduction (McCagg 1978). Both the Americans and the Soviets were to be disappointed. Critically, the Americans believed that after Yalta the Bear would permit democracy and the Open Door in Eastern Europe.

What a difference five months made. The Potsdam Conference was held after FDR’s death (12 April) and the Germans’ surrender (8 May). Potsdam’s goal was to concretely negotiate postwar territorial realities. The US representative was the new president, Harry Truman. For the Americans, the basis of negotiations was again the Atlantic Charter. The problem was that the Bear seemed to be renegeing on its Yalta agreements. The Red Army occupied Eastern Europe on a north/south line roughly from Stettin in the north to Trieste in the south, and seemed indisposed to withdrawing. Forrestal (1951: 1) was concerned about the possibility of “disorder and destruction,” because the “Soviets, like Hitler, have become victory drunk and are embarking on world domination” so that the “situation in Poland is becoming increasingly serious.” Furthermore,

Berry’s dispatches from Bucharest and Harriman’s from Moscow indicate that the Russians have no idea of going through with the Allied Nations statement of policy about Rumania, namely to permit the establishment of free and democratic institutions in Rumania. Steinhardt makes strong recommendations from Czechoslovakia against the complete withdrawal of American forces. He says this will be an open invitation to the Communists in the country and to Russian influence from without to take over. (Ibid.)

On 23 April—only a few days after taking office—Truman sternly rebuked Molotov over the USSR’s refusal to allow democratic elections in Poland (Gaddis 1972: 243). Harriman, then the US ambassador to Russia,

made a point of seeing Stalin when he arrived for the conference. Seeking to be tactful, he politely said, “It must be gratifying ... to be in Berlin after four bloody years of battle.” Old Joe hesitated for a moment, “thought of other Russian imperialists who had pushed even farther west, and replied, ‘Czar Alexander got to Paris’” (in Isaacson and Thomas 1986: 333–304).

July came, and the Red Army had not budged. Panicked refugees fled westward. Britain and America protested, but Stalin defended his actions, insisting that his control of Eastern Europe was defensive. History supported the Soviets’ claim. France invaded Russia under Napoleon; the Germans invaded during World War I; at the end of that war, the US and its Western European allies invaded the nascent Soviet Union; and in 1941 Hitler invaded yet again. However, to the Americans and British at Potsdam, the Kremlin was insisting “on complete domination of the areas under its control” in the name of defense (Isaacson and Thomas 1986: 307).

Worry over the obstinate Soviets came to a head at Potsdam. Ultimately, as we have seen, the debate concerned territory and its domination. In the territory under which Russia exercised “complete domination” there would be no democracy, no Open Door policy. Just five months earlier Uncle Joe and the US had been wartime buddies. Roosevelt had promised the American people that Stalin would allow free elections. He did not. The State Department, according to one State Department official, was “floundering about” (in Thompson 2009: 59). The Bear was a hermeneutic nightmare. Somebody needed to offer a definitive interpretation of what was happening and what to do. Who could the old boys turn to?

*Mr. Kennan Gives His “Interpretive Analysis”*: The necessary analysis had to be offered by the State Department as the institution responsible for US foreign affairs, so the interpreter had to be one of their own. Why not George F. Kennan (Princeton), the deputy chief of mission in Moscow and the State Department’s top Soviet expert? He was a brainy hermeneut and, according to one commentator, a “poster child for the theory that mild-to-clinical depression actually enhances one’s ability to analyze the world” (Youngsmith 2010: 2). Occasionally he strayed off message—once, for example, he informed an audience that “there is a little bit of the totalitarian” in all people (in Harlow and Maerz 1991: 168) at a time when US hermeneuts were pushing the message that only the Russians were totalitarians. Critically, according to Nitze (Nitze et al. 1989: 85), he had “intimate familiarity” with the Soviet Union. Iconic of this intimacy was a 1944 entry in Kennan’s (2000: 90) diary: “The women had broad faces, brown muscular arms, and the powerful maternal thighs of the female Slav.” Fantasize on, George. The year 1944 was one of famine in the USSR, and a lot of those powerful thighs would have been pretty withered.

Nevertheless, the State Department had to work with what they had. George was the old boys' hermeneut-on-the-spot, so in February 1946 he was summoned by a State Department cable: "We should welcome receiving from you an interpretive analysis of what we may expect in the way of future implementation of [Stalin's] announced policies" ( in Thompson 2009: 56). He went to work lickety-split and on 22 February cabled his 5,300-word interpretation back to Washington. Known now as the Long Telegram, it went, in the language of the Internet, "viral." It was

distributed ... throughout the State Department and then rerouted ... to every embassy in the world. ... Averell Harriman passed a copy to Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, who passed copies to hundreds of colleagues. The Secretary of State read it. The President read it. Soviet spies in Washington read it. (Thompson 2009: 59)

What did they read? The text was divided into five parts. The first four parts interpreted the Soviets and Communism. The final part proposed policy possibilities based on the first four parts. Nothing good was said about the Soviet governance or Communism. The government suffered from an "instinctive ... sense of insecurity." Its members had a "neurotic view of world affairs." They harbored "disrespect ... for objective truth." Their Communism was a "malignant parasite." The most quoted sentence of the telegram stated that "we have here," in the Soviet Union,

a political force committed fanatically to the belief that with the US there can be no permanent *modus vivendi*, that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our [US] society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken, if Soviet power is to be secure. (This quotation and prior ones from the Long Telegram come from Kennan 1946)

The interpretation was clear. The USSR was a neurotic, fanatic, insecure beast out to disrupt and destroy the American "way of life," all of which was unbearable. Part of the hermeneutic puzzle had been resolved. Uncle Joe was reclassified as paranoid, and the old boys had an enemy upon which to practice muscular Christianity.

However, the fifth part of the Long Telegram had not been especially clear about what this practice might be. That lacuna was addressed when Kennan was asked to bring the Long Telegram to a wider audience by publishing it in the journal *Foreign Affairs*, which he did in an anonymously published text and mysteriously dubbed the "X-article." It was brought to ordinary citizens in excerpted versions printed in mass media magazines like *Reader's Digest*, *Life*, and *Newsweek*. It insisted that the Kremlin should be handled with "firm and vigilant containment, designed to confront the

Russians with unalterable counter-force at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world” (Kennan 1947). This “containment,” a term Kennan used three times in the X-article, was the missing procedure regarding what to do with the Bear: contain it in a cage.

Kennan’s Long Telegram and the X-article instituted a hermeneutic that solved the unbearable Bear’s hermeneutic puzzle. The first message of the hermeneutic was that of perceptual culture: If you saw the Bear, you saw the enemy. The second message was procedural: Contain it with “counter-force.” Because these two messages existed in written form, they became part of the public culture. Learned by large numbers of Americans perusing their *Readers’ Digests*, they became part of the country’s neuronal culture. However, this hermeneutic was especially relevant for the old boys, because as members of the official Establishment they were obliged by their windows of authority to deal with the Soviets. Hence, the Long Telegram and the X-article might be thought of as shaping how they experimentally fixated upon the unbearable Bear.

Aware of Kennan’s interventions, the Soviets asked their Washington ambassador, Nicolai Novikov, to respond by assessing the Truman administration’s foreign policy intentions. Novikov’s response was cabled to Molotov in September 1946. The cable’s first line announced:

The foreign policy of the United States, which reflects the imperialist tendencies of American monopolistic capital, is characterized in the postwar period by a striving for world supremacy. This is the real meaning of the many statements by President Truman and other representatives of American ruling circles; that the United States has the right to lead the world. All the forces of American diplomacy—the army, the air force, the navy, industry, and science—are enlisted in the service of this foreign policy. (Novikov 1946)

Between 1946 and 1950, as the next section shows, the old boys marched on to transform the containment hermeneutic into public *délires*, thereby making Ambassador Novikov’s announcement to be prophetic. In fact, they would fix the inter-imperial contradiction by constituting a New American Empire that did seek “world supremacy.”

### *Instituting the Public Délires of the New American Empire*

Instituting empire meant building up the institutions of the economic system of capitalist accumulation and fusing them to those of the governmental system. This choreographing was the work of devising public *délires*; whose implementation made possible performance of force extraction and its support. Two sorts of public *délires* were needed to perform these opera-

tions: (1) those whose implementation resulted in economic system force extraction, and (2) those whose implementation in the political system supported force extraction. At the same time, two specific sorts of political system public *délires* were necessary: (1) those whose implementation peacefully supported the economic system, and (2) those whose implementation violently supported the economic system. Finally, two types of violent public *délires* were instrumental in violently supporting resource extraction: (1) those whose implementation resulted in violent institutions, and (2) those whose implementation guided the level and the direction of violence. The next few pages explore the old boys constituting public *délires* and creating empire on the job.

*The Economic System:* Actually, the economic system was already constituted and was operating well at the end of the war. US firms were in a commanding global economic position, as other advanced capitalist states and the Russian economy were shattered. Consequently, it was believed that American firms would invest in foreign places, take over their economies, and repatriate profits to accumulate back in the US core. This process would hasten core US corporations' progression from national to transnational enterprises—and thus establishing global domination of capital accumulation. Global capital accumulation would turn out to be no easy thing. Not all would go well. However, exploration of this is reserved for the following chapter. The remainder of this section documents the construction of the nonviolent and violent institutions of governmental system.

*Developing Peaceful Governmental Support:* Old Joe was right—Czar Alexander's troops, upon Napoleon's defeat, had made it as far as Paris. However, Metternich and Bismarck had successfully kept Russia out of Central Europe. Stalin succeeded where the czar had failed. After Potsdam, it was clear that the Soviets were extending their domination throughout Eastern and Central Europe. Unclear, and nerve-racking, was whether there would be additional expansion into Western Europe and the Middle East. Essentially, the old boys developed iterations of the Open Door public *délire* to help prevent this development. These iterations involved the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan.

In early 1947, the financially exhausted British government informed its American counterpart that it would cease supporting the Greek state after 31 March of that year. This was ominous. The Greek government was engaged in a civil war with its Communists, and cessation of British support offered the Bear a tempting opportunity. State Department officials feared that Greece's fall could have a ripple effect, spreading Soviet power throughout the Middle East. President Truman responded by addressing a



joint session of Congress (12 March 1947) with a request for \$400 million to aid both Greece and Turkey. This speech’s substance became known as the Truman Doctrine. It did not directly mention the Soviets, but it did say that “the seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured by misery and want,” with everyone knowing that the Kremlin was the totalitarian regime. So the money would contain Soviet expansion, serving as “an investment in world freedom and world peace” (Truman 1947).

The Truman Doctrine applied to only two countries. However, the following year it was expanded to effectively cover all of Western Europe. This expansion had begun as a bee-in-the-bonnet of Forrestal, who wanted a “face-off” against the Soviets that would directly “pit capitalism against Marxism” (in Isaacson and Thomas 1986: 404). The point of this face-off was that successful capitalism alone would contain the Soviets. After all, who would want a decrepit economy like the USSR’s when they could have a shiny new capitalist model? Forrestal enlisted two other old boys—Clark Clifford, then an influential White House counsel, and George Marshall, who had just become secretary of State—in his projected face-off. Marshall, in turn, gave the job of turning Forrestal’s idea into policy to George Kennan, who after his Long Telegram success had been made chief of the newly formed (on 7 May 1947) Policy Planning Staff. For a time this blandly named unit would be the geostrategic brains of the State Department.

Marshall first announced the plan that would bear his name at the Harvard graduation on 5 June 1947. He stated:

It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health to the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is not directed against any country, but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos. Any government that is willing to assist in recovery will find full co-operation on the part of the U.S.A. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist. (Marshall 1947)

Marshall promised “the world” US “cooperation” in its “recovery” so that “free institutions,” meaning capitalist ones, would prevail. The USSR and its Eastern European allies, now pejoratively called its “satellites,” were initially offered participation in the Marshall Plan. They rejected it, fearing it was a Trojan Horse meant to weaken socialist economic organization. So “cooperation” extended only to Western Europe in the form of \$13 billion dispensed by the European Recovery Program (1948–1951).

The considerable debate over how to evaluate the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan has ranged from viewing it as an example of US generosity to considering it out-and-out economic imperialism (Kolko and

Kolko 1972). Both views have their merits, though one questions whether US goodwill was all that compassionate. Together the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan were important ways for the old boys to go about supporting their economic system.<sup>6</sup> Both provided US money to Western European governments. This was “goodwill.” But these investments were carrots to entice those governments to construct “free,” that is to say, capitalist institutions. The preceding makes explicit that money-giving was client-making, and that clients would, at least to some degree, run their economies in capitalist ways. Thus, US goodwill was not extended out of compassion, but as a way to open the door to US businesses. As such, was an iteration of the Open Door public *délire*.

Other policies the old boys implemented at the time further promoted the Open Door public *délire*. For example, Western European states that still had formal empires and wished to receive Marshall Plan funding had to allow US companies access to their colonies (Kiernan 1978: 285). Further, the US government sought to make it possible for US capitalist firms to conduct business without restrictions in Eastern Europe, in effect attempting to extend the Open Door policy there.

This threatened Soviet domination. Stalin and Foreign Minister Molotov, as already discussed, insisted that Eastern Europe must remain as a barrier against renewed Western invasion, and that these countries would be of little use as a buffer if they had capitalist economies. Additionally, any implementation of the Open Door policy in Eastern Europe threatened to divert economic benefits from Soviet to capitalist enterprise. Consequently, in the years immediately after Potsdam the USSR began to institute what might be termed a Closed Door policy, working in the late 1940s to create a relatively autarkic economic and political space in Eastern Europe.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, by the early 1950s the US, through iterations of its Open Door public *délire*, was providing nonviolent governmental support to its economic system, which in Eastern Europe had obliged the Soviet Union to withdraw into semi-isolation. Let us now consider the building of violent capabilities in the governmental system.

*Developing the Institutions of Violence: The War-Making Institutions Public Délire:* The US military had demobilized rapidly after wars in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. Initially, World War II was no exception. The annual rate of US military spending plunged from \$83 billion at the end of 1945 to \$7 billion in 1945 (“Defense Spending and Troop Levels” 2014). The US seemed to be turning pacifist. However, about a year and a half after the Long Telegram, and just as Kennan’s X-article was being published, Truman signed the National Security Act (26 July 1947). Its first line stated, “In enacting this legislation, it is the in-

tention of Congress to provide a comprehensive program for the future security of the United States; to provide for the establishment of integrated policies and procedures for the departments, agencies, and functions of the Government relating to national security” (National Security Act 1947). The CIA, in its public “Featured Story Archive,” tells the world: “The importance of the National Security Act cannot be overstated. It was the central document in the US Cold War policy and reflected the nation’s acceptance of its position as a world leader” (CIA 2008: 1). It was the work of many old boys, but Forrestal, even though he initially opposed certain portions of it, and Kennan were especially important in bringing it to a Congressional vote. It constituted the postwar US security apparatus.

The act merged different military institutions into a common agency, the Defense Department, headed by a secretary of Defense. Forrestal, who had been worried about a “face-off” with the Soviets, became the first Defense secretary. Further, the act formed the National Security Council (NSC), which was allocated “the function ... to advise the President with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security” (National Security Act 1947: 7).<sup>8</sup> Advice to the president was offered through the issuance of consecutively numbered policy “directives.” In the early years of the Cold War, the personnel of the State Department’s Policy Planning Staff did much of the work preparing the NSC policy directives.

Finally, the Act authorized the CIA to, “provide overall direction for and coordination of the collection of national intelligence outside the United States through human sources by elements of the intelligence community” (National Security Act 1947: 30).<sup>9</sup> Kennan had been particularly interested in refurbishing the US’s intelligence and covert action capabilities after Truman terminated the OSS. Kennan confided to Forrestal that he wanted the CIA to be a “guerilla war corps” (in Weiner 2008: 29) specializing in covert operations. Kennan tended to call these operations “political warfare.” He regretted the US was deficient in them because, he was convinced, “the creation, success, and survival of the British Empire has been due in part to the British understanding and application of the principles of political warfare.” So, he further believed, “we have been handicapped however by a popular attachment to the concept of the basic difference between peace and war” (in Thompson 2009: 84). Kennan’s view was unsettling: empire depended in part on covert operations that, being intrinsically violent, are hidden; hence, they hide war in the illusion of peace.

The Defense Department, the CIA, and the NSC were and are the anatomy of governmental violence because the first two institutions did, and do, much of the warring—covert or overt—and the latter institution

does much of the planning of that violence. The National Security Act was a “central document,” then, in that it constituted the institutional anatomy of US violence. Three additional NSC directives further shaped that anatomy.

Several months after passage of the National Security Act, the National Security Council issued a directive concerning covert action. This was NSC 4-A (NSC 4-A 1947), which specified that covert action would be conducted by the CIA and would occur in times of peace as well as war. NSC 4-A increased presidential authority by placing covert operations within the CIA, which was within the US government’s executive branch, overseen by the president. However, NSC 4-A’s definition of the CIA’s covert activities referred to “psychological warfare,” and this terminology prompted hermeneutic debate among the Washington elites as to the precise meaning of such activities. NSC 10/2, formulated by Kennan’s Policy Planning Staff and issued 18 July 1948, replaced NSC 4-A and clarified the matter. The directive first ordered that, “a new Office of Special Projects shall be created within the Central Intelligence Agency to plan and conduct covert operations” (NSC 10/2, 1948). It additionally directed that such operations

are understood to be all activities (except as noted herein) which are conducted or sponsored by this Government against hostile foreign states or groups or in support of friendly foreign states or groups but which are so planned and executed that any US Government responsibility for them is not evident to unauthorized persons and that if uncovered the US Government can plausibly disclaim any responsibility for them. Specifically, such operations shall include any covert activities related to: propaganda, economic warfare; preventive direct action, including sabotage, anti-sabotage, demolition and evacuation measures; subversion against hostile states, including assistance to underground resistance movements, guerrillas and refugee liberation groups, and support of indigenous anti-communist elements in threatened countries of the free world. Such operations shall not include armed conflict by recognized military forces, espionage, counter-espionage, and cover and deception for military operations. (Ibid.)

NSC 10/2 made it clear: during peacetime a branch of the US government, the secretive Office of Special Projects would conduct hidden warfare against enemies.

In sum, the National Security Act of 1947 had constituted overt US war-making within the new Defense Department, covert war-making within the CIA, and security planning within the NSC. As such, the act was indeed a “central document” and can be termed the War-Making Institutions public *délire*. The act, however, had not clarified what level of violent force would be at the disposal of the New American Empire, nor the

direction in which this violence would be directed. Kennan would address this oversight in another NSC decision.

*Kennan Addresses the Level and Direction of Violence:* Three months after settling the question of covert US violence in NSC 10/2, Kennan addressed the issue of the level and direction of violence in NSC 20/4 (23 November 1948). Here, as had been the case in the Long Telegram and the X-article, the argument was made in terms of a Soviet bogeyman. The directive begins by asserting, “Communist ideology and Soviet behavior clearly demonstrate that the ultimate objective of the leaders of the USSR is the domination of the world” (NSC 20/4 1948). Paranoid Old Joe wanted the world. He had to be stopped. In order for this to happen the US had to “develop a level of military readiness which can be maintained as long as necessary as a deterrent to Soviet aggression” (ibid.). Additionally, America had to “maximize our economic potential, including the strengthening of our peace-time economy” (ibid.). NSC 20/4 is both clear and obscure at the same time. It indicated the direction of US violence by making clear that military containment of the Soviets was “necessary.” However, it says nothing concerning how much military force was “necessary.”

Perhaps this murkiness was because Kennan was beginning to harbor reservations about just how much violent force was needed to militarily check the USSR. These hesitations sparked a hermeneutic politics. In a letter of 6 April 1948 to the influential columnist Walter Lippmann, well before NSC 20/4, Kennan claimed, “The Russians do not want to invade anyone. It is not in their tradition. . . . They don’t want war of any kind” (in Isaacson and Thomas 1986: 446). This letter was unsent. The Europeans, for their part, had their own fears about the Soviets, and on 17 March 1948 they signed the Treaty of Brussels, which bound Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, and the United Kingdom in a mutual defense pact against Russia. However, because US participation in the treaty was thought necessary to make it credible to the Kremlin, talks for a new military alliance began almost immediately with Washington. Kennan opposed US membership in any such alliance, believing it a needless provocation. This reluctance to bait the Bear cost Kennan credibility among other “old boys.” McCloy thought Kennan was “too damn esoteric”; Lovett said, “I liked him more as Mr. X”; and Acheson finished him off with the observation that he was a “horse who would come up to a fence and not take it” (Isaacson and Thomas 1986: 449–450). Kennan suffered from a “muscular Christianity” deficit.

Western Europeans’ negotiation of a mutual defense treaty against the Russians progressed smoothly, culminating in the April 1949 signing of

the North Atlantic Treaty, which inaugurated the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The treaty members

agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all. Consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense will assist the Party or Parties being attacked, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force. (NATO 1949)

NATO was significant because it bound the US to militarily support its Western European allies. Such military alliances would become commonplace throughout the world in the coming years. If the Truman and Marshall Plans provided carrots of economic assistance, NATO provided another sort of carrot. The US offered to kill for its client states. Who could ask for anything more?

Kennan had lost on NATO. In the summer of 1949 he made Paul Nitze his deputy at the Policy Planning Staff. Also that summer, he wrote that he had begun to feel “like a court jester . . . not to be taken fully seriously” (in Isaacson and Thomas 1986: 474). He had reason to feel as he did. Acheson, who had now replaced Marshall as secretary of State, curtailed Kennan’s influence. In September Kennan informed the secretary of State that he wished to be relieved of his Policy Planning Staff duties. He left the State Department in June 1950. The court jester had become nobody’s fool.

Nitze succeeded to his post, and very soon was involved in drafting what was to become the most important of the NSC directives. In the midst of this rearranging of the security elites building the US Leviathan, something happened that frightened them, and fear brought a particular perceptual “theory” of the way the world could change.

*The Bomb and the Domino Theory:* As we have seen, the US military was the first to acquire nuclear weapons. Thereafter, American killing elites slept contentedly at night knowing they could incinerate anybody, anywhere, without reprisals. How did they know this? They had done it, cremating gratifyingly large numbers of civilians in Japan in 1945—showing the world who’s who, militarily speaking. So when the Soviets detonated their own atomic bomb (29 July 1949), they created a world where they could do for Americans just as Americans had done for the Japanese.

The Security Elites 1.0 now knew dread. They began to interpret what defeat might look like, imagining a situation where one US defeat could provoke a chain of other defeats. This was the previously mentioned “domino theory”—a perceptual cultural message that the fall of one country to the

Communists would lead, like dominoes falling, to the loss of a whole string of countries.<sup>10</sup> It was not entirely fanciful. Since its inception, the Soviet Union had announced its intention of expanding Communism. Gaddis recollected how Lenin,

convinced that capitalism required exploitation of colonies for their raw materials and markets ... launched an appeal soon after the Bolshevik Revolution, for the “peoples” of the East” to overthrow their masters. He even authorized a congress of such peoples, held in Baku in 1920 ... at which fellow Bolshevik Grigorii Zinoviev called for jihad against imperialism and capitalism amidst a frenzied waving of swords, daggers, and revolvers. (1997: 158)

Actually, in the 1920s and 1930s through World War II the USSR did rather little to help those in the East “overthrow their masters.” But Moscow never gave up on Asian revolution. Thus, Stalin justified withdrawal of Soviet troops from China and Iran in 1946 as a way of exposing British and American imperial exploitation, thereby unleashing “a movement of liberation” in the colonies (in Gaddis 1997: 158). Hence, the intention to expand was announced from the inception of the Soviet Communist project, and to American elites this meant elimination of places where their capitalism could go about its accumulation.

Consequently, nagged by the double anxiety of the Soviet bomb and the possibility of losing territory in domino-theory scenarios, President Truman directed his National Security Council to reevaluate US policies toward the Soviet Union. The Soviets had immensely augmented their military capabilities. How would the US respond? This spawned hermeneutic politics among the old boys as to whether to up the ante and build a bigger bomb, the hydrogen bomb. Nitze strongly favored building it. The “court jester” Kennan, almost as his last act in government, argued powerfully against it; writing on 20 January 1950 a seventy-nine page document stating his case and expressing fear that development of the “atomic weapon ... will carry us to the misuse and dissipation of our national strength” (in Thompson 2009: 106). Spending escalating amounts on the military Kennan said would cause “dissipation” because the Soviets would meet each military advance with their own innovations. The language was strong: the string of events of escalating militarization led to “dissipation.” Eleven days later Truman publicly announced his plan to build hydrogen nuclear weapons. Thus the old boys responded to fear with a bigger bomb, and American schools from sea to shining sea were instructed to institute the practice of “duck and cover,” in which, after the bell rang, you ducked under your desk and shielded your head with your arms to protect against the nuclear fireball.

NSC 68: *The Global Domination Public Délire*: At the same time that the hydrogen bomb was being debated, the Policy Planning Staff was instructed to prepare a NSC directive that put the H-bomb's acquisition within a larger strategic perspective. By this time Kennan had been replaced by Nitze, whose disposition toward violence differed greatly from Kennan's, perhaps due to childhood experience. Nitze's father had been a University of Chicago professor. The neighborhood around the university was tough. For a while a gang roughed Nitze up on his way to school. He responded by joining another gang, which beat up members of the first gang, thereby freeing Nitze from difficulties with the first gang. The conviction that *Gewalt macht Frieden* had literally been beaten into Nitze. His Policy Planning Staff would author NSC 68 and make this point the prime national security goal.

NSC 68, issued in 1950, became the old boys' ultimate resolution of the hermeneutic puzzle of what to do about the Soviets in a nuclear world. To understand the interpretation taken, first note NSC 68's rhetorical strategy, which has been described as "apocalyptic" (Youngsmith 2010: 5). Its discourse plays on the trope of a "design." The Soviets had an "evil design," a "design ... for the complete subversion or forcible destruction" of the entire non-Soviet world, a "design for world domination" whose implementation would be "violent and ruthless" (NSC 68 1950: 6,13). This rhetorical strategy was set to the substantive chore of arguing that the US and Soviet Union were the earth's two greatest powers and that this world was in "crisis." The crisis was due to the Soviets, and the Soviets alone, who "unlike previous aspirants to hegemony" were "animated by a fanatic new faith, antithetic to our own" that drove them to "impose ... absolute authority over the rest of the world. Conflict has, therefore, become endemic and is waged ... by violent and non-violent means" (ibid.). NSC 68's understanding of the Russians was piece of perceptual culture. Moreover, it was a hermeneutic break that dispensed with John Quincy Adams's injunction, "America does not go abroad in search of monsters to destroy." Nitze had gone in search of monsters and had found one in the Bear. If the Soviets were the Americans' Other; Nitze's NSC 68 made certain they were understood as a "fanatic" monster-alterity.

Given this interpretation, NSC 68 proposed a procedural solution for the "crisis" with enduring global implications for US power. NSC 68 announced that "our position as the center of power in the free world places a heavy responsibility on the US for leadership. We must organize and enlist the energies and resources of the free world in a positive program for peace which will frustrate the Kremlin design for world domination" (ibid.).

NSC 68 conjures up a monstrous social being, the Soviet Leviathan. Opposing the Soviet Empire is a good social being, "the free world"—



of capitalism and liberal democracy—which America, as its “center of power,” “must organize” to “frustrate.” However, if “the free world” is understood as a euphemism for US Empire, then NSC 68 calls upon the US to “organize” its subordinates to “frustrate” the evil empire’s “design for world domination.” Of course, if the US was to “organize” the “free world” it would in fact be dominating it, and this domination meant that if the US thwarted the Soviets, its only competitor for world domination, then the US itself would achieve “world domination.” Ganging up on the USSR, according to the text of NSC 68, was to occur through “a rapid and concerted [military] build-up of the actual strength of both the US and other nations of the free world” (ibid.). The good guys in the free world were to arm themselves, big time. Nitze of the Security Elite 1.0 (and Hotchkiss and Harvard, via Chicago’s mean streets), proposed that the US organize a violent gang on a global scale, call it the “free world,” and set it up to “frustrate” the monster-alterity. NSC 68 instituted a particular public *délire*: perceptually there might be threats to US global domination; procedurally, these were to be eliminated, violently if necessary. This might be said to be the NSC 68 iteration of what was literally a global domination public *délire*. There would be other iterations.

What was, and is, NSC 68’s significance? NSC 68 validated Ambassador Novikov’s interpretation of postwar America because it affected the level and the direction of US violence. John Quincy Adams’s warning was summarily jettisoned. The New American Empire would now sail out of its territory to all places in the world in search of monsters to slay. Because some of these, like the Bear, were very violent, the level of US violence had to be even greater. Novikov had said Washington sought “world supremacy.” He was correct, and NSC 68 was an iteration of the global domination public *délire* designed to achieve it.

President Truman was alarmed when first informed of NSC 68, realizing that it had immense budgetary implications because US violent force had to be sufficient to nullify the Soviets’ violent force. Consequently, rather than immediately authorizing NSC 68 Truman initially shelved it, requesting further study of its financial implications.

However, over the following years it was instituted. In fact, by the early twenty-first century the US security budget was judged to be “enormous” (Hartung 2007: 1), a description applicable since the early 1950s. In the early 2000s it was estimated to be around a trillion dollars annually (Higgs 2007). Currently this spending represents roughly half of the world’s total military expenditures, and when the expenditures of Atlantic Community clients (NATO, Japan, South Korea, and Australia) are added in, the figure rises to 72 percent (Hellman and Sharp 2009). Approximately 50 percent of US tax revenues are spent on military items. These funds purchased

approximately 1.45 million active-duty US soldiers in 2011 (Infoplease 2011: 1). Additionally, in the 1980s the UK had 344,150 soldiers, West Germany had 495,000 soldiers, and France had 500,000 soldiers (LaFeber 2002: 284).

However, “The crucial military superiority is not nuclear weapons or weight of numbers but global deployment and firepower” (M. Mann 2003: 20). The US had fourteen bases outside its borders in 1938 (Lutz 2009). According to the Defense Department’s annual Base Structure Report for 2003, the Pentagon owned or rented 702 overseas bases in 130 countries, with another 6,000 bases in the US and its territories (C. Johnson 2005). If the number of countries in the UN is taken as a proxy indicator of the number of countries in the world, then the US had bases in 67.4 percent of all the world’s states in 2003. Lutz and Vine estimated there were from 900 to 1,000 bases throughout the world by 2009 (Lutz 2009; Vine 2009); personnel, according to the Defense Department, were in 150 countries in 2011 (“US Military Personnel by Country” 2011)—that is, 78 percent of the countries in the UN. The New American Empire has not instituted formal colonies. Why bother, when your soldiers are there to violently enforce your interests?

In the 1990s US firepower was especially enhanced by a “revolution in military affairs” (RMA), which refers to “a major change in the nature of warfare brought about by the innovative application of new technologies which, combined with dramatic changes in military doctrine and operational and organizational concepts, fundamentally alters the character and conduct of military operations” (M. Mann 2003: 23).<sup>11</sup>

The inter-imperial contradiction intensified as the Soviets expanded following World War II. Such a situation promised reproductive vulnerabilities, so the old boys became fixated on the hermeneutic puzzle of the nasty Bear. Between 1947 and 1950 five governmental acts (the National Security Act in 1947, NSC 4-A in 1947, NSC 10/2 in 1948, NSC 20/4 in 1948, and above all NSC 68 in 1950) instituted the Open Door, war-making institutions, and global domination public *délires*. All this created governmental support for the US imperial social being’s economic system, whose capitalist institutions were doing quite well extracting value at home and abroad. It is time now to specify the overall structural form and glue of this New American Empire.

### A Three-Tiered Rental Empire

Since 1945 the US has developed what might be termed a three-tiered imperial system. The “imperial core” of the US, with the most force and

power, has been at the top of this hierarchy. Beneath the US has been a second tier of countries that Dean Acheson spoke of in a radio speech to the nation on 18 March 1949, when he said, “North America and Western Europe have formed the two halves of what is really one community,” which he called the “Atlantic community” (Acheson 1949). Acheson’s use of “community” appears to reflect to his belief that many people in North America and Western Europe broadly shared liberal cultural ideologies. The Atlantic Community originally included capitalist Western Europe but has increasingly grown to include honorary members such as Japan and Australia. Taken together, the original members of the community and the later additions might be called the “greater Atlantic community.” Since the final elimination of formal empire, the US has tended to utilize certain geopolitically significant states in the developing world as sub-imperialist satrapies in the sense that they defend US interests in their region. Iran under the Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (1953–1979) was such an ally in the Middle East. Considerable strategic rent has been paid to the second tier via programs such as the Marshall Plan and NATO.

Second-tier states have considerable force and power; consequently, they have some ability to negotiate relations with the core. Their autonomy varies. Some, such as France under President De Gaulle, have been more independent. Others, like Germany, have been more compliant with US demands though at times showing independence, for example with the development of *Ostpolitik* under Willi Brandt in the 1960s, or Gerhard Schroeder’s opposition to Bush II’s war in Iraq. Still others have been spear-carriers of US imperialism, for example, Great Britain. However, all of these second-tier states—Atlantic Community members and others alike—basically operate in ways consistent with US public *délires*. They are for capitalism—their own and that of America—and they will defend this world with violence if necessary. Because of their privileged position in the New American Empire, these states might be termed “advantaged clients.”

The New American Empire’s governmental elite tolerate informal sub-imperialisms among advantaged clients, so second-tier countries in the US empire have regions where they too continue, or try to continue, imperial activities. The countries doing this are former formal empires, and the regions they do it in are where they had their colonies. France, for example, does this in past sub-Saharan colonies in an informal sub-empire termed “*Françafrique*” (Verschave 1999). A key rule of such regional imperialisms is that while doing their own imperial business they should also mind the store of the US empire. Consider, for example, that the US government desires to weaken Hezbollah in Lebanon because it possesses considerable military capabilities, is an ally of Iran, is anti-Israeli, and consequently is an opponent of US Middle Eastern interests. France, especially under Presi-

dent Sarkozy, pursued its interests in Lebanon, including opposing Hezbollah, thereby doing Washington's work. Israel assisted the CIA in the 2008 assassination of Imad Mughniyah, Hezbollah's international operations chief (Goldman and Nakashima 2015).

A third tier of client states exists largely in the less developed world. These countries possess natural resources or markets coveted by countries in the first two tiers of the empire. The more important third-tier clients are petroleum-producing countries, especially those in the Persian Gulf area and, increasingly, Central Asia and Africa. These third-tier states have the least force and power in the tripartite imperial hierarchy. They tend to be provided with fewer strategic rents from the core, and to be accorded fewer opportunities to negotiate relations with the core. They do what they are told. They are the Haitis, Panamas, Dominican Republics of the world. They might be termed "ordinary clients." Although this organization of imperial core, advantaged clients, and ordinary clients does not include all the countries in the world—certainly the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) in 2010 were not US clients—it does include countries in all parts of the world, and is therefore a global empire. The following will consider the actors who work with core elites to choreograph operations throughout the global New American Empire.

*Advantaged and Hybrid Elites:* The US requires its handler elites to manage its client states' subject elites, because it is these latter actors who perform the chores equivalent to those done by colonial officials and compradors in the colonies of formal empires. In the countries of the original Atlantic Community, this is not much of a problem. English, French, and German elites come from families and go to schools that produce actors with worldviews resembling those of their American counterparts. Graduates of Oxbridge, a *grande école*, or a German dueling club differ little from their Harvard or Yale counterparts. Because of such backgrounds, they are privileged. These people, once they have grown up and gotten jobs in either large transnational corporations or government, should be called "advantaged" elites.

Matters are more complicated in the developing world, where the elites are culturally different from their American counterparts. To do the job of imperial management in the developing world, however, there have emerged what Jonathan Friedman (1999: 409) calls "hybrid cosmopolitans."<sup>12</sup> I prefer the term "hybrid elites" because it is not clear that elites are all that cosmopolitan.<sup>13</sup> They are subject elites in strategic positions in developing client countries' government or economic institutions who have been Euro-Americanized because their parents recognized the importance of sending them to schools and other establishments (camps, clubs,

employments, neighborhoods) favored by American or European elites. So they attended the “Harvards” and “Oxfords” of the world and during these years acquired aspects of old-boy positional culture in addition to their pre-existing positional culture. One US official judged Mexico’s president to be reliable during NAFTA negotiations because he was Harvard-educated and so, according to the official, was “one of us” (Rothkopf 2009: 11). However, these subject elites are hybrids, in the sense that they are part of whatever positional culture they came from and part old boy. They may root for the Boston Red Sox, but at the same time hold it as a possibility that Ganesh, “Remover of Obstacles,” made Boston’s 2013 World Series triumph possible.

Advantaged and hybrid elites participate in transnational networks by working with handler elites in the New American imperial core. The environment is chummy. They get along in the very best places at work and at play, treating each other to desired economic or political opportunities. These network opportunity flows exhibit reciprocities. When somebody gives you an opportunity, you are obliged to give something in return—to “scratch the back” of that somebody, in American slang. Consequently, if an American handler has given you something, you should reciprocate when s/he wants something back. Managing the New American Empire thus involves subject elites and core handlers scratching each other’s backs, which in economic anthropological terms means they perform generalized reciprocity (Sahlins 1972). Elites are unlikely to describe their relations as “back scratching,” which connotes corruption. More probably they will use the language of friendship and/or kinship, which has virtuous moral implications. For example, Hillary Clinton, when President Obama’s secretary of State, stated, “I really consider President and Mrs. Mubarak to be friends of my family” (in Radia 2011).

To illustrate the nature of hybrid elites, consider Saif al-Islam (literally “Sword of Islam”), Libyan President Gaddafi’s youngest son. On the one hand, as his father’s son he shared much of the positional culture of the kin network that surrounded President Gaddafi. On the other hand, he was a graduate of the London School of Economics who enjoyed the London social circuit. *Slate* reported that this social circuit enjoyed “parties in St. James’s Palace and sailed in yachts off Corfu.” The circuit included

Nat Rothschild, scion of the banking family, who gave a party for Saif when he completed his doctorate on “civil society” and “global governance” ... Sir Howard Davies, director of the LSE and one of Tony Blair’s economic envoys to Libya; Lord Peter Mandelson, a former Blair adviser, Cabinet minister, and European commissioner, who now advises “companies hoping to expand markets overseas”; Prince Andrew, who promotes British trade abroad; and, last but not least, Blair himself. (Applebaum 2011)

The *Slate* article further explained that “thanks to his [Saif’s] contacts, he became the conduit through which British companies invested in Libya—and through which the Libyan Investment Authority invested in British companies” (ibid.).

Saif’s handlers took him to nice parties. In reciprocation, Saif became a “conduit” for UK investment. A fine bit of back scratching. However, the case of Saif illustrates the risks of being a hybrid elite. Currently, Saif rots in a Libyan jail, betrayed by his handlers. However, one point should be clear: advantaged and hybrid elites in transnational elite networks replace the formal empires’ colonial administration, managing imperial operations across the three tiers of the New American Empire. It is time now to more exactly specify the social constitution of this empire.

*Integration by Invitation or Rent?* Social constitution is the manner in which social forms are integrated, “integration” being understood as the “glue” bonding social parts together. In this conceptualization, the analysis of social constitutions seeks to discover the forces that do the bonding. So the current chore is to sniff out the glue that integrates the particular imperial shape that the old boys created.

Consider one glue favored by certain liberal political thinkers. The US has been described by Lundestad (1986) and Gaddis (1997) as an “empire by invitation” where client states “invited” the US “to play” the role of an imperial core (Lundestad 1986: 263). This means that the empire was integrated by the *délirés* of elites in the different types of neo-colonies, who wanted US domination. Thus, unlike the formal empires, where colonies were ultimately attached by military compulsion, the US Leviathan was glued together by invitation, which took the form of programs like the Marshall Plan; other development programs (e.g., those provided by the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961); and bilateral or multilateral military alliances (e.g., NATO or the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, SEATO). However, to insist that the US Empire was, and is, integrated because its clients’ elites desired imperial domination is an oversimplification.

This is so for two reasons. To understand the first, consider that the Empire of Bagirmi in precolonial Chad would defeat its opponents, whereupon they would ask—quite politely—to become tributaries (Reyna 1990). Further, throughout imperial history polities about to become colonies, perceiving the writing on the wall, usually either asked to be colonies or were in some way invited to do so. So there is nothing especially novel about the US being an empire by invitation. A second oversimplification in judging the US empire to be constituted by invitation is that it leaves unanswered a key question: What made motivated clients seek invitation? Only when

this question is answered does the investigator know what glues it together. Thus, attention turns to a search for the sticky glue adhering the US core to its clients.

Think carrots. The hybrid and advantaged elites were motivated to seek invitation by their handlers’ carrots, which raises the question, What is a carrot? One answer is that it is a form of rent. A common definition of rent is “income from hiring out land or other durable goods” (*The Economist* 2010). In premodern agricultural empires, the state (sovereign and lords) owned the land. Agricultural workers supplied the sovereign and lords with part of their labor or agricultural products as payment (rent) for the right to use the land. In modern formal empires, the core state was the ultimate owner of the land in its colonies by virtue of its sovereignty over the colonial territory. Consequently, colonial officials could demand income from their subjects—corvée labor, money, or in-kind products—by virtue of their ownership of the colonial territory, which meant that the subjects’ fees were effectively rents.

However, the US makes no pretense of owning the land of its client countries. American elites make no claim of empire or of colony, and they insist that client states are sovereign. Nonetheless, as in the formal empires a certain type of rent, was, and is, paid in the New American Empire, only it goes in the opposite direction, from the core imperial state to the dominated client states. The rent paid is not income specifically remunerating the use of land or other durable goods. Rather, it pays for general “backing” from client states in the form of some of the clients’ economic or violent force resources provided for the core’s needs. This type of rent is income derived from the hiring out of backing. Such rents were “carrots” earlier in this text, but they are more technically described as “strategic rents.” As an informal empire, the US pays strategic rents to assure backing.

Strategic rents can be paid in many forms. US payments made to countries as part of the Marshall Plan were strategic rents. US foreign assistance is an important strategic rent. Provision of military assistance is another form of strategic rent. Between 1950 and 2000, ten million US military personnel were stationed in Germany (Kane 2004). The money that Germany did not have to spend on military force resources during this time because the US underwrote its security was a strategic rent paid for its backing of the New American Empire. Some US security elites have indicated awareness that the US pays security rents. For example, Charles Freeman, US ambassador to Saudi Arabia during the Iraq Wars, once confided, “The basic bargain of Saudi-American relations was thus simple: in return for preferred access to Saudi oil, the United States undertook to protect the Kingdom against foreign threats” (in Rutledge 2005: 171).

Elmer's Glue-All held my sons' model airplanes together. Strategic rent is the Elmer's Glue-All of American Empire.

Let us turn to Malinowski and his understanding of the social constitution of the peoples he reported upon in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* ([1922] 1961), which furthers our grasp of the New American Empire's constitution. Malinowski's Argonauts were the Trobriand Islanders and their neighbors in the western Pacific. He understood them to have been organized by "forms of exchange" ([1922] 1961: 1), one of which, the *kula*, formed the topic of *Argonauts*. The *kula* involved exchange of valuables (*vaygu'a*) between men inhabiting the different islands surrounding the Trobriands. A type of bracelet (*mwali*) was given for a type of necklace (*soulava*). A *mwali* could only be exchanged for a *soulava* and vice versa. The exchange was immediate. When a *mwali* was given, a *soulava* had to be returned. Technically, this was balanced reciprocity (Sahlins 1972). The exchange never stopped, in the sense that a holder could never decide to hoard *vaygu'a*: it always had to be re-exchanged. Gifts had to be made against equivalent. Thus, the *kula* was an exchange system based upon equal reciprocities. It integrated the Trobrianders and their neighbors by connecting them in a network of continual acquisition of valuables.

The US Empire is also constituted as a system of exchange, though it differs structurally from that of the Trobriand Islanders because the *kula* did not operate so that one category of actors in the exchange accumulated value at the expense of others. Empires do not work this way. The imperial core extracts more than it gives. This is the case with the US rental empire. American rent-givers want the backing they receive from support-givers to provide force resources to fuel imperial projects, ultimately politically those of force accumulation or economically those of value accumulation. The empire only works when what is received in return for strategic rent payments exceeds that rent, that is, when the exchanges exhibit negative reciprocity. This is because when an empire receives less in backing than it gives out, it suffers decline in the force resources it requires to reproduce itself. Seen in this optic, it is clear that if support received does not exceed strategic rent paid, then the empire moves toward reproductive vulnerability. For example, money the US provided to the Atlantic Community via the Marshall Plan was intended to grow American capitalism by giving European economies the means to purchase American commodities. It succeeded and "fueled a tremendous demand for U.S. exports" (R. Scott 2002). The New American Empire might thus be viewed as a vast system of negative reciprocities whose elites deploy underlings to serve their *délire* of accumulating force resources. Now, drawing the various strands of this chapter together, I will respond to the question, what is new in the New American Empire?



## Not by Invitation, but by Invisibility?

We proclaimed a dream of an America that would be a Shining City on a Hill. (Ronald Reagan’s Nomination Acceptance Speech, 1984, in Michael Reagan and J. Denney 1997)

**Date:** February 21, 2010

**Place:** Convoy en route to Kandahar

**Circumstances:** U.S. aerial forces attacked a three-car convoy traveling to a market in Kandehar. The convoy had planned on continuing to Kabul so that some of the passengers could get medical treatment. At least three dozen people were passengers in the three cars. The front car was an SUV type vehicle, and the last was a Land Cruiser. When the first car was hit by U.S. air fire, women in the second car jumped out and waved their scarves to indicate that they were civilians. U.S. helicopters continued to fire rockets and machine guns, killing 21 people and wounding 13.

**U.S. /NATO acknowledgement that the people killed were unarmed civilians:**

Feb 24, 2010—General Stanley McChrystal delivered a videotaped apology. (Voices Co-coordinators 2010).

Contemplate two rather different beings: President Reagan’s dream and a three car convoy wending its way to Kandahar in Afghanistan. In the first quotation Reagan, a skilled hermeneut, evoked Governor Winthrop’s ghost. America is, he dreams, that shining city on the hill, representing the highest aspirations of humanity. Now consider the second quotation, an account of US aerial operations in Afghanistan. This concerns not what Americans dream, but what they actually do. In early 2010 US troops shadowing a three-vehicle convoy by helicopter opened fire on it, and when women left the vehicles and waved their scarves to signal they were civilians, the helicopter returned to rocket them again, killing twenty-one and wounding thirteen. Good shooting!

Lest one think this an atypical anecdote, consider what General Stanley McChrystal, then commander of US/NATO forces in Afghanistan, had to say about such incidents, “We’ve shot an amazing number of people ... and, to my knowledge, none has proven to have been a real threat to the force” (J. Elliott 2010). On the one hand, some elites insist that the US represents the highest of human aspirations; on the other, its soldiers butcher women. How might one apprehend the two opening quotations?

First, let us be clear about one matter. Arthur Schlesinger Jr., the Harvard hermeneut introduced earlier who might be expected to be an empire-denier, endorses the basic premise of the present and the prior chapter, insisting, “who can doubt that there is an American empire?—an “informal” empire, not colonial in polity, but still richly equipped with imperial paraphernalia: troops, ships, planes, bases, proconsuls, local collaborators,

all spread around the luckless planet” (1986: 141). Empire-deniers have tried to disguise these actualities behind their claim that the US was, and is, a sacred, shining city on a hill representing humanity’s “highest aspirations.” This chapter and the previous one have demonstrated how, over two shape-shifting centuries, the US has been an aggressively expanding imperial social being.

But another question remains: Just what is “new” about the current shape of this empire? A helpful way to answer is to clarify what is old about it. Like the oldest of ancient empires—the Akkadians in what is now Iraq (2250 BC)—the New American Empire is a fusion of governmental and economic systems united in the extraction of force resources from dominated populations. Yet despite its ancient structure, it incorporates a novelty: it is concealed behind its informality. Think of this informality as a cloaking device, like the one featured in the famous television series *Star Trek*. Its “troops, ships, planes, bases, proconsuls, local collaborators” are not “imperial paraphernalia”—at least, not in any formal sense. They are just hardworking elites—American handlers working with their subject elites, going about everyday business. When Reagan rhapsodized about how America represents the “highest aspirations” of humanity, he was in effect acting like Captain Kirk switching on the starship *Enterprise*’s cloaking device. The novelty of the New American Empire is that it moves about not by invitation, but by invisibility, disguising its actors as ordinary folk in other peoples’ countries.

But this recognition alone does not do full justice to the originality of the American imperialism. Informal empire is not unique to the Americans. As observed in the last chapter, it was practiced by the British in nineteenth-century South America, for example. The difference is that the American Empire is *entirely* informal, whereas the British Empire for most of its history was mostly formal.

A further novelty pertains to scale. At its height the British Empire occupied roughly a quarter of the earth’s surface (N. Ferguson 2004: 15). That was big, to be sure, but US imperialism has striven for world domination since NSC 68, and following the end of the Cold War such dominion seemed realizable in part because of increased force, both economic and violent. The US gross national product grew from about \$3 trillion in 1950 to about \$15 trillion in 2011. In 1938 the US had fourteen military bases outside its borders. In 2009 it had approximately 1,000 such bases operating everywhere on the planet.

Here then is the full novelty of the being the old boys constituted at creation. The US has always been an imperial social being. But what is now out there is a triple-tiered rental empire, a global system wielding enormous amounts of violent force. This combination of global reach and

capacity for violence is the innovation in Acheson’s and the other old boys’ work at creation. Bluntly, it is the largest concatenation of human force the world has ever seen. In Nietzsche’s terms, it is a truly global “monster of energy” cloaked by empire-denying hermeneuts’ insistence that it is a “shining city upon a hill.”

The introduction of this volume promised readers a journey. So far they have been taken to “a period of creation” in the sea of late modernity and have glimpsed constitution of a social being, the New American Empire. The journey continues in the next chapter. Readers learn it is not easy being an imperial Leviathan navigating contemporary seas. American imperialism has toiled against a rising coalescence of political contradictions and the one-two punch of cyclical and systemic economic contradictions. The next chapter details the contradictory currents the empire itself generates, and in so doing reveals why it is a world of *very* late modernity.

## Notes

1. Useful discussion of the Establishment in the immediate postwar period can be found in Isaacson and Thomas (1986). Burton Hersh (2001) discusses the elites and the founding of the CIA. Thompson (2009) explores the roles of Kennan and Nitze in creation of the postwar world. Beisner (2006) does the same for Acheson.

2. Gatzambide-Fernández (2009) shows how students at private schools construct elite identities. Bird ([1998] 2000: 23–71) provides a rich account of the old-boy upbringing of the Bundy brothers, important security elites of the Vietnam War.

3. A distinction should be made between “good old boys” and “old boys.” The former phrase denotes networks of non-wealthy Southern men of rural background. The latter phrase is derived from the term used to designate graduates of English private schools. To enhance their distinction, graduates of certain American private schools began to also call themselves old boys.

4. Does competition between imperial social beings inevitably progress to warfare? Debates over this question are ongoing. Some non-Marxists have insisted that empire is a source of peace, as in the Pax Romana of the Roman Empire or the Pax Britannica of the nineteenth-century English Empire (N. Ferguson 2004). Marxist scholars, especially around the time of World War I, fell into two camps. Those like Rudolf Hilferding, Rosa Luxemburg, Nicholai Bukharin, and Vladimir Lenin believed that imperialism was a stage of finance capitalism that led to war, whereas more moderate Marxists like Karl Kautsky argued that this was not the case. The text presents an argument explaining when two empires are likely to war. It does not address the question of its inevitability.

Certainly, imperial systems have frequently warred with each other in the modern world. The Spanish and Dutch empires fought in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The Dutch and English empires battled in the last half of the seventeenth century. The English and the French duelled from the seventeenth until the early nineteenth century. Next the German and the Japanese Empires took on the French and British Empires, aided by their informally imperial US allies, between 1914 and 1918 and then again in 1939 to 1945.

5. Gaddis’s position on Stalin’s mental state is equivocal. In 1972, he stated Stalin had “almost paranoid suspicion” but 349 pages later labeled him as exhibiting “paranoia” (1972: 10,

359). Later he admitted Stalin exhibited “extraordinary administrative performance” (1997: 8), something not associated with psychosis. Zubok and Pleshakov (1996: 274–277) revealed Soviet documents made available following the Cold War that undermine the case for Stalin’s paranoia.

6. Mitchell (2011) reports that a fair amount of Marshall Plan investment went into transforming Europe from coal to oil energy. Europe had large amounts of coal but lacked oil, which was largely controlled by US companies, deepening European client states’ dependency on America.

7. Two major institutions were instituted to do this. The first was the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) founded in 1949. COMECON was the USSR’s reply to the formation of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation in Western Europe. It included the USSR, Eastern Germany, Bulgaria, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, and Albania. These countries—the Eastern Bloc—came to be referred to by US authorities as the “Soviet Empire” (Gaddis 1997: 28). COMECON was a centralized agency for initiating and directing economic development in Eastern Europe, which among other things involved mutual trade agreements. Soviet trade with Eastern Europe, at \$380 million in 1947, doubled in 1948, quadrupled by 1950, and exceeded \$2.5 billion in 1952. Fully three-quarters of Eastern European trade took place within Eastern Europe (LaFeber 2002: 75). The economic door had effectively shut.

The second major institution was the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance established on the USSR’s initiative in 1955 in Warsaw, Poland (hence its usual name, the Warsaw Pact). Members of this military alliance promised to assist each other if attacked. The Warsaw Pact included the same countries as COMECON, except that Albania was not a member. The Warsaw Pact meant that the Soviets would fight to keep the closed door of Eastern Europe shut tight and, on occasion, to band together exploiting targets of opportunity in other areas of the globe.

8. Inderfurth and Loch (2004) and Rothkopf (2006) have written major studies of the NSC.

9. James Carroll (2006) describes the origins of the Department of Defense and its growth thereafter. Risen (2006), and Weiner (2008) do the same for the CIA. Alfred McCoy (2006) documents CIA use of torture.

10. The origin of the domino theory is unknown. Frank Ninkovich (1994: xvi) believes that a general domino theory was ‘first elaborated’ during World War I by President Wilson. P. M. H. Bell (2001: 117) suggests that General George Marshall in 1947 was first to advocate the idea that communist expansion could be interpreted in terms of a domino theory. By the late 1940s it seems to have been diffused throughout the Truman administration.

11. The US government spends enormous sums of money on RMA. The US research and development budget for military in 2004 was \$69.9 billion compared to \$48 billion for all nonmilitary projects (Barlas 2004). In the 2000s US universities received on the order of \$4 billion annually for defense research (Ghoshroy 2011).

12. Friedman’s identification of hybrid cosmopolitans in the 1990s was followed by a series of studies of transnational or global elites (Sklair 2001; Rothkopf 2009; W. Carroll 2010). These researches are largely restricted to transnational capitalist classes. This, I believe, ignores political elites.

13. If one meaning of cosmopolitan is openness to difference, I am not certain that any elites are at all cosmopolitan. Rather, they are partisans defending their particular class positions. For example, certain privileged Chileans who took economics degrees at the University of Chicago in the 1950s and 1960s went on to work for Pinochet’s dictatorship. Being good hybrids, they worked to defend Chile’s upper class-interests using the ideology of Chicago-style neoliberalism.

PART III

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**PLAUSIBILITY 2:  
CONTRADICTION AND  
REPRODUCTION**



## BURDENS OF EMPIRE

### *Contradictions and Reproductive Vulnerabilities*

Economic strength at home and abroad is the foundation of America's hard and soft power. Earlier enemies learned that America is the arsenal of democracy; today's enemies will learn that America is the economic engine for freedom, opportunity and development. (Robert Zoellick, 20 September 2001, in M. Mann 2003: 49)

Despite the aura of omnipotence most empires project, a look at their history should remind us that they are fragile organisms. (A. McCoy 2010: 1)

Robert Zoellick, at the time President Bush II's trade representative, ruttered the above quotation in the jittery days immediately after 9/11, reassuring everybody that America's "economic strength" was the "engine" of "freedom, opportunity and development." Assumed in Zoellick's discourse is that the imperial engine has plenty of "power" to go about its business. This chapter interrogates that assumption and in doing so submits that the most powerful social being in history—Leviathan of Leviathans—is at the same time, as McCoy put it in the second quote, "fragile."

Remember two points: first, that three major variables in global warring theory (contradiction, reproduction, and global warring) account for the power dynamics of empire; and second, that contradictions in this theory are supposed to intensify and coalesce, leading to reproductive vulnerability. The past chapter showed how the inter-imperial contradiction had led to reproductive vulnerability, which the security elites sought to fix by constituting their imperial Leviathan. If the economic system, as the ultimate producer of force, is viewed as the engine of a social being, then the present chapter probes the engine of the New American Empire. It details the relationship between economic contradictions and reproduction,

seeking to discover whether contradictions have intensified and coalesced, producing vulnerabilities. At issue will be the state of cyclical and systematic, economic contradictions.

## **Up and Down, More Down**

“In 1974–1975 the U.S. economy and the world economy as a whole entered a full-fledged structural crisis,” involving “worsening conditions of accumulation” (Foster and McChesney 2009: 9). First it was good. The years immediately after World War II until roughly the mid 1970s have been called a “golden age” for US capitalism (Marglin and Shor 1992). Then it got bad. The years roughly from 1973 though the present have witnessed what is termed a “long downturn” (Brenner 1998: i) of the US economy—what Foster and McChesney term “a full-fledged structural crisis.” This section shows how the long economic downturn corresponds to the intensification and coalescence of cyclical and systemic contradictions, which saddled the New American Empire with a reproductive vulnerability. Analysis reveals a double cycling of the US economy since 1945 that is up and down—maybe more down than up.<sup>1</sup>

### *Cyclical Contradictions*

The double cycling of the US and global economy since 1945—a “long upturn” followed by a “long downturn” (Brenner 1998: i)—has been dramatic. So impressive was the upturn that it has been characterized as “the most sustained and profitable period of economic growth in the history of world capitalism” (McCormick 1989: 99). During its course, the Nobel Prize-winning economist Robert Solow (1970: 410) announced that the cycling of capitalist economies had been solved after all: “The old notion of a ‘business cycle’ is not very interesting any more.” Solow was wrong. Joan Robinson reported that the expansion gradually ended in the late 1960s and by 1973 had turned into a “leaden age” (1962: 54). The world’s annual GDP increase, which had averaged 3.6 percent during the 1960s, fell to 2.1 percent in the 1970s, 1.3 percent in the 1980s, 1.1 percent in the 1990s, and 1 percent in the 2000s (Bond 2006: 14–15). No serious economist challenges this characterization of the economics of the years since 1945.

A second cycle in the double cycling, occurring within the long downturn itself, has involved alternation between growth phases guillotined by five recessions in 1973–1974, 1981–1982, 1990–1991, 2001–2002, and 2008–2010. In the US economy the 1970s recession inaugurated a time



of “stagflation”—the conjuncture of high inflation, high unemployment, and economic stagnation. Unemployment rose from 5.1 percent in January 1974 to 9.0 percent in May 1975. Inflation, which had averaged 3.2 percent annually following World War II, more than doubled in 1973 to a 7.7 percent annual rate. By 1979 inflation had reached 11.3 percent, and in 1980 it soared to 13.5 percent. The conservative hermeneut Martin Feldstein (Harvard and Oxford), writing at the end of the 1970s, observed: “There is a strong temptation to regard the poor performance of the past decade as the beginning of a new long-term adverse trend for the American economy. It is, however, too early to know whether such an explanation is really warranted” (1980: 2). It was.

Another recession began in 1980 and continued through 1982. Some have argued that this recession was initiated by attempts to deal with stagflation, especially a tightening of monetary policy by Federal Reserve Board Chairman Paul Volker. Decline in the US manufacturing sector became noticeable during this recession. In the mid 1960s manufacturing output was 27 percent of GNP; by 2003, these numbers had fallen precipitously to about 13.8 percent (McKinnon 2004: 1). By the 1980s the manufacturing sectors in other advanced capitalist countries—Japan and Germany especially—had rebounded from World War II, provoking serious competition with US industry. This competition was “one cause” (Plotnick et al. 2000: 285) of the deindustrialization that became serious in the 1980s. As a result of the deindustrialization, “older regions of the country had trouble recovering as entire industries collapsed, leaving distress in a wide swath that became known as the “Rust Belt” (Galambos 2000: 965) because of the severe job loss it suffered. Katherine Newman (1988: ix), writing of the 1980s, reported, “hundreds of thousands of middle class families plunge down America’s social ladder every year.” Additionally, the recession, in conjunction with deregulation, led to problems in the US financial sector throughout the late 1980s. On the Black Monday of 19 October 1987, a stock market collapse of unprecedented size—larger than that of 1929—reduced the Dow Jones Industrial Average by 22.6 percent, causing banks and savings and loan institutions to fail at exceptionally high rates (Lawrence White 1991). The US economic problems of the 1980s carried over into the early 1990s. The panic that followed the 1987 recession led to a sharp recession in the US in 1990, and for the next few years the US economy exhibited high unemployment, massive government budgetary deficits, and slow GDP growth.

Then, in the mid 1990s, the US economy rebounded. Trade opportunities expanded after the fall of the Soviet Union and its satellites. Technological developments brought a wide range of new electronic products. Telecommunications and computer networking advances led to an ex-

panding computer hardware and software industry. The Internet was born. A dot-com boom began, based on companies' sales of products and services derived from the Internet. Also during the 1990s, at the urging of the Clinton administration, the financial sector was further deregulated. This led to the invention of novel financial instruments, especially derivatives like collateralized debt obligations or credit default swaps. Wall Street prospered greatly, at least for the next few years, and like the financial sector, so did the whole economy. Corporate profits rose quickly, inflation and unemployment were low, and strong profits sent the stock market surging as the Dow Jones Industrial Average, which had stood at just 1,000 in the late 1970s, hit the 11,000 mark in 1999. For this reason Joseph Stiglitz (2004: in the subtitle)—another winner of the Nobel Prize for Economics, a liberal hermeneut, and a member of President Clinton's Council of Economic Advisors—called the 1990s “the World's Most Prosperous Decade.” Stiglitz was wrong. For the US and the world, the average annual GDP growth rate in 1990–1996 was lower both than it had been in either 1965–1980 or 1980–1990 (Palley 1999: 3). Worse trouble loomed.

In 2009 *Time* magazine announced that the US and the world were in “the Great Recession” (Gibbs 2009). Trillions of dollars in stock value were lost. For a time in 2008, Paul Krugman (2009) wrote that key economic indicators—such as world trade and world industrial production—“were falling as fast as or faster than they did in 1929–1930. But in the 1930s the trend lines kept heading down.” The plunge appeared to have halted by 2010. However, “if the Great Recession,” according to Foster and McChesney, “leveled off before plunging into the depths of a second Great Depression, it nevertheless left the US and world economies in shambles,” where “capacity utilization in industry is a shadow of what it was only a year ago” (2009: 1).

So there has been a double cycling the US economy between 1945 and 2010: first upturn, then downturn; and then, within the long downturn, a second cycling as the economy ricocheted into and out of five recessions, with the last two occurring closer together and the last by far the gravest. This cycling, especially that of the long downturn, is explained in chapters 7 and 8, which will return readers to the overproduction discussed when considering US imperial growth at the end of the nineteenth century. Consider the next, systemic contradictions.

### **“Potential ... Collapse”**

We're looking at potential system collapse, politically as well as physically.  
(Dyer 2008: 33)

Gwynne Dyer, an environmental commentator, believes the world's ecology is at risk of "potential system crisis." Why? Prior to the present there were five major mass extinctions: the first 440 million years ago (mya); the second 370 mya, the third 245 mya, the fourth 210 mya, and the fifth 65 mya, which did in the dinosaurs. In 1995, E. O. Wilson estimated that about 30,000 species annually were being driven to extinction (Eldredge 2001). A few years later, the American Museum of Natural History (1998) in New York conducted a survey among biologists concerning these extinctions and found that "seven out of ten biologists" believed "that we are in the midst of a mass extinction of living things, and that this loss of species will pose a major threat to human existence in the next century." Dyer's "system crisis" is a sixth extinction and a "threat to human existence."<sup>2</sup> The narrative below argues that in some measure, the sixth extinction is propelled by a systemic contradiction roiling the US Leviathan. Marx will help to make this case.

*An Ecological Marx:* Marx, as others have observed, might be said to have had a love-hate attitude toward capitalism: on the one hand he despised what it did to people, but on the other he recognized that its productive forces (termed "economic force resources" in chapter 2) were extraordinarily powerful, driven as they were to ceaselessly accumulate. This continual growth, he believed, threatened capitalism with expansion beyond its structural limits and self-destruction. He conceptualized this destruction as a consequence of the contradiction between the development of productive forces and productive relations, where capitalists, to maintain or improve their position within prevailing competitive productive relations, choreographed their productive forces as fully as possible, propelling them toward their limits. Marx was especially interested in the productive force of labor (designated "actors" in chapter 2), believing that to accumulate capital capitalists needed to increasingly exploit the working class, motivating it to revolt and eradicate capitalism.

Marx was less interested in contradictions between capitalist production relations and the force resource of land (i.e., land/capital contradictions). Perhaps this was due to his distress over the fate of the proletariat during the development of capitalist productive forces. Perhaps it was also because there was little information about the effect of capitalist development upon natural resources in the mid nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, capitalists' *délires* to continually accumulate capital obliged them to utilize growing amounts of land. Capitalist farmers, for example, literally used increasing land areas, whereas steel manufactures used more and more iron ore.

Perpetual consumption of land resources could push production toward the limits in two ways. In the first, "indirect" way, continual use of a land

resource might lead to changes that threaten production. For example, farmers might bring all the arable land into production and then over-farm it, causing drastic declines in soil fertility. In the second, “direct” way, the continual use of a land resource itself threatens production because the resource occurs in finite amounts. For example, it is possible that steel manufacturers might use so much iron ore that they run eventually out of it. Contemporary capitalism appears to be rushing toward a systemic capital/land contradiction for both of these reasons.

The problem is energy. Capitalism, as shown earlier, must have energy—enormous amounts of it. Energy largely comes from burning hydrocarbons (i.e., fossil fuels such as oil, gas, and coal), which are forms of land whose combustion releases carbon dioxide. Hydrocarbons are limited, meaning consumption of them pushes capitalism toward its functional limits. Should fossil fuels be used up and not replaced by other energy sources, then the engine of capitalism might have its parts, but no energy to make them work. Further, burning hydrocarbons puts increasing amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, producing global warming, which can have dire consequences. Global warming and peak oil emerge as two manifestations of this intensifying capital/land contradiction.

*Global Warming:* Global warming indirectly influences capitalist accumulation, but in potentially calamitous ways. During Marx’s lifetime, knowledge that greenhouse gases existed, and that their increase could cause global warming, was just beginning to be acquired. Now worldwide temperatures are increasing, creating a potential for global “catastrophe” (J. Hansen 2009).<sup>4</sup> Global warming—sometimes called the greenhouse effect—is the process by which absorption and emission of infrared radiation by gases in the atmosphere heats the planet’s lower atmosphere and surface. The French mathematician and physicist Joseph Fourier (1824) first proposed this in the *Annales de Chimie et de Physique*, a journal Marx was unlikely to have read. After Marx’s death, Svante Arrhenius (1896: 267) calculated that “if the quantity of carbonic acid [CO<sub>2</sub>] increased in geometric progression, the augmentation of the temperature will increase nearly in arithmetic progression.”

Greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, methane, and certain other chemical compounds. A greenhouse gas permits solar radiation (sunlight) to pass through the atmosphere to the earth’s surface and be re-radiated back into the atmosphere as longer-wave energy (heat). Greenhouse gases “trap” some of this heat in the lower atmosphere, thereby raising surface temperatures. The major greenhouse gases are water vapor, which causes about 36–70 percent of the greenhouse effect; carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), 9–26 percent; methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), 4–9 percent; and ozone (O<sub>3</sub>), 3–7 percent.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UN agency instituted to scientifically evaluate climate change, states, “Warming of the climate system is unequivocal” (Solomon et al. 2007: 5). Global surface temperature increased 1.33 degrees Fahrenheit during the twentieth century. The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere was at 190 ppm (parts per million) 21,000 years ago.<sup>5</sup> It rose to 280 ppm just prior to the Industrial Revolution (c. 1700) and thereafter increased rapidly to 290 ppm in 1900, 316 ppm in 1959, 363.8 ppm in 1997, and 388 ppm in 2010. The current level of the “rate of increase” of CO<sub>2</sub> is “unprecedented in the paleoclimate record” (Houghton 2009: 90). At carbon dioxide levels above 350 ppm (Hansen 2009) the earth is believed to experience deleterious consequences, and

recent results show that most of the adverse effects of global warming are running at or above the worst case predictions and records of only a few years ago—including the movement of Greenland glaciers, sea level rise, areas under drought and flood around the world, Arctic sea ice loss, oceans becoming acidic and warmer and reducing the amount of vital plankton in the seas, methane escaping from thawing permafrost in the Arctic, and a reduction of plant growth rather than an increase as many assumed. (Braasch 2010)

What made the greenhouse gases burgeon? Most greenhouse gases come from the burning of fossil fuels in the energy sector, by far the largest emitter of greenhouse gases (70 percent), followed by the land use sector (23 percent), waste management (4 percent), and industrial processes (3 percent). Yergin (1993) has documented the enormous increase in the fossil fuel industry. As these enterprises grow, more energy is required; as more energy is required, more oil, natural gas, and coal are burned; as more fossil fuels are burned, more greenhouse gases are emitted into the atmosphere, and the closer the global economy edges to systemic crisis. Clearly, “the origins of climate change are deeply rooted in the development of the global capitalist economy” (Newell and Paterson 2010: 9). Equally clearly, and ironically, capitalism is a force producing an unintended power, insofar as it causes “a climate increasingly inhospitable to the very industries most responsible for its warming” (Klein 2014). This irony is a contradiction: what capitalism does to be capitalism harms capitalism.

What harms can global warming inflict upon human life? Though respondents to this question are embroiled in heated debate, three generalizations seem safe. The first is that wealthy, Northern, capitalist countries will be better able to mitigate climate change’s effects. The second is that wealthy, Northern elites will be less affected. The third is that the rest of humanity will likely suffer stark consequences. The Stern review provides a respected estimate of economic effects, forecasting that in the absence

of serious mitigation, the costs of global warming will have reached 20 percent of total global output by the end of the twenty-first century (N. Stern 2007). Bear in mind that the bulk of these costs would be experienced in the poor South. Further, it is likely that the “most important impact of climate change will be an acute and permanent crisis of food supply” (Dyer 2008: ix). One report estimated that in the first decade of the twenty-first century, global warming was responsible for 300,000 deaths and \$125 billion in economic losses each year (Vidal 2009). Should global warming worsen, humanity could become one of the 30,000 species that go extinct each year.<sup>6</sup> Global warming, however, is only a half of the capital/land contradiction, which brings us to peak oil and a more direct assault on capitalism.

*Peak Oil:* The significance of peak oil is made clear by the understanding of energy in physics as “the ability to do” or “the capacity to do work” (Heinberg 2003: 1). In the terms used in this volume, energy is produced by force. It is that which has the ability to cause certain powers, that is, “to do” things. Clearly, actors’ labor has its force, or energy, as do various instruments. However, the most important sources of force are those that can augment the powers of labor or instruments. This energy is acquired by a process that William Catton (1980) has called “drawdown”: the consumption of stocks of energy provided by land. The use of wood to create fire is perhaps the first form of energy drawdown in human history.

Two sorts of drawdown might be distinguished: one utilizing renewable sources of energy that, once consumed, can be replaced; and the other using nonrenewable energy sources that are irreplaceable after they are consumed. Firewood burned to provide heat energy is a replaceable energy resource. Nonrenewable energy sources include “coal, oil, natural gas, and uranium” (Heinberg 2003: 28). Oil is a good example. According to Kenneth Boulding, distinguished founder of general systems theory, “In 1859 the human race discovered a huge treasure chest in its basement. This was oil and gas, a fantastically cheap and easily available source of energy. We did, or at least some of us did, what anybody does who discovers a treasure chest in the basement—live it up” (in *ibid.*: 43).

However, there was a problem. It had been known since ancient times that there was oil in the earth. But no one yet knew how to get at it; that is, no way of getting hold of the treasure in the chest had been discovered. But in 1859 Colonel Edwin Drake devised a way of drilling into the earth to get the oil in Titusville, Pennsylvania. Drake’s drilling was successful: he had developed a drawdown technology to get at the treasure in the chest. Then, as industrialization spread throughout the globe, capitalist elites lived “it up,” devising ways to use oil to run the various

engines of economic activity. In our terms, a drilling technology had been invented to acquire oil from of land to provide the force for myriad economic practices.

Here it is useful to give an idea of the number and importance of these practices. Refined oil—diesel fuel, gasoline, jet fuel, kerosene, and liquefied petroleum gas—is fuel. In today's world, fuel is the most important energy source. Petroleum is also the raw material for many chemical products, including pharmaceuticals, solvents, fertilizers, pesticides, and plastics. Certain types of resultant hydrocarbons may be mixed with non-hydrocarbons to create other end products—alkenes that can be manufactured into plastics or other compounds; lubricants; wax; sulfur—or useful industrial materials like bulk tar; asphalt; the petroleum coke used in specialty carbon products; paraffin wax; and aromatic petrochemicals used as precursors in other chemical products.

Because these oil products are either the energy or raw material inputs in the running of large machines, petroleum is vital to industrial manufacturing. As the major fuel, oil is also crucial to transportation, which is essential to operation of nearly all industrial enterprise because it is the means by which distribution of products occurs, and distribution is necessary for profit realization and capital accumulation. Transportation in the form of affordable cars and cheap gasoline have enabled the suburbanization—with its associated housing developments, malls, offices, and parks—that distinguishes residential patterns increasingly found around the world. Transportation, in the form of cars, buses, airplanes, and ocean liners, underlies the tourism and recreation industries as well. Many fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides are made from petroleum products, so oil is likewise crucial to agriculture. Finally, militaries rely upon oil-powered planes, helicopters, ships, armored vehicles, and the like—in other words, the instruments of war. Without the force resource oil, humans cannot grow the food, make the goods, run the armies, and work the educational systems and medias that are the economics, politics, and culture of contemporary social beings. Oil and gas, then, are force resources that enable other force resources to have power. No oil means no advanced modern capitalism.

Hence the problem: when Colonel Drake showed how to realize oil drawdown, he initiated huge utilization of an effectively nonrenewable resource. Most petroleum in the earth was made in the Jurassic period (180,000,000 million years BP) as the remains of tiny plants and animals were subjected to enormous amounts of heat and pressure. It is true that some oil is in the process of being made today, but it will take millions upon millions of years for this process to produce new oil. Consequently, the oil that is in the ground at present is effectively all there is.

No one has exact knowledge of the amount of oil and gas in the ground. However, estimates of the amount of oil in the ground are based on the proven reserves of oil in each country.<sup>7</sup> A recent estimate puts this at 1,477 billion barrels of crude oil (OPEC 2014)—a lot of oil, but at the same time all there is. Once consumed, it is no more, and if there is no petroleum replacement, there is no capitalism. Currently, despite theoretical concurrence that some replacement(s) for oil could exist, theory is not yet actuality. No energy source that now exists can replace oil and gas (see Kunstler 2006: 100–147). This realization highlights the importance of understanding the likely history of oil utilization. At this point the work of M. King Hubbert becomes relevant.

Hubbert (1956), a geophysicist and sometime employee of Shell Oil, theorized the trajectory of oil's development. He hypothesized that oil supplies, like other limited resources, would take the form of a bell curve: an ascending slope as output increased; a highest point before decrease set in; and a descending slope as output decreased. At the high point, now known as "Hubbert's Peak," oil output stagnates and then declines, whereupon economic tribulations caused by dwindling supply commence. It was unclear how analysts would know the production peak had been reached, though situations where oil demand exceeded supply would be a likely indicator that peak oil was approaching or had arrived. Initially Hubbert's position was viewed with disdain. However, his prediction that US oil production would peak in the 1970s was borne out to some extent: US oil production reached its highest point in the 1970s and thereafter declined, until the development of fracking techniques.

Enormous amounts of oil have been consumed since the publication of Hubbert's views in the 1950s. This represents an enormous drawdown on Boulding's "treasure chest in the basement." An influential Department of Energy study known as the Hirsch Report evaluated the implications of this petroleum consumption, concluding that "peaking *will* happen" (Hirsch, Bezdek, and Wendling 2005: 64). When is "not known" (ibid.: 5), but the report foretold "dramatically higher prices" upon its occurrence, producing "massive demand destruction" and "protracted economic hardship" (ibid.: 5, 65). There would be an inverse relationship between the amount of petroleum produced and capitalist enterprise, for as the amount of oil produced diminished, industrial production decline would intensify, damaging other sectors of capitalist economies in a cascading effect. Hirsch and his co-authors bluntly warned that "the world has never faced a problem like this" (ibid.: 64). The Hirsch Report was reluctant to forecast when peak oil would arrive. Hubbert was bolder. He predicted it was likely to happen around 1995–2000 (Grubb 2011). The inverse relationship just identified between petroleum production and capitalist enterprise means an intensi-



fyng land/capital contradiction involving hydrocarbons. As these productive, land forces are increasingly developed, capitalist enterprise's capacity to survive—let alone accumulate capital—decreases.

One further point concerns the positive relationship between hydrocarbon utilization and global warming. As Heinberg (2003: 3) explains, "The world's oil and coal fields represent vast stores of carbon that have been sequestered under the earth's surface for hundreds of millions of years," and the burning of these petroleum and coal products releases huge amounts of carbon into the atmosphere, contributing to global warming. The co-occurrence of growing global warming and the arrival of peak oil warns of a rapidly increasing, systemic capital/land contradiction and the "potential" for "system collapse." There is lively debate over whether humans will be part of the ongoing sixth extinction, but no debate about whether this is possible. It is time to conclude the present chapter by recognizing where we stand in the argument establishing the plausibility of global warring theory.

### **Very Late Modernity**

Chapters 4 and 5 explained that the US is and has been a shape-shifting empire from its very beginnings in 1783, and that by 1950 it had become the New American Empire. This chapter has examined its economic contradictions since 1950. Economic elites choreographed events in the quest for capital accumulation. This pursuit resulted in *both* coalescing and intensifying cyclical and systemic contradictions, raising reproductive vulnerabilities. The US Leviathan might be the most powerful social being in the history, but its vulnerabilities make it a brittle one.

Next consider the first general proposition of global warring theory—namely, that

intensification and coalescence of an empire's political and economic contradictions increase its reproductive vulnerabilities.

Certainly the information in this and the previous chapter support this proposition. Later chapters will further document how worsening contradictions, and the vulnerabilities they generate, lead to more heremenutics and public *délires*, and eventually to global warring.

Finally, this chapter clarifies why the present is a time of *very* late modernity. In this book's introduction, modernity was said to be a period dominated by institutions of capitalist logic articulated with imperial state forms. This chapter and the last have suggested that the New American Empire is a generator of contradictions pushing it toward its limits. The

Leviathan is subject to immanent and imminent disordering—immanent because the empire’s deconstructing contradictions are *within* its own economic and political systems; imminent because this disordering might arrive momentarily. Jonathan Fowler (2013), reporting on the World Meteorological Organisation’s data on the growth rate of global warming gases in the atmosphere, notes that experts warn that unless more is done soon to address greenhouse emissions, “the world faces potentially devastating effects.” If this is the case, then, this is *very* late modernity, because of the imminence of “devastating effects.” Reproductive fixes involving pragmatic heremenuetics, public *délires*, and war are urgently required in response to such “devastating” vulnerabilities.

The chapters in the next section tell the story of security elites swinging into action through the logic of social constitution, among other things using violent force to fix vulnerabilities. So, readers, it is time to go to war.

## Notes

1. Brenner, McChesney, and Foster are political economists, and it might be concluded that only the left insists a long downturn has occurred. The liberal economist Paul Krugman (1997) wrote—as the title of his book makes clear—that as of the 1970s it became *The Age of Diminished Expectations*. In the 1970s Edward Denison (1979), a centrist economist, began, as the title of his book puts it, *Accounting for the Slower Economic Growth* in the US.

2. Kolbert (2013) and Hartmann (2013) provide introductions to the considerable discussion of the sixth extinction. MacKenzie (2011) reports on some studies that assert the rate of extinctions has been overestimated; Wynne Parry (2012) reports on those arguing the opposite.

3. Foster (2000) has explored Marx and Engels’s ecological views, highlighting their belief that capitalism resulted in a “metabolic rift” between people and nature, expressed especially in declining agricultural soil fertility. However, it is important to not make Marx and Engels into something they were not. Both were primarily interested in the condition of the working class, not in soil fertility, so their concern was to explain people-people relations, not people-land relations.

4. Houghton (2009) provides an overview global warming from the perspective of conventional economics. Braasch and McKibben (2009) consider the topic from an activist perspective; Foster (2009), from a leftist angle.

5. The ppm measure of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is the ratio of CO<sub>2</sub> molecules to all other molecules in the atmosphere.

6. Global warming might cause a massive release of methane from clathrates—deposits of methane produced by bacteria trapped in ice, usually on ocean floors or in Arctic permafrost. Enormous amounts of methane (an estimated 400 billion tons) are trapped in clathrates, and methane is 70 times more potent as a greenhouse gas than CO<sub>2</sub>. When clathrates melt, as they are likely to do as the globe warms, methane is released through degassing, or more colloquially “burping,” into the atmosphere. Such burps can greatly raise temperatures. It appears that the last major clathrate burp occurred during the third major extinction at the end of the Permian Period. This time has come to be known as the Great Dying because approximately 90 percent of all animal life ceased to exist (Benton 2003). Humanity could cease, should global warming lead to another clathrate burp like the one that ended the Permian.

7. Petroleum reserves are guesstimates, and estimates tend to be optimistic.

PART IV

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**PLAUSIBILITY 3:  
GLOBAL WARRING**



## AFTER THE SUNSET CAME THE NIGHT

### *Global Warring 1950–1974*

The work of this chapter and those that follow might best be described by considering the extent of the US government's exercises of violent force since World War II. V. G. Kiernan (1978: 281) cited one study reporting that the US “seriously threatened” to use its military to gain “diplomatic advantage” on 215 occasions from 1945 through 1977. This meant that it threatened to go to war if it did not get its way about six times a year in this period, which was not especially diplomatic. Studies of the actual frequency of US military operations since the end of World War II are limited (Blum 1999; Hermann and Kegley 1998; Z. Grossman 2001; Galtung 2001). No research systematically includes direct and indirect as well as overt and covert US military operations, especially because of the secrecy surrounding indirect, covert warring. Consequently, all estimates of the extent of US governmental violence are approximate and likely to be low due to underreporting.

Istvan Kende (1971), who analyzed existing data from the end of World War II through the late 1960s, reported that in that period the US warred more frequently than any other country in the world. Forty years later Richard Lebow (2011) corroborated Kende, finding that the US was the “world’s most aggressive state” measured in terms of war initiation. Kevin Drum (2013) claimed the US launched a significant overseas assault every forty months over the last fifty years. Drum’s estimate is low because, as he acknowledges, it excludes covert operations. John Tures (2003) used a “United States Military Operations” data set generated by the Federation of American Scientists to estimate the frequency of US military activities since 1945. He found that the US engaged in 263 interstate military operations between 1945 and 2002—an average of around 4.6 operations

per year. However, 176 of these operations occurred in the eleven years between 1991 and 2002, a rate of about 16 operations per year. One conclusion from these findings is “that there has been a sizeable jump in the number of U.S. military actions since the end of the Cold War” (Tures 2003: 8).<sup>1</sup> Military sources concur, reporting that “the number of military deployments has dramatically increased” since 1989 (Castro and Adler 1999: 86–95).

Back in 1971 Kende noticed something that has been a feature of US governmental sub-logic’s violence since the end of World War II. America was, and is, “interventionist” (Kende 1971: 5). Violent force resources were, and are, exported from the US core to be exercised in countries throughout Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Central Asia, Central and Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Pacific, and Europe. Because the interventions are those of an imperial core in other lands, it means the US Leviathan conducts global warring big-time.

Has this warring been consistent with global warring theory? The work of the following five chapters is an answer to this query. US global warring is studied in three periods. The first of these, covered in the present chapter, is between 1950 and 1974, when for the most part the US economy was still basking in its golden age but the New American Empire had to address the US/Soviet Union inter-imperial contradiction along with certain dominator/dominated contradictions arising from the decline of the Old Empires. The second period, analyzed in chapter 7, stretches from 1975 to 1989, when the inter-imperial contradiction was gradually fading even as economic contradictions were beginning to intensify. The third period, investigated in chapters 9, 10, and 11, covers the time from 1990 to the present, when the US/Soviet inter-imperial contradiction has disappeared but the different cyclical and systemic contradictions are intensifying and coalescing in an apparently unstoppable fashion.

The hostilities analyzed are not a random sample of US warring between 1950 and 2014, nor do they include all the interventions in which the US fought during this time. Rather, the global wars investigated were chosen because they were among most important conflicts of their moment. An overview of each of these wars’ violence is presented. Next to be analyzed are the contradictions and reproductive vulnerabilities present prior to hostility, followed by investigation of the logic of social constitution pertaining to the wars. The object of this analysis is to show how, through hermeneutic politics, elites instituted public *délires* that when implemented were violent reproductive fixes—fixes conceived of as global warring used to solve the hermeneutic puzzles provoked by reproductive vulnerabilities. For now, let us establish the global imperial context in which the US warred between 1950 and 1974.

## **Sunset: “avoid the solid, attack the hollow; attack; withdraw”**

In guerrilla warfare ... avoid the solid, attack the hollow; attack; withdraw; deliver a lightning blow; seek a lightning decision.... In guerrilla strategy, the enemy's rear, flanks, and other valuable spots are his vital point, and there he must be harassed, attacked, dispersed, exhausted and annihilated. (Mao Tse Tung 1937)

Sunrise for the old empires had been in AD 1410 when the Portuguese Crown conquered the Moroccan town of Ceuta, beginning six hundred years of world imperial conquest. Of course sunset follows sunrise, and the years 1950 through 1974 were, as the old boys had already discovered, the dusk of the old empires. Make no mistake, imperial domination is a lousy lot for the dominated. Many imperial subjects were conscious that they were economically disadvantaged, even if they did not know they were “exploited.” They were cognizant that they were politically weak, even if they did not know they were “oppressed.” They were aware they were culturally belittled, even if they did not know they were cultural “savages.”<sup>2</sup> This means that dominator/dominated contradictions tended to be razor sharp. It took force to keep the “savages” down. So as reproductive vulnerabilities arose for the old empires, the dominated tended to insure their dominators were “harassed, attacked, dispersed, exhausted and annihilated.”

World Wars I and especially II led to vulnerabilities that gravely hampered the old empires' reproduction. After World War II, as Eisenhower had put it, Western Europe was in “economic collapse” because the wars' destruction had stripped the old imperial governments of force resources to dominate. Actually, this crisis of the old imperial order had been building since the end of the eighteenth century. The American Revolution, discussed in chapter 3, might be thought of as the beginning of their end. Great Britain would recover from its defeat at the hands of the Americans and start empire building elsewhere in the nineteenth century, especially in India and Africa, but the reality was that it had lost and would never recover the richest part of its imperium. Further, throughout the nineteenth century it would withstand substantial rebellion, especially in Afghanistan (1842) and India (1857).

However, the truly spectacular nineteenth-century imperial collapse was that of Spain. The Spanish economy during this time, thoroughly bettered by its capitalist competitors, was largely agrarian and impoverished. Consequently, the Spanish Crown lacked the revenues to acquire sufficient violent force resources to effectively dominate. From 1800 to the early 1900s Spain lost imperial holdings in South America, North America, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. By the early twentieth century it had only three small colonies left, in Africa (largely in the Sahara, where there were few to revolt).

The end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth was an epoch of both growth and decline for the other old empires. On the one hand, prior to World War I they had carved out new imperiums in Africa, Indochina, and the Pacific. On the other, after that war there was resistance and rebellion in these places. For example, “by 1919–20, Britain was facing revolt almost everywhere in the empire—in Ireland, India, and Egypt, as well as Palestine and Iraq” (Mitchell 2011: 94).

Then came World War II, whose losers—Germany, Japan, and Italy—were stripped of their colonies by the winners while the remaining European imperial states, especially the English, French, and Dutch, were greatly weakened. In this situation the dominator/dominated contradiction became more intense in the sense that, although colonial subjects remained subjects, their dominators’ force had collapsed, so that the balance of forces between dominators and dominated swung in the latter’s favor. Indigenous elites in dominated colonies faced the following hermeneutic puzzle: “What is to be done with our imperial masters?” The perceptual response to the puzzle was “our masters are feeble.” Its procedural solution was, to appropriate a line from Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*: “Cry ‘Havoc!’ and let slip the dogs of war.” This they did by forming ideologies of independence. Along with the ideologies came revolutionary public *délires* instituting national liberation armies that choreographed rebellion along nationalist and/or Marxist lines (Moran 2006).

Nikita Khrushchev, who by 1956 had emerged from the jockeying for power following Stalin’s death as the Soviet leader, recognized what was happening and in January of 1961 told the Higher Party School of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism:

Our era ... [is] an era of Socialist revolutions and national liberation revolutions; an era of the collapse of capitalism and of the liquidation of the colonial system; an era of the change to the road of socialism by more and more nations; and of the triumph of socialism and communism on a world scale. (In Gaddis 1997: 183)

Khrushchev got it wrong about capitalism’s “collapse” and the “triumph of ... communism on a world scale,” but he was correct that it was an era of “national liberation revolutions.” However—and this is important, as Douglas Blaufarb (1977) observed—there is little evidence that the Kremlin actually organized, or even encouraged, local leftist parties to launch insurgencies. Rather, the wars of national liberation appear to have been a response to the altered state of the balance of forces in the dominator/dominated contradiction. Revolution by the dominated could now be won.

The two most important wars of national liberation were in China and Indonesia, in the former case against a client of the US, the Chinese Nationalist Party (the Kuomintang, KMT) and in the latter case against



the Dutch. Remember that at the end of the nineteenth century, the old empires had competed in China while waiting for the Qing dynasty to completely collapse before instituting colonization. The Qing dissolved in 1911.<sup>3</sup> Sun Yat-Sen, leader of the KMT, attempted to install a liberal republic. Violence followed as the country fractured into territories presided over by regional warlords. Sun Yat-Sen initially allied with the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) under and attempted to unify the country. He died in 1925, and his successor, Chiang Kai-shek, turned on the CPC, trying to destroy it. In 1934 the Japanese invaded, seeking to incorporate China into their growing empire, and the CPC was obliged to fight both the Japanese and the KMT. The Japanese fell in 1945, and in 1949 the KMT, now allied with the US, was driven from the Chinese mainland to the island of Taiwan. China was liberated.

Key to the CPC's success was its development of a procedural culture of insurgency, whose choreography was detailed in Mao's *On Guerilla War* (1937), quoted at the opening of this section, which encouraged nimble practitioners to "avoid the solid, attack the hollow; attack; withdraw." Such fighting, also called "irregular" or "asymmetric" war, posed grave problems for the old empires' militaries. Robert Taber ([1965] 2002: 1), in his classic account, explained why by observing that

analogically, the guerrilla fights the war of the flea, and his military enemy suffers the dog's disadvantages: too much to defend; too small, ubiquitous, and agile an enemy to come to grips with. If the war continues long enough—this is the theory—the dog succumbs to exhaustion and anemia without ever having found anything on which to close its jaws or to rake with its claws.

The old empires soon discovered they were infested with "fleas," as guerrilla warfare became the chosen choreography in the wars of national liberation (Chaliand 1982).

In 1945 Indonesia, led by Sukarno and other nationalist leaders, declared independence from the Netherlands. The Dutch demurred, provoking the Indonesian National Revolution (1945–1949), in which the *permuda* (youth groups) and the nascent republican army fought largely as guerrillas (Cribb 2001). General A. H. Nasution was in considerable measure responsible for developing what he believed to be a nationalist, as opposed to communist, form of guerrilla insurgency, articulated in his *Fundamentals of Guerrilla Warfare* ([1953] 1965). Nasution's "fleas" exhausted the Dutch, who granted Indonesia its independence in 1949, relieving themselves of a territory with the fourth largest population in the world and effectively putting themselves out of the imperialism business.

The British, with the largest empire and consequently the most to lose, withdrew peacefully from the richest territory in their empire. South Asia

(what would become India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka) was the second most populated territory in the world, after China. Resistance to the *Raj* (colonial rule) had been building there since the mid nineteenth century. By the 1940s in India this had culminated in the Indian National Congress, which adopted Gandhi's strategy of nonviolence. This choreographed force resources into peaceful strings of resistance. The UK had no stomach for military action in such a populated area. Independence came with the partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan in 1947. A year later Sri Lanka was granted independence.

Britain violently responded to national liberation movements in areas where the distribution of violent force resources seemed more propitious, especially in its settler colonies. There was the Malaysian Emergency (1948–1960), the Mau-Mau Rebellion in Kenya (1952–1960), the Second Chimurenga (1964–1979) in Zimbabwe, and the Aden Emergency (1963–1967) in what would become South Yemen. All these conflicts were characterized by guerilla warfare. The UK lost them all. Malaysia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and South Yemen were independent by the late 1970s.

Perhaps the French fought hard to maintain their empire, especially in Indochina and Algeria, where their nationals had settled. Indochina—the countries of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia—was the grimmest violent place of the last half of the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> Vietnam announced its independence in 1945. Ho Chi Minh, head of the Viet Minh (a coalition of communists and nationalists), wrote the Vietnamese Declaration of Independence. To emphasize its kinship with the anti-imperialism that had begun with the American Revolution, he inserted in his declaration a line from the US Declaration of Independence (Ho Chi Minh 1977: 5356) The French decided to militarily oppose Ho, and so began the First Indochina War (1946–1954).

In the late 1940s the US government began to supply and finance French military operations, and in the summer of 1950, in his resignation letter to Dean Acheson, George Kennan warned, “In Indochina we are getting into the position of guaranteeing the French in an undertaking which neither they, nor we, nor both of us together, can win” (1972: 58–60). The Vietnamese, led by Vo Nguyen Giap, initially engaged in scattered guerilla engagements. These developed into a war of maneuver that finally trapped the elite of the French Far East Expeditionary Force at Dien Bien Phu (1953–1954), where it suffered crushing defeat. Kennan had been prescient. French politicians in Paris gave up the struggle, to the disgust of much of the French military, and independence was granted in 1954. Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam became independent, Vietnam being divided into two countries: communist North Vietnam, ruled over by Ho Chi Minh; and noncommunist South Vietnam, increasingly a US client. Kennan once

again would be correct when the stage was set for the Second Indochina War, known to Americans as the Vietnam War; but understanding this awaits the US entry into Vietnam, described later in the chapter.

The year the First Indochina War ended, the Algerian War of Independence began (1954–1962). This conflict was especially brutal (Horne 1977), in part because the French military sought to avenge its defeat in Indochina; in part because of Algerian tactics; and in part because France was fighting to protect its own. There were 1.4 million French or other Europeans settled in Algeria (*pieds noirs*), composing about 13 percent of the population and owning roughly 27 percent of the arable land. For example, the novelist Albert Camus was a *pied noir*. He largely backed French attempts to prevent independence; in part because his mother was still in Algeria. The Algerian National Liberation Front initially fought using Maoist guerilla tactics, but it also employed especially repressive measures against Algerians who would not support it, and specialized in terrorist tactics against opponents both French and Algerian. The French military, for their part, developed an equally ugly counterinsurgency terrorism.

But by the late 1950s and early 1960s the war was destabilizing France: six governments had been brought down, and the Fourth Republic had collapsed. Communists, a major political force at the time, favored Algeria's independence. Conservatives, *pieds noirs*, and the military favored the opposite. General De Gaulle, brought to power in 1958 in an attempt to stop the destabilization, betrayed his followers by favoring independence. The Organisation de l'Armée Secrète formed in January 1961 and began attacking French officials representing De Gaulle. This was *de trop*, and to end the instability De Gaulle allowed Algerian independence. A million Algerians had died in the carnage.

Portugal, as stated earlier, had begun the expansion of the old empires. After Algeria's fall, Portugal soldiered on alone to defend the old empire in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, and Cape Verde. But in 1974, young Portuguese army officers imbued with the Maoist ideology of their opponents staged a successful revolution against the dictatorship in Lisbon. Portugal became a democratic republic, and its colonies were liberated. After it was all over, I recall standing in blazing sunlight in Guinea Bissau, as a ferryman transported me across a river as dark as the River Styx. He was one of Taber's "fleas," a veteran of the fight against Portugal. As we crossed, he nostalgically reminisced about the sweet pleasures of downing Portuguese planes. In such ways the sun set on the old imperial dogs of war, fatally infested with "fleas." What happened next?

As the sun set on the old empires, it rose on the New American Empire—or rather, it didn't; because what appeared was a phantasmagoric light that blinded imperial domination. This fantastic light was the cre-

ation of mainstream US scholarly hermeneuts who wrote books with titles like *After Empire*.<sup>5</sup> Theirs was a rhetorical sunshine that shone down on a peaceable US hegemony, allowing political elites, like President Reagan, to describe America as a holy “city on a hill.” To know what really happened next, we must examine actual events in lands upon which the light of the New American Empire shone.

Hal Brands, writing of Latin America in the years this chapter is concerned with (1950–1974), though he could have been speaking of other global regions, remarked that US security doctrine in the era “centered on the premise that ... countries were ... menaced by the twin dangers of subversion and insurgency” (2010: 79) by the Soviets or their clients. One set of events that marked this era is the US’s path to war to combat this menace. The five US global wars during 1950–1974 are considered representative because they were about addressing “subversion and insurgency.” Two of these hostilities were overt (Korea and Vietnam); three were covert (the Iranian Coup, the Guatemalan Coup, and the Bay of Pigs Fiasco in Cuba). Korea and Vietnam were the two major US wars of the first period of post–NSC-68 warring; meanwhile the Iranian and Guatemalan coups, along with the attempted Cuban coups, are examples of a type of covert, CIA-organized warfare favored by the Americans.<sup>6</sup> Analysis begins with the Korean War.

### **War in the Land of the Morning Calm, 1950–1953**

Here in Asia is where the Communist conspirators have elected to make their play for global conquest. Here we fight Europe’s war with arms. (General MacArthur, US military commander in Asia; in Jervis 1980: 124–127).

US security elites’ immediate post–World War II attentions had focused upon events in Europe. After all, the Russian Bear was incorporating Eastern Europe. In Italy the Communist Party was the strongest political party on the left, attracting the support of a third of voters as late as the 1970s. The French Communist Party was vigorous, having participated in three governments from 1944 through 1947. Immediately after the war, it held 159 of the 586 seats in the National Assembly. The Berlin Blockade threatened Western authority within Germany in 1947 and much of 1948. So in 1949 it was conceivable that Soviet subversion might break into Western Europe.

One way the old boys sought to prevent this was through clandestine operations. First the OSS and then the CIA began the covert Operation Gladio. Timed to coincide precisely with the Marshall Plan’s implementation, this involved training and arming paramilitary forces that employed

terrorism to advance rightist political goals in Western Europe. Operation Gladio was especially active in Greece and Italy (Brozzu-Gentile 1994; Ganser 2005). In Greece, Neni Panourgia (2009) reported, it mounted clandestine actions creating terror via unrelenting exile, torture, disappearance, and murder of leftists, culminating in the Junta of Colonels' dictatorship from 1967 to 1974.<sup>7</sup>

However, if the cockpit of old boys' Soviet angst had been Europe immediately following 1945, General Douglas MacArthur was right: it was in Asia that the Communists would "make their play." Actually, the "play" would be made in Korea, the place known as the Land of the Morning Calm, which was among the lesser of Washington's concerns. In the late 1940s Washington security elites, led by Secretary of State Dean Acheson, had developed a strategy called the Asian Defense Perimeter for protection of their Asian clients. Korea was not included as a country to be defended in this strategy. In fact, by 1948 the Joint Chiefs of Staff had stated clearly that "the US has little strategic interest in maintaining its present troops and bases in Korea" (NSC 8 1948: 8). Consider more closely how this Land of the Morning Calm of "little ... interest" lost its calm.

The Korean peninsula had been incorporated into the Japanese Empire in 1910. Following World War II, a decision taken at Potsdam divided it at the 38th parallel, with the northern part to be occupied by the Soviets and the southern part by the Americans. In principle, the peninsula was to be reunited following free elections. These never occurred. Nine months after Mao Tse-Tung's victory in China, war began on the Korean peninsula. On 25 June 1950 North Korea invaded South Korea, instigating a conflict that ended in an armistice on 27 July 1953.<sup>8</sup> From the Truman regime's perspective, as expressed by the National Security Council, several weeks after fighting commenced, the "invasion of South Korea came as a complete surprise and shock" (NSC Action # 315 1950: 1), a "shock" they responded to with direct, overt global war in which the US and the United Nations supported the Republic of Korea against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its allies, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.

Actually, Truman's old boys should not have been so surprised. Reunification of the two occupation zones failed due to non-performance of promised free elections scheduled for 1948, sharpening the animosity between the two sides. In the South, the South Korean government agreed upon a constitution (17 July 1948), elected a president, Syngman Rhee (20 July 1948), and established the Republic of South Korea (ROK). In the North, the USSR established the Democratic People's Republic of Korea headed by Kim Il-sung. Rhee was a hybrid elite. On one hand, he was a member of a *yangban* (aristocratic), if impoverished, family; on the other,

he had received an MA from Harvard University and a Ph.D. from Princeton University. He was a Korean nationalist, but one with an Ivy League appreciation of American *délîres*.

According to one source, Rhee was recruited into the OSS by his handler, OSS Deputy Director Colonel Preston Goodfellow, sometime in the 1940s (Rang 2000). Once president, he showed an authoritarianism that expressed itself in the elimination of leftist opponents, revealing his solicitude for US interests. Many of those opponents who survived became bitter enemies, headed north as refugees and prepared for guerrilla war against the US-sponsored ROK government. Nevertheless, in principle the two Koreas were still to be reunified, which raised the question of which side of the Cold War divide reunification would occur on. This question would, it seemed, be answered in favor of the Communists because of the Rhee government's increasing unpopularity.

Cross-border attacks along the 38th Parallel became more frequent as 1950 approached, including many by the South against the North. Kim Il-sung, fearing these attacks presaged a ROK invasion of North Korea, petitioned Stalin for permission to mount his own offensive. In May of 1950 President Rhee lost an election in the South and was about to lose control of the ROK government. For Rhee, this was a time of decision. He had to either attack the North, or withdraw from government. At this vulnerable time, the Soviets granted Kim permission to attack to reunify Korea (Bajanov 1995). However, the Russian approval was qualified. Stalin is said to have told Kim, "If you get kicked in the teeth I shall not lift a finger" (in Offner 2002: 369). North Korean soldiers began an offensive toward dawn on 25 June 1949. The Land of the Morning Calm had lost its calm.

Three days after the initial attack, North Korean troops were in Seoul, South Korea's capital. The US mobilized the young United Nations and intervened on South Korea's side. After early defeats at the hands of the North Korean military, a US-UN counteroffensive organized by General MacArthur drove the North Koreans past the 38th Parallel almost to the Yalu River, which forms the border between Korea and China. When this occurred, communist China interceded on the side of North Korea. China's entry into the conflict drove US, UN, and South Korean forces back south of the 38th parallel. MacArthur, who had begun advocating invasion of China and the use of nuclear weapons, and who was increasingly insubordinate to civilian control, was relieved and replaced by General Matthew Ridgeway. Thereafter the fighting eventually deadlocked. An armistice was signed on 27 July 1953 on the basis of status quo ante. The US did not lose the Korean War, but it certainly "did not win" (Pierpaoli: 2000: 15).

Why did the New American Empire fight in Korea? Consider first that South Korea would have been no more, had the North won. To the New

American Empire, this meant that all force resources, and the value they might produce, would be lost on the Korean Peninsula. Fully 98,480 square kilometers were at risk. This was an intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction. With the intensified contradiction, heightened reproductive vulnerability posed a hermeneutic puzzle: how to relax intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction in Korea? The following section discusses the hermeneutic politics involved in the resolution of this puzzle.

### *Social Reflexivity of the Korean War*

Why did the US fight in Korea? Of the several answers to that question, two of the more persistent are examined here before the discussion turns to the hermeneutic politics that preceded US entry into the war.

*A Conspiracy:* Perhaps the boldest account of the origins of the Korean War was that given by the leftist I.F. Stone in *The Hidden History of the Korean War* (1952). Written during the conflict itself, it argued that the war was caused not by the North Koreans and Stalin, but by a conspiracy of US and South Korean elites to defeat the North. Evidence recently made available by the opening of Soviet Cold War files suggests this position is simply wrong. Kim Il-sung *was* worried about South Korean raids into the North. He *did* ask Stalin for permission to counterattack. Stalin initially responded negatively but eventually granted permission, which Kim implemented as a large offensive against the South (Gaddis 1997: 71). Soviet Cold War archives, however, also make clear that whereas Stalin was not displeased by the prospect of an additional communist state, his approval was not part of any plan of “unrestrained (Russian) expansionism” (Weathersby 1993: 32). The preceding accounts for why Kim invaded the South with 90,000 troops on 25 April 1950, but it does nothing to explain why the Security Elites 1.0 counterattacked. A second influential explanation of America’s entrance into the war might be called the “defense of the defense” account.

*Defense of the Defense:* Yŏng-jin Kim (1973: 30) argued that after China’s fall to communism, “Japan itself increasingly appeared as the major East Asian prize to be protected”—a “major ... prize” because it was the sole country in Asia that could counterbalance China. How was such protection to be extended? Kim believed there was “recognition” among the old boys “that the security of Japan required a non-hostile Korea,” which “led directly to President Truman’s decision to intervene” (ibid.). In this view, the defense of Japan necessitated the defense of Korea. But a problem with Kim’s position becomes clear upon revelation of the interpretations that

occupied Truman's I-space, and those of his officials, in the few days prior to their authorizing intervention. This takes us directly to the hermeneutic politics of the Korean War.

*"Draw the line"*: It is possible to gain insight into these politics because the Truman Library has released a series of documents relating to events pertinent to the conflict, called "The Korean War and Its Origins, 1945–53." The documents, especially as the war approaches, do not show the old boys soberly contemplating the hermeneutic puzzle of intensified contradiction. Rather, they reveal them wrestling with the "surprise and shock" of invasion. Korea's relevance to the defense of Japan is mentioned only once in these documents prior to the decision to intervene. This was at a meeting held on the evening of 25 June at the Blair House between President Truman and top officials of the military and the Departments of State and Defense. At this meeting Admiral Sherman, at the time chief of Naval Operations, said, "Korea is a strategic threat to Japan" (Memorandum of Conversation 1950: 3). The admiral's statement is cryptic, but what he apparently meant was that should Korea become completely communist, its geographic location could serve as a stepping stone to Tokyo. The fact that Korea was mentioned only once as important to Japan's defense in a collection of documents about the origins of the Korean War is not evidence of Kim's insistence that this consideration "led directly to President Truman's decision to intervene." It is evidence that it was something on the mind of one actor. But there was something else that more "directly" dominated the old boys' I-spaces, far more than protecting Japan.

The striking thing about their decision to go to war was the rapidity with which it was made. The North Korean offensive that began on 25 June was an instantaneous and great intensification of the inter-imperial competition. The choice to go to war was made by 26 June, and the White House had publicly announced military operations by 28 June. Let us follow events over these three days. North Korean troops invaded the South at 4 a.m. local time. Korea is thirteen hours ahead of the US East Coast, so Washington received news of the invasion by the morning of the 25 June. The first concern of the Security Elites 1.0 was to discover exactly what was happening. At 8:45 a.m. Washington time on 25 June, a telephone conference was held between military leaders in the US capital and those in Tokyo (Tokyo was headquarters for US Asian forces). Washington asked its military, "What is your estimate of objective of current North Korean effort?" Tokyo replied that "the North Koreans are engaged in an all-out offensive to subjugate South Korea" (Note Regarding Teleconference 1950: 1) and that regarding ROK, "our estimate is that a complete collapse is possible" (ibid.: 3). This, then, was a perceptual cultural message



about events in E-space. An “all-out offense” was coming from the North, with “complete collapse ... possible” in the South. This intelligence was transmitted to civilian officials in the White House, State Department, and Defense Department. These were the stark realities of the North Korean invasion.

The next evening, 26 June, senior figures in Truman’s State Department, Defense Department, and Joint Chiefs of Staff assembled at the Blair House. The Blair House is the presidential guest house, but at this time it was serving as Truman’s residence while the White House was being renovated. At the Blair House meeting a decision was made to begin all military operations, short of committing ground troops. Consequently, “Appropriate orders were issued that evening, and a public announcement made the next day” (Notes Regarding Blair House Meeting 1950: 1). At roughly 9 a.m. on 25 June, US governmental elites had discovered they had a reproductive vulnerability. At roughly 9 p.m. the next day they had their fix, and the fix was war.

After the Blair House meeting finished, Truman instructed that certain important Congressmen be requested to attend “a very important meeting on Korea” at 11:30 a.m. the next day (Notes Regarding Meeting with Congressional Leaders 1950: 1). The following morning,

the President opened the meeting by stating that he had invited a group of Senators and Congressman to the White House so he could describe the situation in the Far East to them, and inform them of a number of important decisions which he had made during the previous twenty four hours. (Ibid.: 2)

The information he imparted gives a clue as to the old boys’ response to the hermeneutic puzzle they faced. Truman told his audience,

The communist invasion of South Korea could not be let pass unnoticed ... this act was obviously inspired by the Soviet Union. If we let Korea down, the Soviets will keep right on going and swallow up one piece of Asia after another. We had to make a stand sometime, or else let all of Asia go by the board. If we were to let Asia go, the Near East would collapse and no telling what would happen in Europe. Therefore, the President concluded, we ordered our forces to support Korea as long as we could ... and it was equally necessary for us to draw the line at Indochina, the Philippines, and Formosa. (Ibid.: 4)

Elsewhere in his memoirs, remembering the North Korean attack, Truman (1956: 378–379) used even stronger language: “Communism was acting in Korea just as Hitler, Mussolini, and the Japanese had acted ... earlier.”

Truman had interpreted the North Korean invasion through the lens of the domino theory hermeneutic and the global domination public *délire*. The Soviets were a monster-alterity. Communism would conquer territory after territory, like dominoes falling, due to an initial push. This was the

perceptual solution of the hermeneutic puzzle. The procedural solution was to “draw the line,” but because war had already started and peaceful solutions to the puzzle were no longer possible, the old boys granted themselves Shultzian Permission. North Korea’s invasion had been understood in terms of the global domination public *délire*: Violence would be answered by violence.

There seems to have been no opposing politics among the security elites regarding the meaning of the North Korean attack. Truman’s interpretation was shared by two key officials authorized to respond to it. Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson testified before Congress:

The very fact of this aggression ... constitute[s] undeniable proof that the forces of international communism possess not only the willingness, but also the intention, of attacking and invading any free nation within their reach at any time they think they can get away with it. The real significance of the North Korean aggression lies in the evidence that, even at the resultant risk of starting a third world war, communism is willing to resort to armed aggression, whenever it believes it can win. (In Jervis 1980: 579)

Again the language was strong. The monster-alterity of “international communism” would attack “any time they think they can get away with it,” even if this risked starting “a third world war.” Dean Acheson strongly supported his Defense Department counterpart and brought the Soviets into the picture, “The profound lesson of Korea is that ... the USSR took a step which risked—however remotely—general war” (ibid.).

So the president, the secretary of state, and the secretary of defense were hermetically sealed into interpreting the North Korean invasion in terms of the recent global domination public *délire*. Perceptually they believed the Soviet monster-alterity was implementing the domino theory and threatened “global war,” thus creating a risk of enormous loss of US force resources and value. This interpretation may or may not have been accurate (in fact, it was untrue with regard to any Soviet plan for “global war”), but what the old boys did know was that if they did nothing, they would lose South Korea and all its force resources. So the procedural fix for the hermeneutic puzzle was to “draw the line” and meet violence with violence. On 29 June 1950 the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent General MacArthur a cable ordering him to support the South Korean forces. This cable implemented the procedural part of the global domination public *délire*, an implementation that would be especially gory.<sup>9</sup>

The Korean War was of utmost significance for transforming the global domination public *délire* from an unfunded and hence unimplementable *délire* into a funded violent fix to the inter-imperial contradiction threatening the US Leviathan. Remember, Truman had been shaken by its implied

costs when he first saw it in 1949 and had accordingly shelved it. However, once he entered the war, as Pierpaoli (2000: 144) makes clear, “He also began ... to rearm the nation along the lines prescribed in NSC-68.” The defense budget quadrupled from a pre-Korean War low of \$13.5 billion to \$50 billion by the end of 1951 (Markusen, *Campbell, and Deitrick* 1991). This was a military Keynesianism: the government was stimulating the private (military) economy with enormous infusions of capital. In Pierpaoli’s terms, “The United States was now on its way to constructing a permanent national security state and defense economy” (2000: 144). Thus, the Korean War and the funding of NSC 68 began the military-industrial complex, which gave the New American Empire sufficient violent force to actually be in a position to implement the global domination public *délire*. President Eisenhower, who followed Truman in the presidency, denounced the military-industrial complex at the end of his administration, but it was there to stay, a permanent structural feature of the US Leviathan.

The year 1953 saw President Dwight D. Eisenhower’s inauguration on 20 January and the end of the Korean War on 27 July. Within months of taking office, the new president would address a major issue in Middle Eastern politics by authorizing a covert coup d’état in Iran. Why?

### “That Terrible Thing”: The Iranian Coup, 1953

“Why did you Americans do that terrible thing?” she cried out, “We always loved America.... But after that moment, no one in Iran ever trusted the United States again.... Why, why did you do it?” (Kinzer 2008: xxv)

The speaker quoted in the above citation was an Iranian memoirist who, at a book party celebrating her memoir, was asked a question by the American journalist Stephen Kinzer about the 1950s CIA coup that overthrew the democratically elected prime minister, Mohammad Mossadegh. She responded in an “agitated and animated” (*ibid.*) fashion, calling the coup “that terrible thing” and asking, “Why, why did you do it?” The memoirist’s question is our own: Why did the US Leviathan do that terrible thing?

The answer has to do with the Republican victory in the 1952 presidential election. It had been a long time coming. Eisenhower’s triumph was the first Republican presidential win since 1928. In part, his reason for authorizing a coup in Iran concerned the ideological arguments used in the hermeneutic politics of the election campaign, which had to do with perceptions of the inter-imperial contradiction. Profits were to be made selling goods to a reviving Europe and Japan. The Korean War, as we have just seen, pumped enormous sums into US companies through defense contracts for equipment and supplies. Consequently, the 1950s were very

much part of the Golden Age of US capitalism. This meant that a faltering economy could not be used to bludgeon the Democrats in electioneering. The same was not true of national security. Here matters seemed to be worsening, especially in the US's relations with the monster-alterity.

A threesome of bad events, uninvited, clambered into the Democratic bed in the fall of 1949: in September the Soviets exploded their first atomic bomb; a month later Mao triumphed in China; and in September and October division of Germany into two states formally occurred, effectively confirming Eastern Europe's loss to the Soviets. Then, the Korean War ended with its problematic outcome.

There was no doubt about it in Republican eyes. Democrats were losing to the "Commies," which was a Republican understanding of intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction. Republican Senator McCarthy called it "twenty years of treason" (in A. Fried 1996: 179). "Treason" was an abomination the Republicans were pleased to use to savage the Democrats. With a snarling disregard for evidence, Joseph McCarthy rose to national prominence by, on every day in every way, accusing government officials of disloyalty, subversion, or treason vis-à-vis the Soviet "menace."<sup>10</sup> Of course, those accused were Democrats. Genial, grandfatherly Eisenhower, "Ike" to many, who had defeated the Germans as Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe and should know a thing or two about dealing with bad guys, ran for the presidency on the Republican ticket. He promised to take a "new look" at Democratic "treason." What was this new look?

John Foster Dulles was to be the new secretary of state. He had been rehearsing for this job since the 1940s, and in *War or Peace* (1950) had told readers how he would take a new look. The book was largely about what to do with the Bear. Its language continues the strident tones of NSC 68. The Soviets are "despotic," "fanatical," and "diabolically clever," seeking "world domination" (ibid.: 2, 224). However, there was a novel recognition. The Kremlin does not intend "to use the Red Army as an actually attacking force"; rather, it will use "class war" (ibid.: 12). This was "penetration" into a country by "intensive radio and press propaganda" to foment "discontent," "terrorism," and "civil war," leading to the country's subversion into the communist camp.

The key to meeting the Soviets' subversion was not to passively contain them. It was to aggressively "pressure" them, which might lead the Bear "into a state of collapse" (ibid.: 252). After all, Dulles had pledged in 1949, "We should make it clear to the tens of millions of restive subject people in Eastern Europe and Asia, that we do not accept the status quo of servitude and aggression Soviet Communism has imposed on them, and eventual liberation is an essential and enduring part of our foreign policy"

(in Stöver 2004: 98). This was “rollback.” Instead of the USSR being contained in existing areas, it would “collapse.” Implicit here was a notion of regime change. The Bear collapsed would be replaced by a regime genial to Republican sensibilities. What sort of procedures would do the rolling? Here matters were unclear, though Dulles did recommend covert operations (Bodenheimer & Gold 1989). Rollback might be judged a particular iteration of the global domination public *délire*, differing from the original in that it proposed regime change in the USSR. It became part of the Republican Party’s new look in the 1952 campaign.

Following Ike’s victory, Walter “Beetle” Bedell Smith was appointed undersecretary of state. Beetle had been Ike’s chief of staff during part of World War II, US Ambassador to the USSR (1946–1948), and CIA Director (1950–1953); and had acquired a fierce animosity toward the Soviets. Allen Dulles, John’s younger brother, became the head of CIA.<sup>11</sup> Together, with the elder Dulles, they were the core Security Elites 1.0 that implemented the new look. The first place they did this was in Iran, by rolling back its nationalist government. It is time to investigate “that terrible thing”—the coup against Mohammad Mossadegh, Iran’s democratically elected prime minister.

### *The Coup*

I owe my throne to God, my people, my army and to you. (The Shah of Iran, in K. Roosevelt 1979: 199)

The person enumerating his debts above was *Shahanshah* (King of Kings), *Aryamehr* (Light of the Artuans), Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Shah of Iran. The person he was speaking to was Kermit Roosevelt Jr., Teddy Roosevelt’s grandson (Groton and Harvard, like his grandfather). The reason the shah was so grateful was that in August 1953 Kermit had led a CIA coup code-named Operation Ajax that helped place the shah on his throne. The Iran Coup was covert and involved largely indirect US operations.<sup>12</sup> *Operation Ajax* directed against the government in Teheran was the first CIA new look at the world. Additionally, it was the first American attack upon a democratically elected government and it was cheap, costing in the order of a million dollars. The Korean War had cost between 1951 and 2000 on the order of 1,001 billion dollars (R. Miller 2007).

Operation Ajax engineered the toppling of Mossadegh’s government at the insistence of, and with assistance from, Whitehall. This permitted Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to govern for twenty-six oppressive years until he was overthrown in the 1979 revolution that swept the Ayatollah Khomeini to power.<sup>13</sup> Why were the British and the Americans so vexed with Mossadegh, a frail septuagenarian from an aristocratic background,

Paris-educated, whom the Soviets regarded as a “bourgeois nationalist” (in Gaddis 1997: 167)? Under normal circumstances such gentlemen were preferred clients of their imperial handlers. The emphasis in the preceding sentence falls on “normal,” for in the early 1950s in Iran, especially from the UK’s perspective, events were not normal.

What was abnormal to her majesty’s government had to do with oil. Great Britain was experiencing imperial sunset. Iran, land of ancient and medieval empire, had escaped formal English or anybody else’s colonization. Rather, it had survived as a buffer state between expanding Russian and British imperialisms. Importantly, before World War II the UK had practiced an informal imperialism there, centered on oil. Iran was a petro-state in possession of enormous oil reserves, and since the early twentieth century the Anglo Iranian Oil Company (AIOC, which would become British Petroleum, BP) had exercised a near monopoly, ensuring a comfortable accumulation of oil profits back in England. This was the British “normal” in Iran.

Lamentably for the UK, Iran had been anything but normal since the early 1900s. Initially, pesky US majors sought entrance into the oilfields. The Americans were held off during the inter-World War period. Unfortunately, the British faced severer challenges starting in the late 1940s. Iranian nationalists, recognizing the UK’s enfeeblement, demanded renegotiation of oil royalties, using Venezuela as a model for how royalties should be split—at the time, about 50-50 (Engdahl 2004: 93). The Iranian demand for higher royalties represented a significant intensification of what was earlier termed the oil company/petro-state contradiction.

Unsurprisingly, AIOC resisted renegotiating their concession, which sparked increased Iranian popular agitation for nationalization. The pro-Western Prime Minister Ali Razmara, a supporter of the AIOC, was assassinated in March 1951. The next month, the Majlis (parliament) legislated the nationalization of AIOC by creating the National Iranian Oil Company. The newly elected Prime Minister Mossadegh might have been bourgeois, but he was also a nationalist, and as such he vigorously supported nationalization, believing Iran should enjoy increased profits from its oil reserves instead of allowing them to nourish English elites. Note that the oil company/petrostate meso-contradiction was at the same time an expression of the dominator/dominated macro-contradiction between UK elites and Iran, the informal client state they sought to dominate. With nationalization came intensification of these contradictions.

At least some British elites understood Mossadegh’s oil nationalism through a racist gaze, as the work of “*incomprehensible orientals*” (Elwell-Sutton 1955: 258). The AIOC represented the UK’s single largest overseas investment at the time. Moreover, the loss of Iranian oil endangered the

UK's post–World War II restructuring strategy, which Engdahl (2004: 92) explains as follows:

While Britain during the 1950s appeared to be losing her most extensive attributes of empire, she held tenaciously to a reordered set of colonial priorities. Rather than stake everything on maintaining the extensive formal empire ... she regrouped around the far more profitable empire of world oil and strategic raw materials. ... Thus ... a strategic priority ... [was] maintenance of British interests in the oil-producing Middle East Gulf States, especially Iran.

Winston Churchill, then prime minister, tried a number of nonviolent reproductive fixes to reverse Iran's nationalization: "They first demanded that the World Court and the United Nations punish [Mossadegh], then sent warships to the Persian Gulf, and finally imposed a crushing embargo that devastated Iran's economy" (Kinzer 2008: 2–3). Mossadegh "was utterly unmoved" by these measures. Their strategic priorities defied by "incomprehensible orientals," stiff upper lips quivered in Whitehall. It was time to call in the "birdwatchers" (British slang for spies).

Granting itself Shultzian Permission, London turned to the US and demanded strategic rent in the form of assistance in staging a coup. President Truman refused, but his successor, Eisenhower, whose secretary of state was eager to give rollback a try, complied. Two birdwatchers—Kermit Roosevelt Jr. and Donald Wilber (Iranian architectural scholar, oriental rug collector, and one-time president of the Princeton Rug Society)—planned and executed Operation Ajax, assisted by elements of British intelligence and the Iranian military. Iranian politics around the nationalization of their oil confronted the Americans with a hermeneutic puzzle: What to do about this politics, which produced a reproductive vulnerability of an intensified oil company/petrostate contradiction? At this point the social reflexivity of the US old boys helps to explain why they did "that terrible thing."

### *Social Reflexivity: Two Contradictions and One Public Délire*

There have been three main answers to the question of why the 1953 coup took place. The first was that it had to do with domestic Iranian politics; the second was that it addressed a Communist menace; and a third was that it was about oil. I suggest a fourth answer that elaborates upon the roles of both communism and oil. Let us first consider Iranian politics.

*It's the Ayatollah:* Darioush Bayandor (2010) argues that the overthrow of Mossadegh resulted primarily from 1950s domestic Iranian politics, and that key clerics of the time, notably Ayatollah Borujerdi, the Grand

*Marja-i-Taqlid* (“source of emulation”), played a crucial role in deposing Mossadegh. Bayander does not deny that there was a CIA coup attempt but argues that it failed, and that only a second attempt organized by the clerics succeeded. Bayander marshals evidence well and is possibly correct, but his views are not germane to our interest because they answer the different question of why the coup was effective, whereas our question is why the Americans did what *they* did in it. Korea had been all about the inter-imperial contradiction and containing communist expansion. Might this sort of a consideration have played a role in US involvement in the coup?

*Communism and the Inter-imperial Contradiction*: Donald Wilber (1954), in his originally secret CIA report of the events, insisted that Mossadegh’s regime “had cooperated closely with the Tudeh (Communist) Party of Iran.” Kermit Roosevelt (1979) emphatically supported his co-conspirator in his own book *Countercoup*. So the two CIA birdwatchers who had led the coup for the US perceived what was happening in Mossadegh’s Iran as communist expansion. This, in our terms, would be an intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction.

The phrase “blowing smoke” is American slang for deliberately obscuring something. Spies often blow smoke, and Ervand Abrahamian (2001: 198) has argued that the two spooks who ran Operation Ajax were blowing smoke. Specifically, he insists:

Throughout the crisis, the “communist danger” was more of a rhetorical device than a real issue—i.e., it was part of the cold-war discourse. The British and American governments knew Mossadeq was as distrustful of the Soviet Union as of the West. In fact, they often complained to each other about his “neutrality.” ... They also knew that the Tudeh, even though the largest political organization, was in no position to seize power. ... Despite 20,000 members and 110,000 sympathizers, the Tudeh was no match for the armed tribes and the 129,000-man military. What is more, the British and Americans had enough inside information to be confident that the party had no plans to initiate armed insurrection.

Further, at the time the Soviets clearly were not involved in plans to expand into Iran. Moscow’s relationship to Mossadegh was “distant and distrustful” (Gaddis 1997: 166).

Nevertheless, it was true that “Iran had enormous oil wealth, a long border with the Soviet Union, an active Communist party, and a nationalist prime minister” (Kinzer 2008: 4). While Mossadegh was by no means a communist, he was a social reformer. Further, Tudah might not have been in a strong position in the early 1950s, but there was no reason to automatically rule it out in the future. It was entirely possible that Mossadegh’s and Tudah’s sympathies might be disposed more to Moscow than to the



US. Thus, if he continued as prime minister the Soviets' position might well be strengthened in Tehran, and at worst Iran might become a "second China" (ibid.). Consequently, a possibility of expansion of Soviet influence into Iran existed.<sup>14</sup> The inter-imperial contradiction certainly appeared to be intensifying. This brings the discussion to the role of oil.

*Oil and the Oil Company/Petro-state Contradiction:* Concerning oil, Abrahamian has said,

the oil was important both for the United States and for Britain. It's not just the question of oil in Iran. It was a question of control over oil internationally. If Mossadegh had succeeded in nationalizing the British oil industry in Iran, that would have set an example and was seen at that time by the Americans as a threat to U.S. oil interests throughout the world, because other countries would do the same. Once you have control, then you can determine how much oil you produce in your country, who you sell it to, when you sell it, and that meant basically shifting power ... to local countries like Iran and Venezuela. And in this, the U.S. had as much stake in preventing nationalization in Iran as the British did. (In Goodman 2003)

Abrahamian has a point. After all, prior to coming to Washington the Dulles brothers had worked for the law firm Sullivan and Cromwell, which represented the AIOC parent firm's business in the US. They were thus familiar with the issues pertaining to Iranian oil and moreover had their own ideas as to how the control of the oil might be rearranged. Wilber's (1954: 2) account makes clear what that John Foster Dulles wanted: "Specifically to cause the fall of the Mossadegh government, and bring to power a government which would reach an equitable oil settlement." "Equitable" meant that the American oil companies would have to get a big cut of the oil. In the 1950s, Iran, as an oil producer, was a petro-state. It wanted more of the value of its oil. The UK and the US had oil companies that also wanted more of the value of Iran's oil than Mossadegh was willing to give them. Here, then, was an oil company/petro-state contradiction impinging upon the Iranian situation in the early 1950s.

*The global domination public délire:* US hermeneutic politics in the early 1950s was ruled by a particular hermeneutic. In 1953, at the height of Senator McCarthy's anti-Communist crusade, Americans fixated on the understanding that the Commies were wicked, ubiquitous—even in government—and needful of riddance. Further, the Republican campaign platform of the just finished election had promised such an eradication in the international arena in the form of "rollback." The hermeneutic was clear: perceptually, communists of any variety were monsters; procedurally, they were to be eradicated.

In the first three years of the 1950s, the hermeneutic politics within the US security establishment vis-à-vis Iran sought to understand the relevance of Mossadegh's oil nationalization within the context of this anti-Communist hermeneutic. A National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) in December 1950, the end of the first year of the Korean War, judged that the Soviets had intended to aggressively pursue a global attack on the US's position. NIEs provide medium- to long-term estimates of the intelligence community's thinking about various topics. They were produced by the CIA in Eisenhower's time. The 1950 NIE warned of the Soviets "aggressively" attacking "world-wide" (NIE-15 1950).

A few months later the US embassy in Moscow, in a report entitled "Soviet Intentions" (*FRUS* 1951: 1582), included Iran as a target of Soviet "attack," reporting, "Elsewhere along the periphery of the Soviet orbit Iran, Yugoslavia, and Germany are the principal foci of attention and any faltering in Free World unity & determination might tempt the Kremlin to move at these parts." Mossadegh seemed especially vulnerable because he governed in a National Front government, and such governments seemed vulnerable to communist subversion, as had happened to Czechoslovakian President Beneš's regime in 1948. The State Department's Policy Planning Staff (30 July 1952) reported that there was fear that Mossadegh could be co-opted in a Czech-style coup, "where the communist organization either alone or in coalition with leftist elements in the National Front might win control of a deteriorating situation" (in Gavin 1999: 27).

At this point oil entered the discussion. During a June 1952 meeting of the State Department and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General J. Lawton Collins, representing the Joint Chiefs, declared, "If we are going to hold Middle Eastern oil we will have to hold a line in Iran" (*FRUS* 1952–1954: 239).<sup>15</sup> The Security Elites 1.0 were not thinking that oil and communism were unrelated. Rather, they understood both were relevant to appreciating the situation because they supposed that Iran was vulnerable to communist subversion, and if Iran was lost, then, the military believed (according to General Collins), all Near Eastern oil was at risk.

The Washington security elite's interpretation of the Iranian puzzle by the end of 1952 was summarized by another NIE report issued on 15 January 1953:

Iran presents a more pressing problem than that existing in other states of the area, owing in part to the proximity of the Soviet Union and the strength of the Tudah party, and in part to the more immediate danger of social, political and fiscal breakdown. The longer present trends in Iran continue unchecked, the more difficult it will become to prevent a breakdown of government authority which would open the way for at least a gradual assumption of control by the

Tudah ... the Iranian situation contains so many elements of instability that it might occur at any time. (FRUS 1952–1954: 340–341)

This NIE might be thought of as the CIA's perceptual interpretation of the Iranian situation. The key understanding was that Iran might go communist "at any time." Given such a perception, the procedures to be followed included exercising violent force—violent, because Churchill had already tried peaceful means of getting Mossadegh to cooperate and these had failed. This understanding of the inter-imperial and the oil company/petro-state contradictions was in terms of the global domination public *délire*.

NSC 136/1, dated 20 November 1952 and entitled "US Policy Regarding the Present Situation in Iran," declared, "Specific military, economic, diplomatic and psychological measures should be taken to support a non-communist Iranian government or to prevent all or part of Iran or adjacent areas from falling under communist domination" (In Gavin 1999: 34). NSC 136/1 and its command to take "military ... measures" authorized implementation of the global domination public *délire*.

Actually, the decisions taken in the NIE and NSC documents had been made during the Truman administration, so when Ike and the Dulles brothers arrived on the scene the reproductive fix was already in. Moreover, the hermeneutic politics on this matter had been entirely one-sided. Wherever Ike, the Dulles brothers, and "Beetle" Smith turned, the recently implemented global domination public *délire* dominated and, under the Eisenhower administration, in the more aggressive rollback iteration.

On 3 June 1953, at a meeting held in Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' office, Kermit Roosevelt explained how he planned to carry out the coup. When he finished, Dulles asked what others thought about the plan. His brother, the CIA head; Beetle Smith; Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson; the assistant secretary of state for Middle Eastern affairs; the director of policy planning at the State Department; and the US ambassador to Iran all endorsed it, saying "we have no choice," whereupon John Foster Dulles said: "That's that then. Let's get going" (Kinzer 2008: 164). Among the principals, it was a hermetic seal. Once they got Operation Ajax "going," it became the August coup and the reason why the US Leviathan did "that terrible thing."

The coup, which may well have succeeded due to the reasons given by Bayander, was over by 20 August 1953. The next year a meeting was held between the US, UK, Iran, and other interested parties, who were called "the Consortium," to divvy up the spoils of Iran's oil. A Consortium Agreement was reached, which specified that (1) for the first time US oil companies shared in the control of Iranian oil; (2) Western majors got 50 percent of revenues, with the US and UK evenly splitting 80 percent of

this sum and the remainder divided between French and Dutch interests; and (3) Iran was allocated 50 percent of the revenues, an increase from 16 percent in the original agreement. Thus, instead of Iranian oil becoming a lost cause to all oil companies save Iranian ones, American officials used the coup to arrange a situation that benefited friends of the US, inviting advanced capitalist clients—the UK, Holland, and France—to enjoy economic carrots in the form of oil revenues. The French may have grumbled that they got only 6 percent of the loot and the Dutch only 14 percent, but they got something. The British may have grouched that they only got as much as the Americans, but they could otherwise have lost it all. First these countries received Marshall Plan Funds; next they got Iranian oil revenues. These flows of value were strategic rents the US paid to advantaged clients to attach them to the second tier of the New American Empire. Further, the Iranians got more oil revenues than had been the case under the old AIOC.

Certain of Eisenhower's security elites probably thought they were rolling back the Soviets in Iran. However, the Bear was never really there, so it only makes sense to think of the coup as a preemptive rollback iteration of the global domination public *délire*. They were preempting something—Iran becoming a Soviet client—so they would not have to roll it back later. Moreover, the Shah, after thanking Kermit for his throne, allowed Iran to join the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) along with Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey, and the UK, to defend the Middle East against the USSR as NATO did in Europe. Accordingly, the CIA coup further challenged the Soviets by adding an additional client state to the New American Empire, solidifying the US imperium in an area of the world where oil revenues kept richly accumulating while helping to pay rents to its Atlantic community clients. Finally, with US military and CIA assistance, the Shah organized a secret police that brutally repressed the Tudah, effectively eliminating them as a political force in Iran (Abrahamian 1999). Moreover, many ordinary Iranians eventually suffered under the Shah due to Kermit's fine coup. So all in all, as the Iranian filmmaker Maziar Bahari told US National Public Radio, it left "a bitter taste in Iranians' mouths" (NPR Staff 2013). We shall hear from Iran in a later chapter. Now it is time to move on to Banana Land and another adventure of the Dulles brothers.

### **Banana Land: The Guatemalan Coup, 1954**

... the people are very polite ... (*Journey to Banana Land*, a 1950 United Fruit Company film, in Brimont 2011).

In 1950 the United Fruit Company (UFC), which had vast interests in Guatemala, produced a film called *Journey to Banana Land*. Filled with sentimental music and condescending assurances that the “people” were “very polite,” the film was above all a trip into the UFC’s self-representation, whereby the company presented itself as a benign corporation bearing fruit for the folk of Banana Land. Another, altogether different trip in Banana Land leads to the tentacles of *el pulpo* (the octopus, a common moniker for the UFC among Guatemalans) and another coup.

The 1954 Guatemalan coup d’état was a covert, indirect CIA operation that, according to Nicholas Cullather (1994: ix), a historian working for the CIA, “delighted both President Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers.”<sup>16</sup> It was called Operation PBSUCCESS and considered another CIA triumph after Iran. It overthrew Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, the democratically elected president of Guatemala. The following events led to Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers’ delight.

During the first half of the twentieth century, Guatemala had been a place of informal US imperialism where US companies extracted capital from the country. Guatemala’s geography is favorable to tropical agricultural production. Consequently the UFC (most famous for Chiquita bananas), starting in 1901 and continuing through the dictatorial presidencies of Manuel José Estrada Cabrera (1898–1920) and General Jorge Ubico (1931–1944), gradually came to dominate the Guatemalan economy. This was especially true under Ubico, who was called “Little Napoleon” because he fancied himself as like Napoleon, and whom Tomàs Borge (1992: 55) described as “crazier than a half-dozen opium smoking frogs.”

Little Napoleon, the only son of a wealthy landowner and prominent political figure, was something of a hybrid elite. He was first privately tutored, then educated at Guatemala’s most prestigious schools before further education in the US and Europe. Unsurprisingly, he was disposed to grant favors to the UFC, which it used to secure controlling shares of the railroad, electric utility, and telegraph companies while also acquiring over 40 percent of the country’s best land and de facto control over its only port facility, in the process earning its nickname, *el pulpo*. However, a period of nationalist, social welfare-oriented reform in Guatemala began in the 1940s.

Little Napoleon met his personal Waterloo in the “October Revolution” of 1944, whereupon Juan José Arévalo Bermejo was elected and governed until 1951. A new constitution was enacted, permitting land expropriation. This, combined with Arévalo’s belief in “spiritual socialism,” horrified Guatemala’s landed elite, who accused him of supporting communism. In 1947 he signed a labor protection law whose most obvious target was

the UFC. The US embassy in Guatemala became worried and sent cables warning of Arévalo's communist leanings.

Jacobo Arbenz was the next president of Guatemala. His father was a Swiss migrant and pharmacist who initially earned enough to provide his family with a comfortable life. Tragically, the father became an addict, neglected his business, went bankrupt, and plunged the family into poverty. There was no money for Jacobo to attend university, so he attended the military academy, to which he was able to win a scholarship. Subsequently, Arbenz entered the army as an officer and married Maria Cristina Vilanova, a landowner's daughter with a taste for socialism. Instead of traveling north to attend Harvard, cavort with wealthy old boys, and become a hybrid elite, Jacobo stayed south, fell in love with a socialist, and became a committed advocate of social welfare.

Arbenz's participation in the 1944 revolution made him a hero. This fame helped get him elected president in 1951 as a reformer following in Arévalo's footsteps. Arbenz's government sought to more completely implement his predecessor's policies. The Agrarian Reform Law enacted in 1952 authorized expropriation of private corporations' unfarmed land and its distribution to peasants. In 1953 the Guatemalan government began expropriating UFC land, seizing 234,000 acres. A year later it took another 173,000 acres. Arbenz collaborated with members of the communist Guatemalan Labor Party to make the land reform program effective. Subsequent to the 1953 expropriations, the UFC began extensive lobbying of the US government for its support in their confrontation with Arbenz.

The UFC lobbying was successful. Allen Dulles described what was happening in Guatemala as the establishment of a "Soviet beachhead in the western hemisphere" (in Cullather 1999: 17). No self-respecting Security Elite 1.0 wanted "Soviet beachheads" near the US, so a coup was authorized via a series of three events. On 12 August 1953 the NSC authorized covert action against Guatemala. Three months later on 9 December, Allen Dulles approved and allocated \$3 million for Operation PBSUCCESS's general plan. Finally, on 17 April 1954 the Dulles brothers gave the green light to implement it.

Howard Hunt, a CIA officer who participated in the coup (and was, from 1972 to 1974, part of the Watergate fiasco that destroyed President Nixon's presidency), recalled the nature of the coup's activities in a film where he said, "what we wanted to do was to have a terror campaign" (in TruthGlobal 2010). PBSUCCESS's "terror" lasted from late 1953 to 1954. It included arming and training a "Liberation Army" of about 400 fighters under the command of the then-exiled Guatemalan army officer Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas that was deployed in coordination with elaborate diplomatic, economic, and propaganda campaigns. PBSUCCESS was a

success. Arbenz resigned on 27 June 1954, terminating a nationalist period of representative democracy in Guatemala known as the “Ten Years of Spring.” Eisenhower and the Dulleses, as we already know, were “delighted.” Next the social reflexivity of why they did it is analyzed.

### *The Hermeneutic Politics of PBSUCCESS*

The social reflexivity of PBSUCCESS involved a hermeneutic politics concerning a particular hermeneutic puzzle: how to address the supposed reproductive vulnerability of a Soviet “beachhead” in Banana Land. However, to be clear: the old boys may have solved a puzzle that could well have been, but was not. Consider the following. Stalin had just died on 5 March 1953, and the ruling *nomenklatura* (the Russian equivalent of the old boys) was preoccupied with arranging the succession. The Guatemalan Communists would have appreciated some Soviet assistance. In fact, one recalled,

“We were knocking on the Soviets’ door,” one Guatemalan communist later acknowledged, “but they didn’t answer.” Pravda and Kommunist did run a few optimistic articles ...; and the Czechs were authorized to sell the Guatemalans—for cash—obsolete and largely inoperable German military equipment left over from World War II. Direct Soviet-Guatemalan contacts, though, appear to have been limited to a visit by a Soviet diplomat interested in bartering agricultural equipment for bananas: the deal fell through when each side realized that the other had no refrigerated ships. (Gaddis 1997: 178)

After the coup, the CIA seized Guatemalan archives to find proof of Soviet support for the Arbenz regime. Historian Piero Gleijeses gained access to these archives and searched them. The only evidence he found of Soviet dealings with Guatemala were bills from the Moscow bookstore Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga to the local Communist Party for \$23 (1992: 184–188). Soviet intervention in Guatemala prior to the coup seems limited to a request for payment on an outstanding bill.

Still, the US and Guatemala were in a dominator/dominated contradiction due largely to the UFC’s economic imperialism. Arbenz was intensifying this contradiction with his moves against *el pulpo*. His land reform had the potential to weaken the UFC and the old landowning elites, the very parties most likely to appreciate Washington’s embrace. Had Arbenz been successful, it is entirely possible that Moscow would have sought Guatemala as an ally and gradually moved it into its orbit. Perhaps the UFC might have been nationalized and its bananas rerouted to the USSR in exchange for military hardware. However, as of 1954 there was no “beachhead.” The notion of the hermetic seal helps account for why the “old boys” moved against Guatemala.

## *A Hermetic Seal and the Fixing of a Vulnerability that Was Not*

By early 1954 Washington was firmly of the opinion that Arbenz was a communist. Once the hermeneutic puzzle of Guatemala was reduced to the fact that its president was a “Commie,” his country could be treated as fair game for US spooks. Of course, Arbenz was not a Communist. He was pretty much, in Immerman’s (1982: 182–186) terms, “a middle-class reformer.”<sup>17</sup> How could the US government have made such a mistake?

The hermetic seal forged by the joint operations of UFC and US government actors answers this question. The story of these operations begins with the UFC, which was acutely sensitive to what was happening in Banana Land because Arbenz’s land reform was swallowing their territory. As this was occurring, the UFC public relations department hired two especially effective hermeneuts—Thomas Corcoran (whom FDR had nicknamed “Tommy the Cork”) and Edward L. Bernay. The Cork had worked with FDR during the New Deal and gone on to be the first truly powerful US government lobbyist. Bernay, a native of Vienna and a nephew of Sigmund Freud, believed in manipulating public opinion using the subconscious and was in many ways the creator of US public relations (Tye 1998). Both men were hired to communicate the perceptual message “that attacks on the company (UFC) were proof of communist complicity” in Arbenz’s regime (Cullather 1994: 18). Additionally, the Cork employed Adolf Berle and Robert LaFollette Jr. to assist him with his lobbying. The Washington elite considered Berle a “wise-man” on Latin American affairs. LaFollette was a hero of political progressives in the US. Bernay “laid down a PR barrage that sent correspondents from *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *New York Times*, and *Chicago Tribune* to report on Communist activities in Guatemala” (ibid.).

How influential the UFC actually was in the CIA’s intervention in Guatemala has been debated. Kinzer and Schlesinger ([1982] 1999) argued it was decisive. Gleijeses (1992) suggested that UFC’s lobbying efforts were not all that pivotal. Certainly the UFC helped in two ways “to create a sympathetic audience” for the knowledge that the Arbenz regime was going Communist (Immerman 1980: 638). First, the likes of the Cork, Bernay, LaFollette, and Berle directly brought this knowledge to the principals among Eisenhower’s security elites by visiting with them in their offices and arguing their briefs. Second, the journalists hired by Bernay saw to it that the same knowledge appeared in mass-circulation publications. Appy (2000: 200) reports that “every major article about Guatemala” in this press “cast the government as pro-Communist.” According to John Prados (1996: 91–108), CIA officers remembered that it was a summer 1953 meeting between the Cork and Beetle Smith that led to actual planning for the Guatemalan coup.<sup>18</sup>



At the same time, CIA hermeneuts reported information that replicated knowledge coming from the Cork and Bernay. During the early 1950s, “officers in the Directorate of Planning believed they were witnessing something new. For the first time Communists had targeted a country ‘in America’s backyard’ for subversion and transformation into a ‘denied area’” (Cullather 1994: 2). Equally, officers in the Office of Policy Coordination, which was part of the CIA but also reported directly to the State Department, worried as early as August 1950 about “the rapid growth of Communist activity in Guatemala” (ibid.: 18). The 19 May 1953 NIE asserted that Arbenz’s agrarian reform might “mobilize the hitherto inert peasantry in support of the Administration” and consequently “afford the Communists an opportunity to extend their influence by organizing the peasants as they have organized other workers” (NIE-84 1953: 1064, 1700).

Gleijeses (1992: 152) interviewed José Manuel Fortuny, head of the Communist Party at the time, about this assertion and found it to be essentially correct: the party supposed that by helping implement the land reform, it would be laying “the groundwork for eventual radicalization of the peasantry.” However, and this is important, the party also believed that Guatemala was in a “feudal” stage of development, which necessitated that it should first become capitalist before any socialist transformation could occur. Yet by 1952, CIA analysts regarded the Communist threat in Guatemala as great enough to warrant clandestine action, which they recommended.

Even more hermeneuts in the State Department at this time produced knowledge of communist perfidy in Banana Land. For example, the State Department’s desk officer for Central America, who was responsible for passing information arriving from the different embassies on to higher officials, cabled that “the trend toward increased Communist strength is uninterrupted” (Gleijeses 1992: 22). John Moors Cabot (Harvard and Oxford), of the Boston Cabots, traveled to Guatemala at this time. As the assistant secretary of state for Inter-American affairs and consequently the highest ranking State Department official dealing with Latin and Central America, Cabot was thought to be an objective commentator because even though his family was tied to the UFC, he had initially opposed any Guatemalan intervention. In April 1953, he met with Arbenz and other officials in the Guatemalan administration to negotiate with them about issues of compensating the UFC for its expropriated land and suppressing the Communists in the government. The negotiations were testy, prompting Cabot to report:

My talks in Guatemala were highly unsatisfactory. The Foreign Minister was a complete jackass. ... President Arbenz had the pale, cold-lipped look of an

ideologue and showed no interest in my suggestions for a change in his government's direction. He had obviously sold out to the Communists and that was that. (In Moulton 2009: 70)

Having met with the president who had “sold out to the Communists,” Cabot felt obliged to report that there was no way the Arbenz regime could be persuaded to mend its ways. Hence, he recommended, “a CIA-organized coup was the only solution” (in *ibid.*). In effect, this interpretation was that Shultzian Permission needed to be granted with regard to Guatemala because peaceful attempts at controlling Banana Land’s “direction” had failed.

There was more from Foggy Bottom. The formidable Paul Nitze, still head of the Policy Planning Staff, worried that Guatemalan communism “would be difficult to contain” (*ibid.*: 21). This worry raised the issue of the domino effect. Consequently, a draft NSC policy paper insisted in August 1953 that “a policy of non-action would be suicidal since the Communist movement under Moscow tutelage, will not falter nor abandon its goals” (*ibid.*: 25). A new ambassador to Guatemala, John Peurifoy, took up residence in October 1953. Fresh from fighting communism in Greece, Peurifoy, an admirer of Joseph McCarthy, told Congress, “Communism is directed by the Kremlin all over the world, and anyone who thinks differently doesn’t know what he is talking about” (*ibid.*: 16). Peurifoy immediately began reporting back to the State Department that Guatemala was in danger of communism “directed by the Kremlin.”<sup>19</sup>

There is one final actor in this story. Ann Whitman was Eisenhower’s personal secretary and the wife of Edmund Whitman, the public relations director of the UFC. Ann’s conversations with Ike are discretely not in evidence. However, it is possible she whispered the UFC line in the presidential ear: “The Commies are coming, the Commies are coming—to Guatemala.” A conclusion emerges from the preceding, if one contemplates the bobblehead doll.

“Bobblehead” dolls are toys often seen dangling from rearview mirrors in cars or arranged on mantles. They consist of large heads, usually of famous individuals, attached by springs to small bodies in such a way that a light tap causes the heads to nod vigorously. When this happens, they look like they are talking. Eisenhower and the two Dulles brothers were the principal Security Elites 1.0 authorizing the Guatemala coup. Wherever Ike and the Dulleses turned—to the press, the CIA, the State Department, UFC Lobbyists, the Cork, Bernay, LaFollette, Berle, Cabot, Nitze, Peurifoy, or the discrete Whitman—there were hermeneuts with heads wagging up and down, busy bobbleheads saying identical things: the monster-alterity had its “beachhead” because Arbenz was a “Commie,” and if you knew

this, you felt you had to act against it. All of which is to assert that the principal old boys had made a global domination interpretation of the situation in Arbenz's Guatemala.

Peaceful operations to remove Arbenz were impracticable because attempts to diplomatically fix the vulnerability, like the Cabot mission, had failed. So Shultzian Permission was granted, and by 1952 the CIA was working on a violent fix based upon the global domination public *délire*. The 12 August 1953 NSC authorization of covert action against Guatemala; Allen Dulles's approval for PBSuccess in 9 December 1953; and the 17 April 1954 joint Dulles brothers "full green light" for the coup all implemented the global domination public *délire*, because these actors were hermetically sealed into a belief in the intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction.

Did the reproductive fix that was PBSuccess fix a nonexistent vulnerability? No and yes. There was no Soviet "beachhead." Arbenz was not a Communist. His regime had no plans to make Guatemala Communist, though the local Communist Party did hope the agrarian reform would strengthen its position. What was happening in Guatemala was not a steep, sudden intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction, but the bobbleheads were hermetically sealed into the belief it was. Their hermeneutic blindness led them into Banana Land fantasy. Still, there was another contradiction in Guatemala—the dominator/dominated contradiction—and it *was* intensified by Arbenz's policies. PBSuccess terminated those policies. So although the vulnerability fixed by the coup did not arise from the inter-imperial contradictions, it was an outcome of the dominator/dominated contradiction.

For Guatemala, the consequences of the fix were grim. The coup provoked long-lasting repression. When a small insurgency developed against the government of Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas, the client installed by the coup, his government, with US assistance, developed a counterinsurgency program that killed tens of thousands. Armas's government gave way to undemocratic regime after undemocratic regime, and for four decades Guatemala was a land of counterinsurgency involving right-wing death squads invariably assisted by the US military. The UN-supported Historical Clarification Commission of Guatemala reported in 1999 that over 200,000 were killed during this time and assigned blame to the US government and the Guatemalan military (CEH 1999).

There was another unintended power of Operation PBSuccess. Ernesto "Che" Guevara was in Guatemala during the coup. There he met, and fell in love with, the Peruvian militant Hilda Gadea (2008). As they experienced the coup, Hilda helped transform Che from a politically inert person who was ethically repulsed by inequality and repression into an activist

committed to revolutionary action. The couple fled to Mexico, where he met Raul and Fidel Castro, and the rest of the story is Cuban history. It is time to travel to Cuba to narrate that story, and one of a CIA coup that failed.

### **The Bay of Pigs: Cuba, 17–19 April 1961**

It should be borne in mind that the United States is now not at such an inaccessible distance from the Soviet Union as formerly. Figuratively speaking, if need be, Soviet artillerymen can support the Cuban people with their rocket fire. (Khrushchev 1960)

I have previously stated, and I repeat now, that the United States intends no military intervention in Cuba. (Kennedy 1961)

The Bay of Pigs invasion occurred at the very beginning of the administration of Ike's successor, John F. Kennedy (JFK). We need to begin with a sense of the new presidency, acquired by turning to a poet. The first line of Percy Shelley's poem "To Jane: The Invitation" urges, "Best and brightest, come away!" Further inspection of the poem indicates Shelley wanted Jane to "come away" into the woods, where they would do God knows what to each other's bodies. David Halberstam (1969) reported that when JFK became president, he asked the "best and brightest" to "come away" with him to Washington, and the old boys (especially from Harvard) were delighted to accede to the dashing young president's request. JFK took office from Ike on 20 January 1961. Three months later the "best and the brightest" were in "deep shit" (US slang for "serious trouble"). Why?

It began with a speech that Nikita Khrushchev, who by the late 1950s had established himself as Stalin's replacement, gave at a teacher's conference on 9 July 1960. In this speech, quoted at the beginning of this section, he threatened to support the Cuban Revolution with Soviet "rocket fire." Ike, still president at the time, was not amused. Nine months later, under the freshly inaugurated Kennedy administration, Cuba was invaded by CIA-trained, armed, and led Cuban counterrevolutionaries at the Bahía de Cochinos (Bay of Pigs).<sup>20</sup> The operation had been planned and organized by the Eisenhower administration's CIA—largely by the same officers responsible for Operation PBSuccess—but was implemented by JFK's "best and brightest." It was a disaster.

Brigade 2506 hit the beach at the Bay of Pigs on 17 April 1961 and directly came under intense fire. By the next day, when Kennedy wrote the letter denying US involvement quoted at this section's outset, the brigade had been cut to pieces, effectively terminating the invasion. Our route to

explaining this fiasco and its implications for US empire-building leads first to understanding the Cuban Revolution of 1959, which in turn requires knowledge of the rule of President Fulgencio Batista.

*“Our son of a bitch”*: Following Spain’s defeat in the Spanish-American War (1898), Cuba became first a formal and then an informal US colony. Cuba, as the largest and most populous of the Caribbean Islands, promised the greatest opportunities for US capitalists. In 1895, US private investments in Cuba totaled \$50 million. By 1925, they were around \$1.5 billion. These investments were deeply resented by Cubans who believed the gringos (North Americans) were exploiting them. This resentment became especially intense during the worldwide depression of the 1930s. It prompted Cuba’s then President Ramón Grau San Martín to enact legislation that reduced the influence of the US government and American businesses in Cuba. The US responded by supporting Cuban military officer Fulgencio Batista’s overthrow of the Grau government in 1934.

Batista was a hybrid elite, though not a typical one. He came from modest circumstances, and his early school years were spent at an American Quaker School in Cuba. After a rapid political rise beginning in 1933, he became Cuba’s president (1940–1944), but then a political reversal precipitated his migration to the US, where from 1944 through 1952 he split his time between New York’s Waldorf-Astoria Hotel and a home in Daytona Beach, Florida. His American sojourn seems to have solidified his sense that good things came from accommodating US interests (Argote-Freyre 2006). In 1952 he led a successful coup that allowed him to establish a second presidency, which lasted until he was overthrown in 1959. Earl T. Smith, the US ambassador to Cuba just prior to Castro’s victory, explained how valuable Batista had been to US enterprise in 1960 Senate testimony, declaring “that American business was for the Government of Cuba, because the Government of Cuba gave normal protection to American business” (US Senate 1960).

“Protection” allowed US business to develop until it largely controlled the Cuban economy. By 1956, in addition to their extensive sugar holdings, Americans owned 80 percent of Cuban utilities and 90 percent of its mining industry (Kraft and Anderson 2004), with firms like Bethlehem Steel Corporation and Speyer and Company controlling much of Cuba’s national resources. The banks, the country’s entire financial system, and most industry were dominated by US capital. Additionally, Cuba became a major tourist destination, and many of its nightclubs and casinos were the property of the American Mafia. In short, Cuba was a profitable client state in the New American Empire, and Batista was a model of a hybrid elite dexterously enabling his handlers’ plans for capital accumulation. In

the view of Arthur Gardner, another 1950s ambassador to Cuba who spoke at the same Senate hearings as had Ambassador Smith, “I don’t think we ever had a better friend” (US Senate Committee on the Judiciary 1960).

Batista had initially attempted some social reform, but by the 1940s his regime was reactionary, corrupt, and brutal. Thus, while Cuba was good business for the Americans, it was bad for business for ordinary Cubans. President Kennedy said of Batista’s Cuba, “I believe that there is no country in the world ... including any and all the countries under colonial domination, where economic colonization, humiliation and exploitation were worse than in Cuba, in part owing to my country’s policies during the Batista regime” (in Daniel 1963: 16). These were strong words, and at least some of the Washington governmental elites might have agreed with Kennedy at the time. Meanwhile, the viewpoint expressed by William Wieland, an important State Department official in the 1950s, takes a mournful tone: “I know Batista is considered by many as a son of a bitch ... but American interests come first ... at least he was our son of a bitch” (in H. Thomas 1998: 650). JFK was acknowledging that by the end of the Batista regime, Cuba had become a particularly repressive client in the New American Empire. Wieland was noting that the tyrant was the US’s “son of a bitch”—a prickly situation likely to raise revolutionary ire, which it did.

“*Going wild and harming*”: The Cuban Revolution began in 1953 when poorly armed Cuban rebels led by the Castro brothers attacked the Moncada Barracks in Santiago. The attack failed, and nearly all the rebels were killed or captured. Following the Moncada debacle, the Castros fled into Mexican exile, where, as we already know, they met Che Guevara, who had just come from Guatemala City. Che and the Castro brothers trained their own army for a guerilla war against Batista. On 2 December 1956, Castro and eighty-two others aboard the boat *Granma* landed in Cuba. Batista’s soldiers quickly reduced their numbers, but most of the important leaders made their way into the Sierra Maestra Mountains, where they formed the 26 May Movement. Two years of guerilla insurgency followed. Eventually, in late 1958, Batista and his generals concluded the situation was hopeless. Forsaking his Daytona home, Batista fled to Spain on New Year’s Day 1959 with a fortune reputed to amount to \$300 million. Fidel Castro arrived triumphantly in Havana on 8 January.

This handed the old boys in the US government a hermeneutic puzzle: What was happening in Cuba? Of course, a first alarm was that the revolution might be due to Communism. Opinion was initially divided on this possibility. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, for example, initially told Eisenhower, “The Provisional Government [of Cuba] appears free from Communist taint” (in Gaddis 1997: 179).

However, Washington elites very soon came to suspect that communism was playing a part in the revolution. For example, a memorandum reporting a debriefing between State Department officials and the Harlem congressman Adam Clayton Powell, who had visited Castro in March of 1959, reported that

The Congressman has concluded that Fidel is very close to a nervous breakdown or crack-up of some sort. "He has gone haywire." Many friends and staunch supporters of Fidel reported to him this same concern. Also, Mr. Powell believes that the Communists are taking advantage of the chaotic conditions to move in to positions of strength wherever they can and with disturbing success so far. (Powell, Weiland, and Stevenson 1959: 1)

Nine months later, in January 1960, Allen Dulles called for Castro's overthrow on the recommendation of Colonel J. C. King, head of the CIA's Western Hemisphere Division, who had concluded that a "far left" dictatorship existed in Cuba (in Rabe 1988: 128). Eisenhower seems to have accepted the CIA's interpretation, as in one of two meetings held at Foggy Bottom that month he labeled Castro a "madman" who was "going wild and harming the whole American structure" (in *ibid.*).

"For the Russians," Gaddis (1997: 181) reports, Castro's victory "came as an enormous surprise; one of them remembered it as 'a completely unexpected miracle.'" To exploit the "miracle," the Kremlin signed a trade agreement in February 1960, instituting an exchange of Cuban sugar for Russian oil, machinery, and technicians. Cuban-Soviet-bloc trade rocketed from 2 percent of the island's trade in 1960 to 80 percent by the end of 1961 (LaFeber 2002: 213). On 18 February 1961, Ike told Senator Smathers that the Castro situation was "intolerable" (*ibid.*: 128). In early March, a ship bringing arms to the Castro regime exploded. Castro blamed the CIA. At an NSC meeting on 17 March 1960, Eisenhower authorized a plan developed largely by Richard Bissell and Tracy Barnes, two Groton old boys and former PBSUCCESS operatives. The plan, called "A Program of Covert Action Against the Castro Regime" (code-named JMARC), was designed to eliminate Castro.

Meanwhile, on 17 May 1960 Cuba passed an Agrarian Reform Law that threatened expropriation of US businesses' landholdings. Cuba proceeded to nationalize 850 million dollars' worth of US property and businesses by June, prompting the US Senate to hold hearings in August to address the situation. The previously quoted Ambassador Gardner informed these hearings:

Senator DODD. In your own mind, Mr. Gardner, do you consider Castro a Communist tool, or do you think he is an important Communist himself?

Mr. GARDNER. I think he is a tool.

Senator DODD. Would you agree that insofar as the security and welfare of the United States is concerned, it doesn't make too much difference—it is not important whether he is a tool—

Mr. GARDNER. I don't think it makes any difference.

Senator DODD. What do you think we ought to do? He is confiscating our property. He is causing trouble. He has created an espionage beachhead in the hemisphere.

Mr. GARDNER. I think we ought to morally support any movement of Cubans that is willing to take the job on. And I don't think there is any question that there are such people. I think we can't do it ourselves, because you know we can't send Marines down. That would be the most terrible thing in the world. But we can, under cover, support and let them know that we want to have a change. (US Senate 1960)

What had happened with the rise of the Castro regime was a coalescence of both the dominator/dominated and the inter-imperial contradictions. Recall that in the former contradiction, the dominator's acquisition of more force resources from the dominated intensifies the contradiction for the dominated; conversely, the dominated's acquisition of greater force resources from the dominators intensifies the contradiction for the dominators. What happened in the Cuban Revolution, as just described, was the latter outcome. Rebels in a dominated state (Cuba) conquered the government in that client state, thereby acquiring control over its force resources and denying them to the dominator state (the US). In the inter-imperial contradiction, the contradiction was intensified if one of the parties to the contradiction lost or gained force resources relative to the other party. As a result of Castro's victory, Cuba increasingly drifted toward the USSR, putting at risk whatever force resources the US had previously been able to extract from there. Cuba, in Ike's words, was "going wild and harming" the New American Empire. Pretty "intolerable"!

Why were negotiations between Washington and Havana not explored at greater length? Otherwise put, why was Shultzian Permission granted so quickly? Consider Eisenhower's and Kennedy's responses to the hermetic puzzle of Castro's Cuba. Gleijeses noted, "Eisenhower and Kennedy ... agreed that Castro represented a deadly threat to US interests, and that the United States had the right to intervene to remove the threat" (1995: 42). This understanding was possibly seared into Eisenhower's I-space as a result of Khrushchev's 9 July 1960 warning that he might defend the Cuban Revolution with Soviet rockets. This certainly reduced the likelihood of peacefully resolving the problem. Ike's response to Khrushchev was simple. The US would not tolerate "establishment of a regime dominated by international communism in the Western Hemisphere" (Eisenhower 1960). Kennedy was effectively trapped into accepting this position



because during his campaign for the presidency in the fall of 1960, he had attacked the Eisenhower administration for letting “a Communist menace ... arise only 90 miles from the shores of the United States” (in Gleijeses 1995: 24). Khrushchev’s threat, which led to Eisenhower and Kennedy’s responses, made it difficult to solve the Cuban crisis through peaceful measures. Shultzian Permission was in effect granted. Accordingly, the Americans attacked on 17 April 1961, and two days later the Cuban military had decisively eliminated Brigade 2506. The invasion implemented the global domination public *délire*.

Some months afterwards, Che Guevara sent a note to Kennedy via the White House adviser Richard N. Goodwin, saying: “Thanks for Playa Girón [the Cuban term for the Bay of Pigs.] Before the invasion, the revolution was weak. Now it’s stronger than ever” (in Anderson 1997: 509). It was not the Kennedy administration’s best moment. His security elites seemed far from the best and the brightest. Why? This leads to the murky realms of hermeneutic deception.

### *Hermeneutic Politics: The CIA and Hermeneutic Deception*

The argument can be made that the hermeneutic politics ending in the Bay of Pigs attack resulted from hermeneutic deception. Chapter 1 explained that such deception is based on messages whose meanings deceive actors about situations in which they have to act. In the case of JMARC, the messages the CIA sent to the White House about what was meant to happen were not what the CIA understood would happen, and ultimately the Bay of Pigs fiasco resulted from this ruse.

The CIA handled the procedural fix; and Allen Dulles largely assigned this task to the two Groton old boys Bissell and Barnes, and those working for them (David Atlee Phillips, Jacob Esterline, William Robertson, and Howard Hunt). This was the old crew from PBSuccess. Peter Wyden (1979) has argued that the CIA’s Cuban blunder was due to “groupthink”—another way of expressing the notion of the hermetic seal. But the groupthink for those deciding how to bring Castro down involved a hermetic seal #2 within a hermetic seal #1.

As a group, the CIA, like most of Washington elite of the time, was sealed into the understanding “Castro must go.” This was hermetic seal #1. But the Bissell group was further sealed into their vision of *how* he would go. This was hermetic seal # 2, discussed next. It is important to grasp that the Bissell team, in formulating how to eliminate the Castro regime, did not work with the CIA’s Directorate of Intelligence (DOI). Bissell’s colleagues never told the DOI that they were planning to overthrow Castro, which meant that they could not coordinate operations. However,

it was the DOI that did the actual intelligence work of the CIA, gathering information about what was occurring in Cuba. This meant Bissell's group was under-informed about the most recent Cuban events.

Critically, the Bissell team was unaware of what the Castro regime was doing militarily, which was important because of a lesson Che and the Castro brothers had learned from PBSUCCESS: they realized that Arbenz had been defeated because his armed forces were neither strong nor reliable. The Castro regime successfully addressed this failing. Bissell's old boys, for their part, knew Castro should be eliminated in the same way Arbenz had been removed. That is, they had hermetically sealed themselves into their interpretation of the situation. Their understanding was a reiteration of their Guatemalan success, where a small counterrevolutionary force supported by the CIA had defeated the military of a country where the CIA desired regime change. Why did Bissell's men hold this understanding? Perhaps it was because the memory that PBSUCCESS had worked was sealed in their I-spaces, whereas they had sealed out knowledge that Che and the Castro brothers had fixed what made PBSUCCESS a CIA success.

In the JMARC plan, Brigade 2506 was tasked with doing to the Castro regime what the small counterrevolutionary force led by Armas had done to Arbenz. Brigade 2506 consisted of 1,297 soldiers who actually landed at the Bay of Pigs. Of course, lacking intelligence, Bissell's plotters did not know they would face a Cuban army of approximately 20,000 and a militia of 200,000. Brigade 2506 never had a chance: 114 of those who landed drowned or were killed in action, and 1,183 were captured. JMARC was a fool's fix.

*"Ships that pass in the night"*: Solving the hermeneutic puzzle of Castro's Cuba was the first challenge of the new Kennedy administration, so let us get a sense of the qualities of its main actors. Kennedy had once said, speaking of the virtues of McGeorge Bundy (National Security Advisor 1961–1966), "You can't beat brains" (in Halberstam [1969] 1992: 44). There were a lot of "brains" in the Kennedy administration. McGeorge Bundy had been a "legend" at Groton, the "brightest boy" at Yale in his time, and a Dean at Harvard (ibid.: 47). Secretary of State Dean Rusk had been a Rhodes scholar at Oxford. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, the "star" of JFK's cabinet, had been a "whiz kid" at Berkeley, graduating Phi Beta Kappa and going on to become president of Ford Motor Company, where he used his smarts to turn the declining automotive giant around. Walt Rostow (McGeorge Bundy's deputy) had been an undergraduate at Yale, became another Oxford Rhodes scholar, returned to Yale for his Ph.D., and went on to become a professor at Harvard, where he was a *wunderkind* in the development of modernization theory.<sup>21</sup> But if the Kennedy

officials were so academically accomplished, how, then, with their brains, did they perpetrate the fool's fix of JMARC?

Gleijeses (1995) argued that the newly elected Kennedy White House and the largely Eisenhower era CIA were like "ships that pass in the night." He provided evidence showing that Kennedy's "brains" assumed Brigade 2506 would, if it encountered stiff resistance, escape destruction by melting into the countryside and conducting guerilla warfare. According to Gleijeses, the CIA professed the same belief as the White House but tacitly assumed that Kennedy would commit US troops rather than let the brigade be overrun. Allen Dulles is reported to have said, "We felt that when the chips were down, when the crisis arose to reality, any action required for success would be authorized rather than permit the enterprise to fail" (in D. Talbot 2007: 47); that is, that JFK would send in the Marines. So the brains supposed one thing would happen to save the situation while the CIA believed another thing altogether, and neither the administration nor the CIA knew what the other thought. These thoughts were ships that pass in the night.

Furthermore, in the dark night of secret operations in Cuban waters one ship was actually sending false signals to another. This was detected by Lucien Vandembroucke, who discovered certain of Allen Dulles's papers in the Princeton University library. He believes that in these Dulles confesses that the CIA tried "to steer past" Kennedy an operation he mistrusted (1984: 365–376). Bissell (1996: 173) himself seems to make a similar admission in his memoirs, written at the very end of his life, where he recalls, "Fear of cancellation [of the attack] became absorbing. . . . It is possible that we in the Agency were not as frank with the President about deficiencies as we might have been." Bissell was worried about "cancellation" because there were rumors that Kennedy might appoint him CIA Director when Dulles resigned, and he wanted a great success to bolster his credentials. So the agency was not "frank." It hid "deficiencies." Evan Thomas's (1995) research among CIA officers of the time showed that "some old CIA hands believe Bissell was setting a trap to force US intervention."

In March of 1960 Ike had approved JMARC but not its implementation. JFK, now President, had the option to authorize implementation. In early 1961 the Joint Chiefs of Staff evaluated JMARC, decided it had only a 30 percent chance of success, and recommended against it. Kennedy accepted their recommendation, but Bissell immediately revised it, papering over its deficiencies. On 4 February at a meeting held to discuss the revised plan, all the old boys with responsibilities toward Cuba were present—Bissell and Dulles from the CIA, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the two Bundy brothers, Nitze, and McNamara. Senator William Fulbright, chairman of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, was also

invited. Everyone spoke favorably of the CIA's revised JMARC, and at the end Fulbright was asked to comment. He denounced the plan in vigorous terms. A vote was taken: all the brains in the administration voted for the revised proposal. JFK accepted their judgment. Here ships passed in the night in the sense that one ship (the CIA) sent a message to another (the Kennedy administration) that all was clear ahead, when an iceberg was looming. It was a hermeneutic deception in which "deficiencies" of procedural interpretation led actors into dangerous waters, resulting in the Bay of Pigs debacle.

The Bay of Pigs invasion was a global warring that occurred after intensified, coalesced dominator/dominated and inter-imperial contradictions provoked reproductive vulnerability. The old boys' perceptual solution of the puzzle was consistent with the domino theory hermeneutic and the global domination public *délire*. Perceptually the Castro regime was another falling domino; procedurally they had to go. Shultzian Permission for violent force was given because Khrushchev's threat of Soviet rockets in defense of Cuba indicated peaceful negotiations were impractical. Ike's March 1960 authorization of JMARC and JFK's February 1961 authorization of its enactment implemented the global domination public *délire*.

The invasion was a debacle for two reasons. The first was that the CIA's procedural solution of the Cuban hermeneutic puzzle was based on Bissell and his agents' being hermetically sealed in a delusional view of Castro's Cuba as like Arbenz's Guatemala; while the Castros and Che, aware of what had happened to Arbenz, made certain it was not. Second, the CIA's hermeneutic deception told JFK's "brains" that the invasion would be a success, when what they really meant was that if it was not a success, then Kennedy should send in US soldiers, which he was not prepared to do. After it was all over, Kennedy cleaned house at the CIA—Dulles gone, Bissell gone, Barnes gone. A few years later when Kennedy himself was gone, it was rumored the CIA might have settled the score with the young president.<sup>22</sup> It is time now to analyze the largest and most violent of the 1950–1975 global wars, the Vietnam War.

### Vietnam: 1961–1975

At the time of the Vietnam War, Vietnamese called the struggle "Chiến tranh giữ nước chống Đế quốc Mỹ," the "Resistance War against the American Empire to Save the Nation." Americans, especially those who fought there, referred to it simply as "Nam." Some of these "grunts" (ordinary soldiers) recalled Nam as a "cluster fuck" (a botched operation), at least for the New American Empire. Few dispute this judgment.

Beginning in 1961 and continuing through 1975, US security elites waged overt and covert, direct and indirect warfare throughout Indochina (the three countries of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia that had comprised French Indochine). Prior to US hostilities in Afghanistan, this was the longest single war in US history. Most combat operations were in South and North Vietnam, where US forces dropped 8 million tons of bombs, 400,000 tons of napalm, and 18 million gallons of Agent Orange and other chemical defoliants. Additionally, they employed “the ‘Daisy Cutter,’ a monster-sized bomb weighing 7.5 tons” that

destroyed everything in an area equal to ten football fields; the AC-47 helicopter gunship ... armed with three Gatling guns that together fired 18,000 rounds per minute ... phosphorus bombs, laser guided bombs, and fragmentation bombs, the latter designed to maximize internal body wounds with flying flechettes that tear into the flesh. (Parenti 1989: 44–45)

Constant bombing, napalming, and defoliating left two-fifths of Vietnam’s land unsuited for forestry or agriculture for a long period. The violent force used by the US government in Vietnam “probably exceeded the amount used in all previous wars combined” (Gettleman 1985: 461).

Some of this firepower was intentionally deployed against “slants” (a derogatory term for ordinary Vietnamese), especially when grunts, who were either “rabbits” (white) or “soul brothers” (black), conducted Zippo Raids—called such because Zippo lighters were used to ignite the thatch of peoples’ huts—that “massacred whole villages.” At the same time they “murdered prisoners of war; set up ‘free fire zones’ in which all living things were subjected to annihilation; systematically bombed all edifices, including hospitals, schools, churches” (Parenti 1989: 43–44).<sup>23</sup> Still this horror might be likened to a stately dance.

*A Dance of War:* Dances have steps. The choreographing of those steps began at the Japanese surrender in August 1945. At that time, Ho Chi Minh’s guerillas occupied Hanoi and proclaimed a provisional government. Ho Chi Minh was a leader of formidable intellect and organizational skills.<sup>24</sup> In 1941 he returned to his homeland from an exile imposed on him because of his anticolonial activities, and in the next year he founded the Viet Minh, part political party, part guerrilla force. In October 1945 the French returned with an army to reclaim their colony. It became clear that the Vietnamese would have to fight for their independence, which they did in what became the First Indochina War (1945–1954), largely fought in North Vietnam. France, economically and financially impoverished in the years after World War II, requested US support in their imperial twilight. Both the USSR and the new, communist People’s Republic of China recog-

nized the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, and China began to militarily supply the Viet Minh, largely with American weapons seized from Chang Kai-shek's defeated Nationalist Army in China.

The communists, from the Washington old boys' perspective, were expanding in two places in Asia at this time—on the Korean and the Indochina Peninsulas. We have already analyzed the US response in Korea. Washington authorized military aid to the French a month after the Korean War began, and it continued until the French defeat in 1955. Over this period the US paid much of the cost of all French war supplies (Wall 1991), making the conflict a US indirect global war.<sup>25</sup> In effect, the US was using the French to fight the Vietnamese in the First Indochina War, as the British had used the Iroquois to fight the French in the Seven Years' War.

US assistance notwithstanding, the French were defeated by the Viet Minh under General Vo Nguyen Giap, in part because Giap, a formidable tactician, was increasingly able to mount conventional military operations with Chinese supplies and training. In May 1954 French troops suffered a devastating rout at Dien Bien Phu, after which France began withdrawal. To decide the post-French disposition of Indochina a conference was organized in Geneva; its results became known as the 1954 Geneva Accords. Among other things, these formalized the division of Vietnam but also scheduled a vote in 1956 to decide whether to reunite the countries. Ho Chi Minh's Communists received the North. A regime headed by the French-supported emperor, Bao Dai, got the South and installed Ngo Dinh Diem as his prime minister. Hanoi instructed approximately 10,000 Viet Minh fighters to remain in Diem's South Vietnam.

With the French gone, the Diem regime was the US government's client in the struggle against communist expansion.<sup>26</sup> Diem was fiercely anti-communist. With US assistance he created a South Vietnamese army to eliminate communists. The North Vietnamese responded by using the Viet Minh who had stayed behind to create a Peoples' Liberation Army (the Viet Cong, VC) to oppose Diem. The year 1956 came and went without a vote to reunify the two Vietnams, heightening the struggle between the two sides. Diem's army was unable to resist the VC, who by the end of 1961 were in control of much of South Vietnam's countryside. In October 1961, six months after the Bay of Pigs fiasco, President Kennedy's young administration decided to send US combat troops to serve as military advisers. This was the formal beginning of direct US intervention in Nam. Thereafter, the US fought overtly and directly, committing more and more of its own troops.

McNamara visited South Vietnam in 1962 and reported, "we are winning the war" (History Place 1999). Fantasy! By 1963 most of the countryside was lost to the VC. South Vietnamese army units could not stand before their VC counterparts. At this time US officials decided that their

problem was Diem, a client they had trouble controlling who was losing support throughout Vietnamese society, especially among Buddhists (“The Overthrow” 1971, II: 1–2). On 4 July 1963 a Buddhist general contacted the CIA in Saigon concerning the possibility of a coup against Diem. The CIA and the US ambassador, Henry Cabot Lodge, agreed to the overthrow. The coup began on 1 November 1963. Trapped in the presidential palace by the mutinous troops, Diem called Lodge and asked, “What is the attitude of the U.S.?” Lodge responded to the man he had betrayed, “It is 4:30 AM in Washington, and the U.S. government cannot possibly have a view” (“The Overthrow” 1971, II: 4). Lodge continued the conversation by inquiring about Diem’s safety. The next day Diem was assassinated.

Between Diem’s assassination and the end of 1965 there were seven successive governments, five in 1964 alone, as coup followed coup. None of the different client regimes were effective against the VC. Generals Khanh, Nguyen Cao Ky, and Nguyen Van Thieu led a coup in December 1964. The US ambassador at the time, General Maxwell Taylor, summoned the coup leaders to the embassy and reprimanded them, only to find General Khanh complaining in the press that the Americans were practicing “colonialism” in South Vietnam (History Place 1999). The general was correct: the US officials were trying to make Vietnam into a client state. The problem was, they were failing.

When a war is being lost, one military iteration, not always the wisest, is to add more violent force. Washington elites implemented this strategy for the four years after 1964. US soldiers called new replacements “turtles”; because they were so slow to arrive. There were roughly 16,000 military advisers in South Vietnam in 1964. President Johnson, who had replaced the assassinated President Kennedy on 23 November 1964, and who promptly orated, “I don’t want any damn Dindinfoo” (History Place 1999), authorized the use of napalm on 9 March 1965, after which things heated up. There were roughly 125,000 US soldiers in Vietnam in July 1965, 390,000 in December 1966, 475,000 in July 1967, 495,000 in November 1968, and 543,000 in November 1969. The turtles acted like cheetahs, arriving lickety-split.

In reply, the Soviet Union and China provided North Vietnam with substantial military assistance.<sup>27</sup> The North was able to move North Vietnamese Army (NVA) regulars south along the Ho Chi Minh Trail to enter the fight as early as the summer of 1964. The US began bombing the trail in Laos and North Vietnam. Between 1964 and 1973 roughly 580,000 bombing missions were conducted in Laos alone. By September 1968, nine hundred US aircraft had been shot down and up to ten thousand NVA supply trucks were on the Ho Chi Minh trail every day, replenishing VC and NVA soldiers.

On the evening of 29 January 1968, Bill Forbes took his Boy Scout troop for an overnight campout in a park near Saigon's Tan Son Nhat airport. The kids had a great time, though they heard noises in the jungle surrounding the park. The next morning Bill marched them out of the park and home. A few hours later the VC and NVA marched through the scouts' campground and attacked the airport.<sup>28</sup> Then, President Johnson got his own "damn Dindinfoo" because the noises the scouts had heard was maneuvering to begin the Tet Offensive (January–March 1968), when communist troops attacked extensively throughout South Vietnam. US forces halted the offensive but did not defeat their enemy, which strengthened the presumption that they could try again in greater force. In the wake of the Tet campaign, Johnson asked Clark Clifford, then secretary of defense and a respected statesman, for advice. On 25 March Clifford convened the "Wise Men," a dozen elder statesman and soldiers of unimpeachable old boy credentials. After deliberating, they advocated withdrawal from Vietnam. This was the end for Johnson. He announced he would not stand for re-election.

Richard Nixon, campaigning on a pledge of "peace with honor," won the presidency and would govern for five years (1969–1974). There was neither peace nor honor with Nixon and his key foreign policy adviser Henry Kissinger. Kissinger, who was respectively Nixon's national security advisor and then his secretary of state, was a German Jewish immigrant who attained old boy status, albeit with a Bavarian accent, by performing brilliantly in Harvard's undergraduate and graduate schools, becoming a professor there, and eventually teaching McGeorge Bundy's course in political science. Nixon, at Kissinger's urging, authorized the secret bombing of Cambodia in 1969–1970. There would be 3,500 bombing raids in one year, destabilizing the Cambodian government and leading to the Khmer Rouge's victory (Shawcross 1979). Under Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge turned Cambodia into killing fields where millions were exterminated, about which Kissinger is supposed to have said, "Why should we flagellate ourselves for what the Cambodians did to each other?" (Kawilarang 2004: 178). Christopher Hitchens (2001) argued that Kissinger was a war criminal due to his Vietnam War activities.

Secret negotiations had been ongoing in Paris since May of 1968. Under the policy of "Vietnamization," instituted in 1969, South Vietnamese soldiers were trained to replace the departing Americans. January 1973 saw the Paris Peace Accords signed, officially ending the war. Nixon declared that "we had won the war" (in Record 1996: 2). US combat troops left in March 1973. Thereafter the NVA invaded South Vietnam in force. Vietnamization failed. By 25 April 1975 the North Vietnamese had surrounded Saigon. Five days later they took the city.



At this juncture, why not contemplate a dance? Consider the pavane—a slow, processional dance of stately steps. Renaissance aristocrats throughout Europe favored it for revels. The Vietnam War might be imagined as an unhurried pavane of death: first the Americans killed, then the Vietnamese killed, next the Americans killed, then the Vietnamese killed, and so on, to the music of firing weaponry. But make no mistake about it: the dance ended badly for the New American Empire. Its final steps were recorded in images of helicopters atop the CIA headquarters in Saigon evacuating defeated Americans and their South Vietnamese allies. Metaphorically they left millions upon millions dead in the ballroom, posing the question of why the old boys went to the ball and did the dance in the first place.<sup>29</sup>

### *The Social Reflexivity of Vietnam*

Is the conflict explainable in terms of global warring theory? Certainly. First, with the loss of North Vietnam to the Communists followed by the VC's successes in South Vietnam, it was clear that the New American Empire was in open global warfare with North Vietnam, which was supported by the USSR and China. The fighting was over territory, meaning that the inter-imperial contradiction was intensifying. Further, because this intensification was due to already occurring military operations, it was clear that a peaceful fix was not possible, so Shultzian Permission was effectively granted, enabling a violent fix in order to relax the contradiction. All this information is congenial to global warring theory. However, there have been other explanations. Before further making the case for a global warring theory, let us therefore examine three other accounts that have been important. Attention turns first to the possibility of plain old loopiness.

*The March of Folly*: In the US, public opposition to the Vietnam War grew throughout the 1960s and was especially strong among American intellectuals (Hixson 2000). A frequent question these opponents posed regarding the war's proponents was "Are they idiots?" The formidable popular historian Barbara Tuchman (1985: 7) addressed this question in her book *The March of Folly*, answering it in the affirmative and claiming that the war's champions suffered from "wooden headedness." Halberstam's *The Best and the Brightest* ([1969] 1992) documented the actions of Kennedy's and Johnson's officials with regard to Vietnam, leaving readers with the sense that they did exhibit such folly.

Consider the single, but telling, case of President Johnson, who once asked his friend Senator Richard Russell—on the reactionary right—for advice on Vietnam. Russell, a rural Georgian, is reported to have coun-

seled, “We’re just like a damn cow over a fence out there in Vietnam” (in McNerney and Israel 2013: 295), which meant the US military was in a place it should not be and could not win. LBJ agreed with his old friend and replied, “I don’t want to commit us to a war” (ibid.: 294). But even though Johnson didn’t want to “commit,” commit he did and with a vengeance, increasing the number of US soldiers there by approximately 500,000. Doing what you do not want is injudicious.

Johnson was not alone in his pessimistic view of the war. As early as JFK’s administration, a fair number of high members of the officer corps warned Kennedy and his security elites that Vietnam was a risky military option. During LBJ’s administration, General Earle Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff throughout much of the war (1964–1970), had offered an overview of the military situation that concluded in 1967 that “the Main force was stalemated ... and there is no evidence that pacification will ever succeed in view of the widespread rot and corruption of the government, the pervasive economic and social ills, and the tired, passive accommodation prone attitude of the armed forces of Vietnam” (in Buzzanco 2002: 186). Equally, George Ball, under secretary of state for both JFK and LBJ, counseled against the war from the beginning as an unwinnable quagmire (Halberstam [1969] 1992: 174). Other high officials reached similar conclusions at the same time. According to W.W. Rostow (1996–97: 39), Robert McNamara believed the war to be “a problem with no solution” as early as the years 1965–1967.

On such assessments, Robert Buzzanco commented: “Given such bleak judgments it would take a rather great stretch of the imagination to expect success in Vietnam. Yet the war continued with the White House and the military as concerned about avoiding responsibility for failure as with actually improving the situation in Vietnam” (Buzzanco 2002: 187). Simply put, by 1967, the president, his secretary of defense and the chairman of his Chief of Staff, among others, supposed the war was unwinnable but persisted in it. Explaining the war as the result of its elite actors’ folly clarifies that what the “best and the brightest” did exhibited their “wooden-headedness.” Unexplained is why they danced their stately pavane of irrationality in the bloody ballroom of Vietnam.

*“The new men were tough.”*

Golf had long symbolized the Eisenhower years—played by soft, boring men with ample waistlines who went around rich men’s country-club courses in the company of wealthy businessmen who were tended by white-haired, dutiful negroes. ... In contrast, the new men [Kennedy brought into his administration] were tough. (Halberstam [1969] 1992: 39)

The role of gender in conflict has become a topic of interest. Jeffords (1989) has extended this interest to the study of Nam. The old boys who conceived and prosecuted the war were indeed *all* male, raising the question of gender's role in the war. Kay Halle, an old Kennedy family friend, provided insight concerning women's positions at the highest levels of the Kennedy administration. When JFK was staffing the White House and asked her opinion of who might be hired, "Halle suggested that he should choose more women. He abruptly changed the subject, for as Halle observed, he considered women largely 'decorative butterflies and lovely to look at.' Kennedy was simply not comfortable being in a room with women who sought to be equal partners in the political process" (Leamer 2002: chap. 21). If women were to be absent, what sorts of men were to be present?

As already noted, Kennedy had once said of the virtues of McGeorge Bundy that "you can't beat brains" (in Halberstam [1969] 1992: 44). Actually, you could. The men in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations were in Halberstam's words not "soft boring" men, as had been the case in Ike's time; rather, they were "tough." Robert Dean (2002: 378) expresses the matter as follows: "the war managers" in the Kennedy/Johnson administrations "used ... a sort of scholastic deduction premised on an imperial psychology of masculine strength and threat." They judged acting aggressively in fierce competition with great strength to be the measure of a "good man"—virtues learned in their prep schools.

Kennedy, when he came into the presidency, worried about an America he thought was getting flabby, so he "warned of 'creeping softness'" that was "worrisome to him because he identified the strength of male bodies with the strength of the state" (in Dean 2002: 370). About Bobby Kennedy, JFK's brother, Halberstam ([1969] 1992: 273) has said, "Toughness fascinated him. ... he judged men by how tough they were." Rusk was "a man who believed in force" (ibid.: 307). Bundy's course at Harvard, Government 180 (the one Kissinger would also teach), concerned US foreign affairs and taught what at that time was known as "ultrarealism": "Its proponents believed that they were tough, that they knew what the world was really like, and that force must be accepted as a basic element of diplomacy" (ibid.: 56).

President Johnson expressed his toughness in a language heavily scented with sexuality. Speaking of a member of his administration who had turned against the Vietnam War, he confided, "Hell, he has to squat to piss" (in Halberstam [1969] 1992: 532). Remarking on one bombing raid, he bragged, "I didn't just screw Ho Chi Minh. I cut his pecker off" (ibid.: 380). Defending his decision not to call a bombing halt, he explained, "Oh yes, a bombing halt, I'll tell you what happens when there is a bombing

halt. I halt and then Ho Chi Minh shoves his trucks up my ass. That's your bombing halt" (ibid.: 379). In response to criticisms that all this bombing might lead to Chinese intervention, he lectured, "I'm going up her leg an inch at a time. ... I'll get the snatch before they know what's happening, you see" (ibid.: 379–380). So Johnson spent his time figuratively "screwing" Ho, while protecting his own "ass" from enemy trucks, all the while going for some "snatch." Tough guy!

Of course, in the 1960s being "macho" was culturally hegemonic for men. You were "rock hard" because that was good; you avoided being "soft" because that was "queer" and bad. If you were "rock hard" you got rewards. Joseph Alsop, an influential columnist of the era, rhapsodized about Kennedy, "'Isn't he marvelous!, he's got 'balls'" (in Halberstam [1969] 1992: 24): here we have the old boys' cultural ideal as testicular warriors. I suspect that this "rock hard" masculinity was, at least in part, responsible for the US's entrance into the Vietnam War.

This argument may be extended as follows, using Pierre Bourdieu's (1990) notion of symbolic capital. Being tough and aggressive yielded considerable symbolic capital among the elite of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. This meant that in any situation, including Vietnam, a real man behaved in a hard, forceful manner. The symbolic capital thus acquired overcame any reservations they might have had about the rationality of committing US troops to Vietnam. In this view, then, Johnson's awareness that Vietnam was not "worth fighting for" was overcome by reluctance to lose the symbolic capital of his "balls."

This argument appears plausible as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. Certainly, the JFK and LBJ men had "balls." Certainly they would be tough, but this means that they would be expected to act hard-hitting in almost any situation. It explains nothing of the specifics of why they desired to act tough in the particular situation of Vietnam in the 1960s. The fact that the elites were "rock hard" explains why they would want to dance dirty in any pavane in which they participated, but not why Vietnam War would be the dance they choose. A third, economic reason, explored next, has been offered for US participation in the conflict.

*Role of the Military-Industrial Complex:* This explanation has to do with the economic interests of what Eisenhower had termed the military-industrial complex. It was offered by some in the anti-war movement during the conflict. William Engdahl (2004: 114) expressed it when he wrote:

It was clear that a significant faction of the American defense industry and New York finance had encouraged the decision of Washington to go to war ... because the military build up offered their interests a politically saleable excuse

to revive a massive diversion of US industry into the production of defense goods. More and more during the 1960s the heart of the US economy was being transformed into a kind of military, in which the cold war against the communist danger was used to justify tens of billions of dollars of spending.

In this view, the US fought in Vietnam so that the military-industrial complex could be strengthened by a “military Keynesianism”: the state’s provision, during economically difficult times, of fiscal stimulus to military enterprises in order to resolve those difficulties (C. Johnson 2008). Undoubtedly, the Vietnam War offered a sizable financial stimulus to the American defense industry.<sup>30</sup> Equally, the sale of US Treasury bonds, which the government used to finance the war, was a source of plentiful profit for Wall Street during the conflict. However, there is a problem in this analysis.

Keynesianism of any sort was a policy tool for addressing economic distress, but the years from the end of World War II until the early 1970s were the golden age of US capitalism. In fact, the years of decision-making about warring in Vietnam were the very best years of that golden age. As Robert Brenner (1998: 58) reports, “Between 1958 and 1965, GNP grew at an average annual rate of 4.6 percent, faster than in any other period of comparable length after 1950. ... Behind this spurt lay a spectacular rise in the rate of profit.” Washington chose military escalation in Vietnam in the years from 1959 through 1965. Therefore, JFK’s and LBJ’s security elites decided to get tough with Vietnam in precisely the years when they would not have done so as a way of stimulating the economy, because the economy did not need to be stimulated. It was roaring along.

Engdahl’s position could possibly be upheld if it is recognized that there is a military variety of Keynesianism in which fiscal stimulus is supplied to military enterprise regardless of how the economy is functioning. I will term this “turbo-military Keynesianism.” (1998: 56) reports that “during the 1950’s, approximately 10 per cent of GNP went to military spending.” There were both good and bad times economically during the 1950s, which means that Washington continually provided military financial stimulus to the economy, as NSC 68 had recommended and the Korean War demanded. Hence, the US appears to have been committed to a policy of turbo-military Keynesianism at this time.

However, such a policy cannot be said to be *the* cause of the Vietnam War, as this would mean Washington fought the war to get the financial stimulus to military enterprise, when in actuality the fiscal stimulus was being supplied regardless of whether or not wars were being fought. New York financiers and military contractors undoubtedly “encouraged” Washington to send money their way during the Vietnam War. It was good business.

But it still does not explain why the Security Elites 1.0, rock hard on their Viagra of toughness, got so tough in Vietnam. Exploration of the hermeneutic politics of the tough guys will aid such an explanation.

*“Crucified”*: *The Hermeneutic Politics of Vietnam*: The hermeneutic puzzle of the Vietnam War had both perceptual and procedural solutions. The perceptual solution is addressed first, as follows. After the success of Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe and Mao’s victory in China, the two communist giants contemplated further enlargement. The language of this planning was belligerent. For example, a lecture broadcast on Radio Moscow in 1949 announced:

The plans of the already bankrupt pretenders to world domination who are trying to surround the Chinese People’s Republic with a police ‘cordon sanitaire’ composed of their vassals are built of sand. The powerful movement of liberation among the peoples of Southeast Asia testifies to this fact. Millions of workers of Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaya, India, Burma, Southern Korea, the Philippines ... have become convinced by the experience of the Chinese people that only a persistent and consistent struggle against imperialism under the leadership of the Communist Party ... backed by the USSR can bring about liberation from the oppression of the modern slave owners. (In Sacks 1950: 227)

The speech promised “persistent and consistent struggle” against Western imperialism in all of Southeast Asia plus India.

In 1949 Stalin met with Liu Shaoqi, the foremost theoretician of the Chinese Communist Party at that time, and together they formulated an “elder brother/junior brother” strategy for Asia’s liberation. The junior brother, China, would seek to directly take advantage of Western weaknesses in colonial areas. The elder brother, the USSR, would provide guidance and material assistance to the junior brother’s activities (Gaddis 1997: 159). Liu (in Sacks 1950: 232–233), in a Radio Peking broadcast toward the end of 1949, gave a sense of how well they believed expansion policy was going:

The war of national liberation in Vietnam has liberated 90 percent of her territory; the war of national liberation in Burma and Indonesia is now developing; the partisan warfare against imperialism and its lackeys in Malaya and the Philippines has been carried on over a long period; and armed struggles for emancipation have also taken place in India ...

Liu was clear that when he spoke of war, he meant it literally,

It is necessary to set up wherever and whenever possible a national army which is led by the Communist Party, and is powerful and skillful in fighting the enemies. ... Armed struggle is the main form of struggle for the national liberation struggles of many colonies and semi-colonies.

So the Soviets and Chinese were preaching territorial acquisition by the end of the 1940s and thought they were doing rather well at it.

Of course, the CIA was eavesdropping. In 1949 it warned Washington elites that the Kremlin would employ China “as an advanced base to facilitate Soviet penetration of Southeast Asia” (in Gaddis 1997: 153). The very next year, the CIA’s cautioning appeared vindicated. North Korea invaded the South. The junior brother helped the North Koreans with troops, and the elder brother provided sophisticated weapons to its junior brothers. Militant communism appeared on the march in Asia, just as it had been, successfully, in Eastern Europe. This expansion was an intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction that presented a hermeneutic puzzle.

Long before the Kennedy and Johnson administration, Washington elites had explicitly interpreted such events in accordance with the domino theory hermeneutic. In 1949 NSC-64 had applied it particularly to Southeast Asia, as the following quotation from it makes clear:

It is important to the US security interests that all practicable measures be taken to prevent further communist expansion in Southeast Asia... The neighboring countries of Thailand and Burma could be expected to fall under Communist domination if Indochina were controlled by a Communist-dominated government. The balance of Southeast Asia would then be in grave balance. (In Jervis 1980: 586)

An even more specific application of this hermeneutic to Vietnam occurred during the Eisenhower administration. As the French were being defeated, Ike held a press conference (7 April 1954) to discuss this situation. A journalist asked Eisenhower,

Mr. President, would you mind commenting on the strategic importance of Indochina to the free world? I think there has been, across the country, some lack of understanding on just what it means to us.

To which the President responded,

you have broader considerations that might follow what you would call the “falling domino” principle. You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have a beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences. ...

Then with respect to more people passing under this domination, Asia, after all, has already lost some 450 million of its peoples to the Communist dictatorship, and we simply can’t afford greater losses.

But when we come to the possible sequence of events, the loss of Indochina, of Burma, of Thailand, of the Peninsula, and Indonesia following, now you begin to talk about areas that not only multiply the disadvantages that you would suffer through loss of materials, sources of materials, but now you are talking

really about millions and millions and millions of people. (“President Eisenhower’s News Conference” 1954: 382–383)

Thereafter, every US president throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s at some point applied the domino theory hermeneutic to Vietnam. In 1961 the Departments of State and Defense sent President Kennedy a joint memorandum, the product of prolonged deliberation at the highest level. William Bundy had written the first draft; Robert McNamara, among others, had revised it. It stated:

The loss of South Viet-Nam would make pointless any further discussion about the importance of Southeast Asia to the free world; we would have to face the near certainty that the remainder of Southeast Asia and Indonesia would move to a complete accommodation with Communism, if not formal incorporation within the Communist bloc. (In Sheehan et al. 1971: 150)

In a televised interview just prior to Kennedy’s assassination in 1963, David Brinkley and the president had the following exchange :

Mr. Brinkley: Mr. President, have you had any reason to doubt this so-called “domino theory,” that if South Viet Nam falls, the rest of Southeast Asia will go behind it?

The President: No, I believe it. I believe it. (In “The Overthrow” 1971, II: 828)

So, beginning in the 1950s and continuing through the Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy administrations, the hermeneutic puzzle of communist military expansion in Asia generally, and Vietnam specifically, was perceptually solved by the domino theory hermeneutic.<sup>31</sup>

The procedural solution to this hermeneutic was that the communist monster-alterity “had to be stopped.” However, the correct procedural solution to the hermeneutic puzzle remained a riddle. Remember that Kennedy had decided in 1961 to commit American troops, but they were there to be “trainers,” not actual combatants. Procedurally, then, the hermeneutic puzzle would be solved by the US fighting an indirect war as it had previously done in the First Indochina War. This solution failed because the trainers failed, resulting in serious deterioration of the South Vietnamese government’s military situation in 1962 and 1963. Then, on 22 November 1963, Kennedy was assassinated, and a renewed hermeneutic politics ensued over the proper way to prosecute the war—a politics in which the hermetic seal had a role.

There were two main sides in this politics: enthusiasts of aggressive, escalating military operations, called “hawks,” faced off against advocates of less aggressive or no military operations, labeled “doves.” Those closest to President Johnson—Bundy, Rusk, and initially McNamara—were hawks



who sought escalation. Perhaps the most important of the doves who encouraged de-escalation or withdrawal were Averill Harriman, George Ball, Roger Hilsman, William Truehart, Michael Forrestal (son of Truman's Secretary of Defense James Forrestal), and Paul Kattenburg. Johnson himself was something of an uncertain actor. He clearly fancied himself a tough Texan, but one who harbored serious doubts about success in Vietnam, as his talks with Senator Russell made clear. Further, his major political goal was implementation of the Great Society: a set of civil rights and anti-poverty domestic programs designed to extend educational and health care benefits to the majority of Americans. The politics in Vietnam's hermeneutic politics after Kennedy's assassination concerned whether Johnson would end up a dove or a hawk.

Three strings of events combined to seal Johnson into a hawk position. The first of these was elimination of the doves in his administration. The elder statesman Harriman was a patrician who was respected for having been governor of New York, US ambassador to the Soviet Union and Great Britain, and secretary of commerce. Under Kennedy he became the under secretary of state for political affairs, where his influence was considerable, but thereafter it waned in the Johnson administration. In mid 1964 Rusk placed him in charge of African affairs at Foggy Bottom, removing him from any Vietnam responsibilities.

Hilsman, though a dove, was an actual tough guy who had been a commando in Merrill's Marauders in the Burma Theater during World War II. He became a counterinsurgency specialist for Kennedy, who favored him. In 1963, as assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs, he infuriated high-level officials in the State and Defense Departments, challenging their optimistic assurances of the war's success. Rusk fired him in March 1964.

William Trueheart had been deputy chief of mission in Saigon and, at times, acting ambassador during the early the 1960s. Consequently, he was particularly knowledgeable about the realities of Vietnam. He too critiqued the military's rosy accounts of military operations. Trueheart had been Hilsman's protégé, and as Hilsman's star imploded, Trueheart's followed. Promised the position of deputy assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs under Hilsman, he was recalled to Washington in December 1963 and made desk officer for all of Southeast Asia—except Vietnam!

Michael Forrestal worked in the White House as one of McGeorge Bundy's most important aids. Unfortunately, he was a "known doubter" about the war (Halberstam [1969] 1992: 377) and in July 1964 was therefore forced out of the White House into a position lacking any responsibility for Vietnam. Paul Kattenburg, the State Department's Vietnam desk officer in the 1960s and the head of its Vietnam Working Group, had the nerve to advocate withdrawal from Vietnam at an NSC meeting on 31 August

1963, and to be the first known US official to do so. He was subsequently relieved of his position in early 1964 and exiled as a counselor officer to the US embassy in Guyana. He never made ambassador.

Of the doves, this left only George Ball, then under secretary of state for economic and agricultural affairs. He had warned Kennedy,

“Within five years we’ll have 300,000 men in the paddies and jungles and never find them again,” ... But JFK thought he knew better, caustically answering, “George, you’re crazier than hell. That just isn’t going to happen.” (Polner 2010: 1).

So although Ball was a dove, he stayed because, according to Halberstam ([1969] 1992: 378), in 1963 and 1964 he was more concerned with European affairs and let Harriman deal with questions of Vietnam. Clearly, one part of Johnson’s hermetic seal into a hawkish position was the elimination of doubting doves to advise him.

Another way the seal was tightened was to add hawks’ voices. William “Bill” Bundy was the older brother of McGeorge “Mac” Bundy and the son-in-law of Dean Acheson. He had been in McNamara’s Defense Department and was trusted by him to hew to a hawkish line. Roger Hilsman’s old position as assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs went to Bill. Though he himself eventually came to doubt the war, in 1964 he firmly and completely championed the line of his brother Mac, and his former boss in Defense. Shortly before he was pushed out at State, Kattenburg got in a “furious argument” with Bill over Vietnam policy (Halberstam [1969] 1992: 370). Bundy was supposed to have insisted “that Kattenburg was performing a *disservice* by his pessimism” (ibid.: 370), and it was for reasons such as this that dovish “disservice” was sealed out of the hermeneutic politics of Vietnam in 1964.

A third way of sealing Johnson into an aggressive stance vis-à-vis Vietnam was to threaten his manhood. JFK had messed up in the Bay of Pigs fiasco but redeemed himself a year later during the Cuban Missile Crisis (October–December 1962). In the summer of 1962, the Soviets began to install long-range missiles in Cuba, only ninety miles from Miami. Kennedy ordered Khrushchev to remove the weapons. Khrushchev demurred, and suggested quite publicly that Washington risked nuclear war. It was high noon: Kennedy and Khrushchev faced off like two gunslingers in a cowboy movie. The Russian flinched. Soviet missiles were dismantled and returned to the USSR. JFK had proven his virility (though secretly he had dismantled missiles targeting the USSR in Turkey).

Now, two years later, another time demanded a hard man. Joe Alsop—one of the most hawkish columnists, who had ties to the Bundys—began to write columns urging drastic action in Vietnam. “For Lyndon Johnson,”

Alsop insisted, “Vietnam is what the second Cuban crisis was for John F. Kennedy. If Mr Johnson ducks the challenge we shall learn by experience about what it would have been like if Kennedy had ducked the challenge in October, 1962” (in Halberstam [1969] 1992: 500). Alsop was saying that if Johnson did not escalate, he was not the man Kennedy had been.

Johnson was trapped. Wherever he turned, no one was left to argue a dovish line, but everyone championed a hawkish line. Wherever he turned, he knew he would be said to have “ducked the challenge” if he did not take the hawk line.<sup>32</sup> Unsurprisingly, Johnson took a hawkish line. On 8 November 1964 Rusk cabled Maxwell Taylor, ambassador in Saigon, announcing that “our present tendency is to adopt a tougher program both privately and publically against them” (in *ibid.*: 487). “They” were the North Vietnamese: the tough had got “tougher.” Soon the US was bombing the North. By 5 March 1965 the US Marines had landed as combat troops, and by 1968 there were over 550,000 combat troops in-country, dying at a rate of 1,000 per month. So the final solution to the procedural hermeneutic puzzle of the Vietnam War was to escalate and escalate and escalate again; yet it was to no avail. The tough got beat.<sup>33</sup>

President Johnson had headed the most powerful social being in history. Presumably, he was an actor of greatest agency. After leaving the presidency, he told an interviewer,

I knew from the start that I was bound to be crucified either way I moved. If I left the woman I really loved—the Great Society—in order to get involved in that bitch of a war on the other side of the world, then I would lose everything at home. All my programs. . . . But if I left that war and let the Communists take over South Vietnam, then I would be seen as a coward and my nation would be seen as an appeaser and we would both find it impossible to accomplish anything for anybody anywhere on the entire globe. (L. Johnson 1990: 45)

Knowing he had lost control within the Democratic Party because of Vietnam, Johnson chose to withdraw from the 1968 presidential election and retired to his ranch in Stonewall, Texas, where he grew his hair long like a hippie, drank heavily, smoked like a chimney, and was soon deceased (in 1973). Thus died a person who, having possessed the greatest agency, nonetheless believed he had been “crucified.” It is time to decide whether the evidence from the foregoing discussion is consistent with global warring theory.

First, the inter-imperial contradiction intensified in Vietnam in the late 1950s and early 1960s as the Diem regime lost chunks of territory to communism, producing a reproductive vulnerability. The fact that the land loss went on bloodily for a number of years in hard-fought guerilla operations made it impossible for US security elites to overlook, making its fix more

urgent. A domino theory hermeneutic interpretation of the vulnerability developed as early as 1950 during the first Indochina War and was continually reapplied during the Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy administrations. Perceptually, the old boys all agreed that Vietnam might fall and, like a domino, push other Southeast Asian countries toward the communist monster-alterity. Shultzian Permission was granted because fighting was already ongoing, ruling out peaceful fixes. In October 1961, JFK ordered commitment of US troops to South Vietnam. This order, as an implementation of the global domination public *délire*, might be seen as the Vietnam iteration of the global domination public *délire*.

After Kennedy's assassination (22 November 1963), however, the procedural solution of the puzzle led to divisive hermeneutic politics among the security elite. Two contestants—hawks and doves—battled over to how to proceed in Vietnam. The hawk position, escalation, was hermetically sealed into Johnson's I-space. On 8 November 1964, Rusk sent a cable to Taylor announcing that the administration was getting "tougher." This cable, a further implementation of the global domination public *délire*, provoked an extraordinarily violent procedural solution to the hermeneutic puzzle. Thus the stately pavane of the "best and the brightest" became a dance of death. In the end Johnson was "crucified," and up to three million Vietnamese died for his crucifixion.<sup>34</sup> It is time to summarize this chapter's analysis and determine whether the five global wars considered here support the plausibility of the global warring theory.

## Conclusion

The years between 1950 and 1974 are often described as the onset and the height of the Cold War, raising the question, what was the Cold War? The five analyses of conflicts in this chapter offer an answer to this query. Each instance of of global warring involved intensification and/or coalescence of the inter-imperial, oil company/petro-state, or dominator/dominated contradictions. The Security Elites 1.0 interpreted the vulnerabilities these posed as fixable via the global domination public *délire*. For different reasons, Shultzian Permission was granted in each case. Additionally, in each case the global domination public *délire* was implemented and then followed by global warring. This evidence supports the plausibility of global warring theory. As for the question of what the Cold War was, it provides an answer: it was the playing out of those strings of events explained by the global warring theory. Let us move on to the years 1975 through 1989, when the times were changing, especially for the contradictions facing the US Leviathan.

## Notes

1. Hinkle, Biddle, and Wallis, using Defense Department sources, conducted research for the US military on the frequency of its military operations roughly between 1970 and 1995. One of their conclusions was that “data are of too poor quality for use in meaningful planning” (1998: 7). This alarmingly suggests that the Pentagon is ignorant of how often it wars. However, Hinkle et al. found that the US annually participates in 6.56 military operations in which there is likely to be violence.

2. During the 1950s, especially in francophone areas, a literature developed documenting the phenomenology of colonial domination, especially in Fanon (1967) and Memmi (1957).

3. Edgar Snow (1994) and Peter Zarrow (2005) provide accounts of China’s drive to independence from the turn of the twentieth century until 1949.

4. Dalloz (1990) and Fall (1961) provide excellent accounts of the First Indochina War.

5. On April 26 2011 Amazon.com advertised sixteen books with the title *After Empire* or a similar title.

6. Perhaps the most significant victory for US global warring in the period between 1950 and 1975 was its indirect, covert operation in support of the 1965 overthrow of President Sukarno, which helped prevent Indonesia, the fourth largest country in the world, from becoming communist (Reyna 1998).

7. According to Panourgia (2009), of the \$3.4 billion in Marshall Plan funds allotted to Greece, only \$1.2 billion went to economic aid. The remainder was allocated to security.

8. The extensive literature on the Korean War is reviewed in Millett (2007). Cummings (1981), Halberstam (2007), Ridgway (1986), and Weathersby (1993) provide useful accounts.

9. There are many, varied estimates of civilian and military deaths during the Korean War. According to CNN approximately 2,800,000 North Koreans, South Koreans, and Chinese were killed or went missing during the war, and an estimated 1,600,000 of these were civilians (CNN 2013).

10. Scholars speak of the “McCarthy Era” (roughly 1950–1954) as a time when, due in considerable measure to Senator McCarthy, “America developed an obsession with domestic communism that outran actual threat and gnawed at the tissue of civil liberties” (R. Fried 1990: 3).

11. The Dulles brothers, Princeton old boys, were from a family with a Christian calling—their grandfather was a missionary and their father a minister; also, John’s son became a cardinal and his daughter a minister. John focused upon the “spiritual” when fighting Communism (Dulles 1950: 262–266). Pious the Dullesees may have been, but they were also capitalists who during World War II had operated through a network of American oil companies and Nazi corporations (Loftus and Aarons 1994). Kinzer (2013) has an excellent biography of the Dulles brothers and their times.

12. The CIA’s role in the coup is described by one of its planners in Roosevelt (1979). Works that place the coup within its geopolitical context include Kinzer’s journalistic classic (2008); also useful are Heiss (1997) and Elm (1994). Abrahamian (2013) argues the coup was part of the conflict between Western imperialism and Iranian nationalism.

13. There is some debate over the relative importance of the Americans and the British in executing the coup. The Americans acknowledge the British played a “pivotal role” (Bowcott 2000).

14. Tehran might not have turned toward the USSR during the 1950s because Irano-Russian relations were strained during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as Czarist Russia expanded into Iran’s sphere of influence in Central Asia and into Iran itself (Heravi [1969] 1999: 25–52).

15. The Joint Chiefs of Staff was established by the National Security Act of 1947 in the Defense Department to advise the Defense secretary. It consisted of a chairman, the chief of staff of the Army, the chief of staff of the Air Force (established as a separate service by the

same act), and the chief of Naval Operations. The Marine Corps commandant was to be consulted on matters concerning the Corps but was not a regular member.

16. Streeter (2000) provides a useful review of the literature on the Guatemala coup. Kinzer and Schlesinger ([1982] 1999), Immerman (1980), Gleijeses (1992), Cullather (1999), and Peter Chapman (2009), are all useful for studying the 1954 CIA coup in Guatemala.

17. No literature demonstrates Arbenz to have been a communist (see Kinzer and Schlesinger [1982] 1999), though he had “friends” among Guatemalan communists (Gleijeses 1989: 453).

18. The point argued in the text is not that the US arranged the coup in Guatemala to aid the UFC. John Foster Dulles was quite clear about the UFC’s significance: “If the United Fruit matter were settled, if they gave a gold piece for every banana, the problem would remain just as it is today as far as the presence of communist infiltration is concerned, That is the problem, not United Fruit” (in Immerman 1980, 1982: 739). Rather, the UFC helped get the CIA to stage a coup by producing the knowledge that Guatemala was going Communist.

19. Appy (2000: 315) believes that “the prominence of the Peurifoy report in his [Ike’s] memoir may have been decisive in persuading Eisenhower to go forward with the plan.”

20. Rasenberger (2011) provides accounts of the events that gave rise to the Bay of Pigs invasion. Hunt (1972), already encountered in Operation PBSuccess, gives an account of a CIA operative on the ground. Schlesinger’s (1965) account of Kennedy’s brief presidency catches Kennedy’s understanding of the fiasco. Farber (2006) offers an interesting rethinking of the origins of the revolution.

21. The topmost Kennedy elite came from a broader, less wealthy background than did the members of earlier Cold War administrations. McNamara’s father had been a sales manager in California. Rusk was from a poor, rural Georgia background. Rostow was the son of Russian Jewish socialist immigrants to New York. Kennedy himself was Irish. His father had made money, at least some of it through illegal means, and sent all his children to the best schools. But the family certainly remembered when families like Bundy’s (who were Boston Lowells) insisted “the Irish were ... an inferior race of moral delinquents” (Vorhees 2007: 31).

22. A number of books have argued for CIA involvement in JFK’s death. Douglass (2008) is a useful place to start in this literature. Tracy Barnes is one CIA official alleged to have been involved in the assassination. He returned to the old boy nesting ground, working for Brewster Kingman at Yale University as an administrator dealing with race relations and gender equality.

23. Consider “Bob,” who admitted to killing women and children during a commando “raid” he commanded against a tiny village in 1969. Bob insisted his troops had fired only when they themselves came under fire. However, a woman in the attacked village told another story. Bob’s men rounded up the women and children and shot them. One soldier under Bob’s command during the raid corroborated her story. The Bob was Bob Kerrey—later a U.S. Senator, a president of a university, a former state governor talked of as a presidential candidate (Vistica 2003). Next contemplate “John,” a Swift Boat commander in the free-fire zone of the Mekong Delta responsible for massacring, among others, civilians (St. Clair 2013a). “John” was John Kerry—later a senator, a presidential candidate, and secretary of state under Obama, known for lecturing others on their morality.

24. Ho’s biographers include Duiker (2000) and Brocheux (2007). Because he rose to head the state, he can be described as elite. Further, he was certainly a hybrid elite. Ho’s father, not an especially privileged person, was nevertheless a Confucian scholar and teacher, and saw to it that his son received a Confucian education. As a teenager Ho attended a French *lycée* in Vietnam; lived in America from 1912 to 1917, acquiring not elite US culture but that of labor in the working-class jobs he held; spent time in the UK; and was politically transformed into a communist in France between 1919 and 1923. Thereafter he alternated between Russia and China until returning to Vietnam in 1941.

25. A detailed account of US military assistance to the French in the First Indochina War from the perspective of the US military can be found in US Office of Joint History (2004).

26. Diem was a hybrid elite, but one created by the French for service in their empire. On the one hand, he was Catholic, like many French. On the other hand, his father had been a Mandarin in the service of the Vietnamese Emperor. Among other responsibilities, the father appears to have been Keeper of the Eunuchs (Jacobs 2006). A difference between Diem and Ho was that Diem came from an elite class position in Vietnam, while Ho did not.

27. In April 1965, China signed a military assistance agreement with North Vietnam to provide for Chinese air defense, engineering, and railroad troops. The Soviets provided weapons, especially for air defense. Approximately three-fourths of the military assistance is estimated to have come from China (Jian 1995; Gaiduk 2003).

28. “Bill Forbes” is a pseudonym. He was an old Yankee.

29. Estimates of Vietnamese civilian and combat deaths range from 1 million to over 3 million; see Hirschman, Preston, and Loi (1995) for a review of the mortality estimates.

30. Higgs (1988: 2) estimated US military purchases between 1961 and 1975 at 2408.5 billion 1982 dollars.

31. Discussion of the domino theory can be found in Guan (2001) and Slater (1993).

32. Some argue that the hawks were less hawkish than previously thought. Bird, for example, maintains that “documents show that the Bundys, and other decision-makers registered deep doubts about the American enterprise in Vietnam” ([1998] 2000: 17). Registering “doubts” is not advocating withdrawal. Hawks may have had “doubts,” but they always supported escalation when decisions were made about how to proceed in Vietnam. Further, hawks made certain it was known that the dove position was, as Bill Bundy had put it in his exchange with Kattenburg, a “disservice.”

33. There have been other explanations of why the US lost (Record [1998] is a useful introduction to this literature). Two have been especially significant: that the US lost because of the strength of the anti-war movement; and that the US military was not allowed to fight with all its resources. Some imply the peace movement was treasonous because it contributed to restraining the military. I believe both views are incorrect and encourage dangerous interventions. The US lost because the tough guys met somebody tougher. The Tet Offensive made clear that US ground forces could not defeat their opponents. This left winning to the air war, which failed either to interdict North Vietnam’s resupply of its forces in the South, or to cause North Vietnam to sue for peace. Imagining that the US lost because it did not fight hard enough is dangerous in that it implies that if only America fights harder, it will win. As tough guys know, sometimes there are tougher guys out there.

34. Debates about who had it right about Vietnam—the hawks or the doves—have flourished since the end of the war. Michael Lind (1999: 156) claimed to have examined all sides in these debates and discovered the “genuine lessons of the Vietnam War,” which were that the hawks were right. The heart of his argument was that the Cold War was a third world war—a position also taken by Nixon (1980)—“in which,” according to Lind, “the future governance of the international system was at stake, and in which the great powers opposing the United States and its allies were the moral equivalents of Nazi Germany” (in Gaddis 2000: 131). The Vietnam War was “necessary” for precisely the reasons given by US security elites during the conflict: “to defend the credibility of the United States as a superpower” in the struggle to govern the international system (Lind 1999: xv). There are empirical problems with Lind’s position, discussed in Gaddis (2000). It rings jingoistic with its denunciations of the Communists as monsters. Mao is likened to “Robespierre” (Lind 1999: 64), and Ho Chi Minh is “vicious” (ibid.: 32). The US’s opponents are dismissed as Nazis. Lind does correctly point out that the Cold War was a global conflict between two social beings; however, he overlooks that these social beings were empires doing what was necessary, given intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction. Finally, Lind regards the US as having fought for “credibility.” Credibility does have a place in discussions of Vietnam, because the war’s outcome established the credibility of the view that the US could be militarily defeated.

## “THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN’”

### *Global Warring 1975–1989*

“For the times they are a-changin’.”  
- Bob Dylan, 26 October 1963

“**T**ricky Dicky” (as President Richard Nixon was nicknamed by some, not affectionately) resigned for reasons of corruption on 9 August 1974. Nine months later, on 30 April 1975, Saigon fell. The Vietnam War was over, and many people suspected, in the words one of the era’s musical poet, “the times they [were] a-changin’.” After the next three presidential administrations (Gerald Ford, 1974–1977; James “Jimmy” Carter, 1977–1981; and Ronald Reagan, 1981–1989) it was clear: they *had* changed.

This chapter will explore the change in the relative significance of the political and the economic contradictions. By the end of the 1980s, following the final flare-up of the inter-imperial contradiction, the Soviet Union was gone and the US Leviathan continued, albeit battered by an intensifying dominator/dominated contradiction. Concurrently, the cyclical and systemic economic contradictions intensified to further pound the New American Empire.

The chapter begins by presenting the second generation of US security elites. Next, it examines the situation vis-à-vis the nonviolent economic reproductive fixes of the economic contradictions in the late 1970s and 1980s. It continues by exploring the relaxation of the inter-imperial contradiction between the Kremlin and Washington, and what this meant for the hermeneutic politics behind its violent fixing. Then it examines three of the period’s global wars: the Soviet-Afghan War (1979–1989) and the Iran-Iraq Wars (1980–1988), along with the lesser US-Libya War (1981–1988). It explains how a new monster-alterity emerged along with new public *délires*. The goal is to show how each of these conflicts was



influenced by the time’s contradictions. In the end, it will be clear that this was a transitional time preparing the way for the era to follow. Reflect upon the new, imperial security elites—masters and commanders of the US Leviathan.

## Security Elites 2.0

The original old boys were history by the end of the Vietnam War. Commanding the New American Empire were new gentlemen who had not been present at the creation but had read about it.<sup>1</sup> Certain points characterize these gentlemen. They still were overwhelmingly white men. Women and people of color still needed not apply. Meanwhile, old boys were fewer, in the sense that they came from the old Eastern Establishment. That is to say, fewer of them had graced its schools—the Grotons and Harvards—and more hailed from the country’s Midwest, South, and Far West.

Richard Nixon, from Yorba Linda, California, was by no means Establishment. His father had opened a grocery store and a gas station, but, as Henry Kissinger (1999: 48) remarked, he wanted to belong and so subscribed to “Establishment orthodoxy.” Gerald Ford, his successor, grew up in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The person he knew as his father was a salesman. He went to public high school and on to the University of Michigan, where he was a “jock” (football player). Jimmy Carter came from a comfortable family of peanut farmers in the tiny Georgia town of Plains. His education included Plains High and the Naval Academy, where he acquired a technical background in nuclear energy. Ronald Reagan hailed from the small city of Dixon, Illinois. His father, like Ford’s, was a salesman. He attended Dixon High and Eureka College before attaining Hollywood stardom, co-starring with a pongid in the film *Bedtime for Bonzo* (a film in which he taught morality to a chimp).

A few old boys lingered. The wealthiest, Nelson Rockefeller (Ford’s vice president, 1974–1977), was heir to John D. Rockefeller’s oil fortune. Less wealthy but politically more potent was George H. W. Bush (Bush I), onetime head of the CIA (under Ford, 1976–1977), Reagan’s vice president (1981–1989), and eventually the forty-first president. Bush I’s father, Prescott, had banking interests and had been a senator from Connecticut. Bush I went to Andover, Yale (Skull and Bones), and on to Texas, where he became something of an oil tycoon. Cyrus Vance, Carter’s secretary of State (1977–1980), was something of an old boy. He had attended the Kent School and Yale, where he was a member of the Scroll and Key Society. From there he went to Yale Law and on to serve in security-related positions in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

Some important figures had immigrant origins. They tended to be “brains.” Kissinger, discussed in the previous chapter, was the most prominent, especially during Nixon’s presidency. Carter’s National Security Advisor (NSA) Zbigniew Brzezinski, the other refugee brain, was born in Warsaw to a noble family. His father, a diplomat, had sought refuge in Canada in 1938. Zbigniew attended McGill University as an undergraduate; moved on to Harvard, where he was awarded a doctorate; and then began teaching political science. Unlike Kissinger, Brzezinski was denied tenure (1959) and went on to Columbia University. A final influential immigrant was Spiro Agnew, Nixon’s first vice president. Less brainy than Kissinger and Brzezinski, he rose from a modest Greek immigrant background to importance in Maryland politics and on to the heights of the vice presidency, from which he resigned due to charges of extortion, tax fraud, bribery, and conspiracy.

A few powerful figures from non-émigré backgrounds were also judged to have “brains.” Casper Weinberger (secretary of health, education, and welfare under Nixon and Ford, 1973–1975; secretary of defense under Reagan, 1981–1989), though sickly in youth, was found to be academically gifted and enjoyed a stellar career at Harvard. George Shultz (secretary of labor 1969–1970 and secretary of the Treasury 1972–1974 in the Nixon administration, and secretary of State 1982–1989 in the Reagan administration) came from comfortable circumstances in New York City. He attended Loomis Chaffee School, did his undergraduate years at Princeton, and acquired an MIT doctorate in economics. He began an academic career at MIT and the University of Chicago, where he fell under the influence of the neoliberals Milton Friedman and George Stigler. Carter brought Harold Brown to Washington to be his secretary of defense (1977–1981). Brown, also from New York, excelled at the demanding Bronx High School of Science and then took three degrees in rapid succession at Columbia University, attaining his doctorate in physics by the age of twenty-one. Eventually he became president of the California Institute of Technology (1969–1977), until Carter picked him to serve in his administration.

Finally, there were high officials who were not old boys, refugees, or brains. Bob Halderman, nicknamed “the Brush” for his distinctive flattop haircut, was Nixon’s chief of staff (1969–1973). His father ran a successful heating and air conditioning business in Los Angeles; from there he went to the University of Redlands, the University of Southern California, UCLA, and thence into advertising at J. Walter Thompson. The Ford administration introduced Dick Cheney (White House chief of staff, 1975–1977, under Ford; secretary of defense, 1989–1993, under Bush I; and Vice President, 2001–2009, under Bush II) and Donald Rumsfeld (White House chief of staff, 1974–1975, under Ford; 13th and 21st secretary of

defense, 1975–1977 under Ford and 2001–2006 under Bush II) to high office. Cheney, the son of a soil conservation agent, was born in Nebraska and raised in Wyoming. He flunked out of Yale as an undergraduate but managed to graduate from the University of Wyoming. Rumsfeld was from a more prosperous background. He grew up in Winnetka, a comfortable Chicago suburb, where his father sold real estate and his mother was a teacher. The young Rumsfeld went to Princeton, and then to Georgetown Law (from which he did not graduate).

As will become clear later in the chapter, these gentlemen, most especially the Republican ones, were as committed to violence as a policy tool as their old boy predecessors had been. Though they had not been indoctrinated in “manly Christianity” at prep schools, many were soldiers with considerable combat experience.<sup>2</sup> However, before examining their command of the New American Empire, the chapter analyzes nonviolent reproductive fixing of the vulnerability to the economic contradictions in order to establish their relevance to the global warring of this time.

### **Fixless Fixes: Nonviolent Fixing of Economic Reproductive Vulnerability**

Being an empire is not easy. Chapter 5 demonstrated the New American Empire’s vulnerability to cyclical and systemic economic contradictions. Here, a first avenue of consideration concerns attempts to fix cyclical reproductive problems over the years from 1975 to 1989.

#### *Attempted Nonviolent Fixes of Cyclical Reproductive Vulnerabilities*

The long downturn brought recession in 1973–1974 and 1981–1982. Recessions were, and are, aspects of cyclical economic contradictions, and they pose a reproductive vulnerability: what to do about the bad times they bring? The years 1975–1989, for example, brought deindustrialization in what came to be called the Rust Belt, the industrial heartland of the Midwest and parts of the Northeast. Private and governmental elites responded to this hermeneutic puzzle with a hermeneutic politics that pitted hermeneuts who were free market fundamentalists against those favoring welfare state economics and Keynesianism. The fundamentalists won, and their politics resulted in what might be termed neoliberal fixation. Let us explore neoliberalism.

*The Neoliberal Fix:* Neoliberalism is variously termed a “stage,” a “social order,” and a “strategy” of capitalism (Duménil and Lévy 2011: 5–32). This

is confusing. Stages, social orders, and strategies are different matters. I understand this liberalism as a public *délire* in different iterations, derived from the liberal class ideology that emerged when economic contradictions intensified during the first two recessions of the long downturn.

John Williamson's "What Washington Means by Policy Reform" (1990) was perhaps the first explicit statement of the neoliberal public *délire*. Williamson argued for what he called the "Washington Consensus," a policy already instituted by capitalist elites in Washington-based institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, US Federal Reserve, and US Treasury Department. At its heart, the neoliberal *délire* is based upon the following hermeneutic: perceptually economic problems are interpreted as the result of government interference in markets, and procedurally it is understood that this requires elimination of welfare state economics, by moving control of the economy from the public to the private sector. Specifically, Williamson's article proposed ten policy recommendations:

1. Governments should *not* run large deficits that have to be repaid by future citizens, because such deficits can only have a short-term effect on the level of an economy's employment.
2. Public subsidies are wasteful, especially those of pro-poor services, education, health care, and infrastructure investment;
3. Tax reductions for higher incomes and adoption of moderate marginal tax rates are encouraged for innovation and efficiency;
4. Implementation of market-determined interest rates that are positive (but moderate) in real terms is encouraged;
5. Floating exchange rates are recommended;
6. Trade liberalization needs to be practiced with particular emphasis on elimination of quantitative restrictions (licensing, etc.) and of any trade protection provided by law; and on relatively uniform tariffs, thus encouraging offshore outsourcing, competition, and long-term growth.
7. Liberalization of the capital account of the balance of payments is important, allowing people the opportunity to invest in offshore outsourcing and allowing foreign funds to be invested in the home country.
8. Privatization of state enterprises is required, insuring market provision of goods and services.
9. Abolition of regulations of economic practice that impede market entry or restrict competition, except for those justified on safety, environmental and consumer protection grounds.
10. Financialization of capital.

These ten policies were not entirely novel. Rather, they were a reiterating of the nuts and bolts of nineteenth-century liberal public *délires*. Innovative, though, was the emphasis on privatization and “speculative and predatory” financialization in capitalist accumulation (Harvey 2005: 161). Neoliberalism was instituted not in a single authorization, as when NSC 68 had authorized the global domination public *délire*, but rather as a series of policy decisions. Those in the US came to be known as Reaganomics; in the UK they were Thatcherism. The iteration imposed upon the developing world, which came to be called “structural adjustment,” began later, at the end of the 1980s and in the 1990s.<sup>3</sup> Neoliberalism treats seeking the commonweal in social being as risible. Rather, it reduces human sociability to choreographed practices of capitalist elites out to clinch the best deal they can, using rules of their making, especially with regard to financial practices. Everybody else is expected to celebrate them or bugger off. How successful has neoliberalism been?

Neoliberalism, according to Duménil and Lévy, has provoked “crisis” (2011). In Harvey’s (2005: 19) words, it, “has not been very effective in revitalizing global capital accumulation.” In the US and the UK, “To be sure, inflation was brought down and interest rates fell, but this was at the expense of high rates of unemployment. ... Cutbacks in state welfare and infrastructural expenditures diminished the quality of life for many. The overall result was an awkward mix of low growth and increasing income inequality” (ibid.: 88). The dossier on structural adjustment has been, if anything, worse. Joseph Stiglitz, who as a senior official at the IMF assisted in its implementation, demonstrated in his *Globalization and Its Discontents* (2003) how structural adjustment had stunted African development in the 1990s and had a hand in provoking the East Asian (1997) and Argentine (1999–2002) financial crises. The problem in these cases was that strict, neoliberal monetary and fiscal policies imposed by the IMF, especially on Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea, and Argentina, provoked flights of capital from these countries and consequent economic crashes.

However, the neoliberal public *délire* has done what it was intended to do and gratified the upper classes *délires* by rewarding them with greater wealth. In the US, starting in the 1970s, wealth inequality “exploded,” with the bottom 90 percent of the population experiencing a “growing erosion of wealth,” being unable to save any of their income (Saez and Zucman 2014). Two aspects of the neoliberal fix—offshore outsourcing and financial innovation—have seemed especially problematic. These are examined next.

*The Offshore Outsourcing Fix:* American enterprise has been able to de-territorialize outside the US due to the development of free trade zones<sup>4</sup>

and its ability to abolish economic regulations that impede US companies' overseas market entry, in conjunction with improved communication and transportation technologies. Starting in the late 1970s and increasingly in the 1980s, initially in manufacturing and later in services, operations previously performed at US companies were assigned to other parts of that company or other enterprises located elsewhere. This was "outsourcing." For example, a telephone company might outsource its customer service division to India. If the outsourcing was done overseas, it was "offshore outsourcing"; which at the turn of the twenty-first century was estimated to increase businesses' productivity and competitiveness ten- to a hundredfold (Corbett 2004). By the 1980s, offshore outsourcing had become a "tidal wave" (R. French 2006: 4) and was a cause of deindustrialization. Iconically, Nike closed all its American sneaker plants by the end of the 1980s and turned to producing sneakers in Indonesia, China, and Vietnam.

The evidence of offshore outsourcing's virtues is disputed. On the one hand, neoliberal hermeneuts insist that it benefits the US economy, claiming it "is unlikely to have accounted for a meaningful part of the job losses in the recent downturn or contributed much to the slow labor market rebound" (Mankiw and Swagel 2005: 2). The particular "recent downturn" Mankiw and Swagel were talking about was the 2001 recession, which leads to an observation: The 2001 recession led to a "phantom recovery" (Reich 2010: 6), followed by the 2007–2009 Great Recession of the US economy. Thereafter, unemployment rates were still higher than in the 2001 recession.

Contradicting Mankiw and Swagel is a literature arguing that offshore outsourcing indeed harmed US labor through the loss of blue-collar and middle-management jobs (Hira and Hira 2005; Dorgan 2007). Further, offshore outsourcing has contributed to decline in the levels of income generated by the jobs remaining in the US economy. Higher-paying industrial work has been outsourced and replaced by lower-paying service industry jobs at Wal-Mart, McDonalds, and the like (Reich 2010: 53). Michael Spence and Sandile Hlatshwayo demonstrate that at present there is a "long-term structural challenge with respect to the quantity and quality of employment opportunities in the United States" (Spence and Hlatshwaya 2011). Such evidence indicates that whereas offshore outsourcing brought cost savings to US economic elites' enterprises, it reduced employment opportunities, especially for well-paid labor, for everyone else. Consider now financial innovation.

*The Financial Fix*: The tribulations of industry have, one can argue, triggered a financial turn in US capitalism. Manufacturing had been in decline since the 1970s recession, falling from 23 percent of GDP in 1970 to

only 11 percent in 2009 (Smil 2011). Manufacturing was a less interesting investment because there was less of it. As a consequence, Foster and McChesney (2009: 10–11) report that, “unable to find an outlet for its growing surplus in the real economy” (i.e., manufacturing),

capital (via corporations and individual investors) poured its excess surplus/savings into finance, speculating in the increase in asset prices. Financial institutions, meanwhile, on their part, found new innovative ways to accommodate the vast inflow of money capital and to leverage the financial superstructure of the economy up to ever greater heights with added borrowing—facilitated by all sorts of exotic financial instruments, such as derivatives, options, securitization, etc.

...

The result was the creation of ... extraordinary growth of financial profits.

Thus, following the late 1970s deindustrialization, the financialization of capital deepened in the 1980s and came to an “apogee” in the first years of the twenty-first century (Callinicos 2010: 74). This, then, was neoliberalism’s financial fix, and the “extraordinary” profits certainly seemed to reduce the vulnerability caused by the long downturn.

It had long been believed that the financial sector becomes increasingly significant as capitalism develops. Rudolf Hilferding ([1910] 1981) argued at the turn of the twentieth century that growing concentration and centralization of capital led to fusion of banking and industrial enterprise under the dominance of the former, creating an era of monopoly finance capitalism. Critically, Hilferding understood finance as investing in the “real” economy—manufacturing and infrastructure—and ultimately in economic growth. There has certainly been a concentration and centralization in the US economy, especially since the end of World War II.

However, the financial practices that emerged, as we are about to learn, have not integrated banking with manufacturing enterprise. Especially since the 1990s, finance in the US has instead grown more concentrated, greater in value, and more autonomous. The big banks still do the traditional business of handling ordinary customer accounts (i.e., “retail” banking), but the bulk of their capital is now used for investments involving their own capital, not that of their customers, for their own profit. It is from this “proprietary trading” that their high profits are derived.

Additionally, a “shadow banking sector”—hedge funds, private equity firms, and structured investment vehicles—has been growing. “Hedge funds” are investment firms—usually available to only a small number of affluent persons who aggressively manage investment portfolios—that emphasize exotic financial instruments, such as leveraged derivatives in both domestic and international markets, with the goal of generating high returns. “Private equity firms” are companies that, through leveraging, ac-

quire publicly listed companies, take them off the stock market, reorganize them to increase their profitability, and then resell them at considerable profit. A “structured investment vehicle” is a type of fund invented by Citigroup in 1988. Its strategy is to borrow money by issuing short-term securities at low interest and then to lend that money by buying long-term securities at higher interest, making a profit for investors from the difference. Both the huge investment banks and the shadow banking community leverage heavily to invest in exotic financial products, such as derivatives, CDOs, CDS, MBS.<sup>5</sup>

Critically, this alphabet soup of exotic financial instruments is non-Hilferdingian. They are *not* investments in production; rather, they are actually bets that already existing assets will achieve certain values. Such financial securities—the basis of the neoliberal financial fix—began to be introduced in the 1980s, following falling rates of profit for both financial and nonfinancial corporations in the 1970s. By the late 1980s they had rejuvenated these profit rates (Duménil & Lévy 2011: 67), increasing the wealth of persons owning the new exotic financial instruments. However, they did nothing to solve the New American Empire’s other economic problems, principally slower growth, stagnant or declining incomes, and a deteriorating labor market. In sum, the evidence indicates neoliberalism might be characterized as a form of simultaneity boom that is bust, that is, booming wealth for the privileged that busts wealth for everyone else.

The neoliberal iteration of the liberal public *délire* was in place by the end of the 1980s. Nevertheless, the US economy remained in “crisis,” and while the cyclical vulnerabilities continued unfixed, systemic ones emerged.

### *Attempted Nonviolent Fixes of Systemic Reproductive Vulnerabilities*

Our inquiry now focuses upon elites’ attempts to fix the reproductive vulnerabilities posed by the initial intensification of a capital/land systemic contradiction, which manifested itself either as global warming or movement toward peak oil. Global warming is examined first.

*Global Warming—“Hardly addressed”*: In 1958 Charles Keeling developed a device to measure the concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. A decade later, Syukuro Manabe and his collaborators (Manabe and Weatherald 1975) produced complex computer models that predicted temperature rise resultant from CO<sub>2</sub> increase. Together these made it possible to precisely measure global warming, making it possible to know whether there was an intensifying capital/land systemic contradiction.



Hermeneutic politics as to the meaning of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions had begun by 1975. Broadly speaking, there were environmentalist (eco-activist or the green movement) and anti-environmentalist (climate skeptic) sides in this politics.<sup>6</sup> Environmental researchers, largely from the biological sciences and climatology, argued that the earth and humanity were threatened by global warming, and that major interventions were needed to reduce this danger. Anti-environmental hermeneuts, largely from industry and economics, lambasted the environmentalists as "doomsters," while assuring people that markets would fix the problem.<sup>7</sup>

The course of their politics has been as follows: Prior to 1975, compelling evidence was lacking that greenhouse gases produced warming. There was actually some thought during this time that the world might experience a period of cooling. A 1975 National Academy of Sciences (NAS 1975) report insisted that climates could change and that there was need for more research to explain how. Two UN agencies, along with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), were chosen to conduct the NAS-requested research. In the middle of the 1980s, a joint UNEP/WMO/CSU conference issued findings of this research and concluded that greenhouse gases "are expected" to cause significant warming in the next century (WMO 1985). In 1988 the WMO and UNEP formed the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to conduct research on global warming and devise policies for addressing it. In 1989 fossil fuel and other industries formed the Global Climate Coalition to inform politicians and ordinary folk that climate science was too uncertain to justify any policies the IPCC might recommend (Weart 2008: 210). The following year the IPCC presented its first report. In the years 1959 through 1987, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions grew from roughly 315 ppm to 349 ppm (CO2Now.Org 2014), at around the rate predicted to cause ecological harm. Newell and Paterson (2010: 34) testified, "Global carbon emissions continue to grow, largely in line with global GDP." Because the growth of GDP is a measure of the growth of capitalist accumulation, this indicated that most of the emissions either directly or indirectly resulted from capitalism. Capitalism and environmental change were, as Adrian Parr (2013: 6) put it, linked in an "earth shattering moment." Here, then, was recognition of grave reproductive vulnerability. To address it, the IPCC report recommended "a programme of global, comprehensive and phased action for the resolution of global warming" (IPCC 1990: 56).

Since that time there have been attempts, in the private and the governmental sectors in the US and in other countries, to implement such a "programme." In private attempts to combat global warming, two sorts of

fixes predominate: those of capitalist enterprise and those of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Consider first the NGOs.

There are literally thousands of NGOs against global warming across all sorts of political and religious divides. Some are mainstream organizations, like the World Social Forum, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Environmental Justice Organization. Others are more specialized: for parent activists there is Green Parenthood; for bird-watchers there is Bird Life International; for fundamentalist Christians there is the Evangelical Climate Initiative; for Zionists there is the Green Zionist Alliance; for those into the Internet there are 350.org, DoSomething.org, and StopGlobalWarming.org; for social networking devotees climatic change can be fought on MySpace and Facebook. Finally, for those with erotic inclinations there is Fuck for Forest, a Norwegian NGO that raises money to rescue the world's rainforests doing what the name of their organization says they do (Dicum 2005).

Nevertheless, global warming has continued unabated in the period being considered (1975–1990). Why? In part this is because the anti-Global Warming NGOs participate in hermeneutic politics with limited force resources. They have only enough money, workers, and tools to create and transmit cultural messages, little more. But simply producing messages is not sufficient. Notably, global warming opponents lack control over the force resources that actually produce global warming. These forces—factories and the like that emit CO<sub>2</sub>—are owned by either capitalist corporations that profit from production of greenhouse gases, or government institutions that have both the authority and the violent force resources to terminate this production, but instead support capitalist enterprise. Further, corporations responsible for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions support climate-skeptical NGOs (discussed in Hoggan and Littlemore 2009) to broadcast the opposing message that global warming is a lie—apparently successfully, because as late as 2014 many Americans expressed doubt over global warming (Agiesta and Borenstein 2014). In short, if producing a message is a bit like blowing a horn, what environmental NGOs have done is blown their own horns. Few appear to have heard.

The second private activity that is supposed to reduce greenhouse emissions is capitalism itself. Here the notion has been that carbon markets could be created. Newell and Paterson (2010: 24–25) have described how such markets might work, explaining that “two main mechanisms are particularly important” for creating carbon markets:

On the one hand are environmental taxation measures where the government imposes taxes on particular pollutants like carbon dioxide. On the other hand are emissions trading schemes, where an overall emissions limit is decided, a number of permits adding up to this limit are distributed to actors according to

some principle of distribution, and then actors are allowed to trade the permits amongst themselves. With both measures the main rationale is that they leave the decisions about how to achieve particular environmental goals up to individuals and companies. Governments set either general incentives (in the case of taxes) or overall limits to pollution levels (in the case of emissions trading) and leave markets to work out who will reduce emissions when and where.

In principle, the idea of creating carbon markets to fight global warming is plausible; but in practice such markets appear “a bit of a scam” (ibid.: 129); the problem being that there may be but little profit to be had in carbon trading unless the tolerated levels of carbon emissions are set so high that they do little to limit greenhouse gas buildup.

The discussion turns now to governmental attempts to constrain global warming. There have been two sorts of governmental policies and programs to address global warming: those coming from individual countries’ governments; and those from multinational governmental agencies, especially the UN. Bilateral attempts to fight climate change have been most successful in Europe, and less so in the rapidly industrializing economies of Asia, notably India and China. In 2007, China surpassed the US as the world’s largest emitter of CO<sub>2</sub> (Vidal and Adam 2007). In the US the summer of 2010 looked promising: a comprehensive bill in the Senate would have imposed a carbon emissions cap. However, energy industry interests opposed it, and a grand bargain was proposed to mollify them: oil companies would be allowed to drill in US coastal waters, where such drilling was forbidden, in exchange for accepting a carbon cap. Nevertheless, the bill failed, and the Senate continued its bipartisan record of doing nothing about global warming.

What about multinational governmental efforts to combat global warming? Global attempts to reduce greenhouse emissions have been coordinated by the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which conducts studies and, based upon them, formulates policy it hopes countries will agree upon at international meetings. Should agreement be reached on these policies, they will attain the status of international law; that is, in our terms, they would form an anti-global warming public *délire*. So far the most important of these climate change conferences has been the 1997 Kyoto Climate Conference, where the Kyoto Protocol was accepted, meaning the countries agreed to cut CO<sub>2</sub> emissions back to 5 percent below 1990 levels. The Clinton administration accepted the protocol. However, under Bush II the US reversed itself (March 2001). Meanwhile, China was never party to it. With both the US and China refusing to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the protocol was effectively dead. The 2009 UNFCCC summit in Copenhagen was supposed to revive the Kyoto Protocol. It failed. A 2010 UNFCCC summit in Cancun was in-

tended to remedy the disappointment of the Copenhagen meeting. The Cancun conference featured less rancorous participant discourse than Copenhagen had, but it too failed. The Paris Climate conference in 2016 secured a global commitment to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, but failed to mandate how each country would do so. Multinational attempts to create an anti-global warming public *délire* have been characterized by failed iteration 1 (the Kyoto Protocol), failed iteration 2 (the Copenhagen summit), failed iteration 3 (the Cancun conference), and uncertain iteration 4 (the Paris conference).

Peaceful fixing of the reproductive vulnerability of global warming from 1975 to 1989 was a chimera. The belching of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere at high levels continued unabated. Neoliberal capitalism was “underpinning ... massive environmental changes” that included “climate change” (Parr 2013: 3). Next we consider attempts to nonviolently reproductively fix the systemic contradiction resulting from peak oil.

*Peak Oil*—“*Off a cliff*”: Recall that chapter 5 explained that if demand for oil increased when amounts of oil supplied were stagnant or decreasing, then the capital/land contradiction was intensifying. World oil discovery per decade peaked in 1959 and declined through 1989 (Ruppert 2009), suggesting oil supply problems. Over this time, world demand for oil had swiftly increased, due especially to rapid growth of Asian economies that began during this period. Clearly, there was evidence of a reproductive vulnerability due to intensification of oil moving toward its peak in the years 1975 through 1989. What has happened as a result?

The result has been ferocious hermeneutic politics. Environmental hermeneuts broadcast the message that peak oil was coming, and it was not going to be nice. Anti-environmental hermeneuts responded that such claims were phantasmagoric. As in the global warming hermeneutic politics, NGOs fighting peak oil lacked the force resources to do anything other than produce messages. Consequently, neither US private enterprise nor the government in the period under consideration confronted the impending arrival of peak oil. President Jimmy Carter was certainly aware of it in April 1977, when he began a televised speech by announcing, “Tonight I want to have an unpleasant talk with you.” The disagreeableness concerned the fact that “the oil and natural gas we rely on for 75 percent of our energy are running out” (Carter 1977: 1, 6). Carter was derided as alarmist. Nothing was done to *effectively* eliminate the unpleasantness—not by Carter; nor by his successor, Reagan. Accordingly, by the early twenty-first century it was judged that “the supply of the world’s essential energy source is going off a cliff” (Arguimbau 2010: 1).

*Commodity Chains and Problems of Fixing Peak Oil*: An additional vulnerability faced the New American Empire because its ability to nonviolently fix the problem of peak oil, even had it wanted to do so, was reduced over the years 1975–1989, as the US lost extensive power over petroleum production and distribution. Oil force resources are transformed into commodities and circulated in commodity chains, and an understanding of these helps to account for the decline in US control over oil.

A “commodity chain” (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1986) is a particular type of a string used by firms to gather resources, transform them into goods, and finally distribute them to consumers. Oil global commodity chains have five sorts of spatially and temporally related operations: exploration (discovering oil deposits), production (removing crude oil from the ground), transportation (moving crude oil from production site to refining site), refining (transforming crude oil into marketable commodities), and finally distribution (moving petroleum products to various distributors, who sell them to consumers). Oil commodity chains became global in the early twentieth century. Concentration had emerged in them by the 1930s among a few companies called “the majors.” Predominantly American transnationals, these included Esso (US), Mobil (US), Texaco (US), Gulf (US), BP (UK), Shell (Dutch, UK) and the CFP (French). Their commodity chains were largely vertically integrated through the 1960s, which relaxed competition *within* them because the different links in the chain were part of the same company. US power over oil production was considerable because its transnational enterprise effectively owned all the institutions in the commodity chains.<sup>8</sup>

However, there was a contradiction between the majors and the governments in the territories where oil was produced: the more revenues went to the majors, the less they went to governments in producing regions. This is the oil company/petro-state contradiction mentioned in chapters 1 and 6. Payments made for the use of a natural resource are rents. Rents paid by petroleum firms were generally low through the 1960s. After all, prior to the 1960s many of these governments were colonial ones that, being appendages of the core governments, saw little reason to interfere with their oil companies’ profits. Thus, as long as the old empires were strong, the oil company/petro-state contradiction was relaxed *vis-à-vis* the oil businesses.

Two transformations intensified the contradiction and loosened the majors’ governance of global oil commodity chains. The first of these involved nationalism, the key ideological force resource that in the last chapter’s discussion was directed by colonies against the old empires after World War II. Local elites in oil-producing areas knew of the copious flow of capital to the majors from oil, so their nationalist ideologies aimed to increase

their share by stressing oil nationalization and the creation of national oil production companies—for example, *Petróleos Mexicanos* (Pemex) in Mexico in 1938—or profit-sharing agreements like the 1943 Hydrocarbon Law in Venezuela. Oil nationalism had spread to the Middle East by the 1950s (Iran nationalized its oil in 1952) and became a veritable flood in the 1970s (Rutledge 2005: 45, 86). Saudi Arabia's Aramco, largely owned by companies that would become ExxonMobil, was nationalized by 1976. Iraq started nationalization in 1961 and had completed it by 1972. Kuwait had nationalized by 1975. By 1976, twenty oil-producing countries accounting for 74 percent of nonsocialist oil had nationalized their oil production operations (Kobrin 1985: 3). This meant, according to Ayoub (1994: 57), that “between 1973 and 1982, [the majors] lost around 50 percent of their share of the crude oil market, from 30 million barrels per day (MMbbl/d) to around 15.2 MMbbl/d.” Consequently, “during the 1970s ... virtually all of the oil resources outside of North America passed from international petroleum companies to the governments of the oil producers” (Morse 1999: 4). At the turn of the millenium, only about 7 percent of the world's oil and gas resources were in countries allowing free rein to private petroleum companies (McNulty 2007).<sup>9</sup>

Hence, national oil companies had replaced the majors as the producer link of the oil global commodity chains. The producer link in the oil commodity chain had gone from being a force resource of the economic system of the New American Empire to being a force resource of petro-states. Henry Kissinger groused in 1972 that this reduced the US's “ability to set the world oil price” (in Rutledge 2005: 43). It certainly did, and according to Morse (1999: 5), “the balance of power in the market was tipped toward sellers,” allowing “oil prices to be raised at the discretion of governments [of oil producing countries], which if they so desired could increase rents from oil exploitation and force a shift in income and wealth from the consuming countries.” Kissinger declared this state of affairs to be an “energy crisis” (1999: 696). His attempted fix of it was diplomatic and featured a “Consumer/Producer Dialogue” (*ibid.*: 697–700), which did not change the fact that oil producers, starting in the 1970s, had far greater control over their oil.

A second transformation further diminished the New American Empire's control over oil. This was the emergence of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).<sup>10</sup> Founded in 1960, OPEC is a cartel whose chief goal has been to coordinate oil producers' policies to better wrest control over oil supply and prices. Though OPEC has not been completely successful, it has been influential in bringing robust, additional revenues to petro-states. By the late 1960s its members' share of oil exports rose to nearly 80 percent of the global total, fortifying its bar-

gaining clout (E. Rose 2004: 433). OPEC used this clout to further the nationalization of foreign oil assets and oil price increases. For example, "At its twenty first meeting in Caracas, in Venezuela December 1970, OPEC demanded and got an across-the-board price increase of thirty-three cents a barrel for crude oil and a minimum tax rate increase of 55 percent from the oil firms" (ibid.: 434). Over the next three years, "OPEC dictated price increases and the beginning of the widespread movement on the part of some of its members to nationalize all or part of the oil companies' assets within their Territories" (ibid.: 434).

Two indicators reveal the loss of US power due to diminished price control. One concerns capital flows. James Akins (1973: 480) indicated something of the magnitude of monies acquired by non-US oil-producing companies because of nationalization and OPEC when he reported, "With the possible exception of Croesus, the world will never have seen anything quite like the wealth which is flowing and will continue to flow into the Persian Gulf"—and, he might have added, other areas of oil production in Africa, Central Asia, and Latin America. The second indicator is the ability to use oil as a weapon to harm the US. For example, in fall of 1973, when the "Yom Kippur" Arab-Israeli War broke out, the US supported Israel. In response, Arab states, through OPEC, organized an oil embargo on the US and its Atlantic community clients. Oil prices skyrocketed in what became known as the "first oil shock." This embargo provoked the steep 1973–1974 recession in the US. A second oil shock occurred in 1979. That February the Iranian Revolution (discussed later in the chapter), began, whereupon the US oil companies lost access to Iranian oil. Here was a second exercise of power over oil supply within six years. Both events provoked steep price inflation, both hurt the US economy, and both were beyond imperial America's power at the time.

The New American Empire's sizable loss of the production link in the oil commodity chain would have been of lesser importance if US oil production had not, for the moment, passed its peak in 1970, more or less according to Hubble's predictions. Thereafter, the US grew increasingly dependent upon foreign petroleum, importing roughly 33 percent of its oil in 1973, 53 percent in 1998, and 62 percent in 2008 (Kunstler 2006: 42, 44). Further, "over half of crude oil imports come from unstable or unfriendly countries" (Center for American Progress: 2008). Hence the US acquired the oil supplies necessary for its capital accumulation from commodity chains whose production links were in hostile countries with the potential to deny supply and thereby compromise capital accumulation. Consequently, even if US elites intended to address peak oil by reducing the oil supply, they were poorly situated to do so because regulating what you imperfectly control is like driving a car with a faulty engine.

## *Like Achilles*

To summarize the preceding discussion, the New American Empire may be the most powerful social being ever, but like Achilles, it has its vulnerabilities. Between 1975 and 1989 cyclical and systemic contradictions intensified and coalesced, contributing to an “inadequate performance of the American economy” (Bernstein and Adler 1994). Fixes were sought, peaceful ones. They failed. Consequently, during these times of late modernity the US Leviathan sailed contradictory seas with fixless fixes.

Indeed, the times were “a-changin’,” and not for the good. There was a sense that the US was in decline. A whole school of scholars called “declinists” emerged to argue this case (D. Snow 1999). A counter-literature arose to cheer elites up. One of its hermeneuts, Joseph Nye (Princeton University’s Colonial Club, followed by a Harvard Distinguished Service Professorship) reassured everybody, as the title of his book put it, that the US was *Bound To Lead* (1991). But the question was, lead to where? The following section begins to answer this question.

### **Hermeneutic Politics in a Time of Fixless Fixes**

Every president since Richard Nixon has recognized that ensuring Persian Gulf security and stability is vital to U.S. interests. (Brzezinski, Scowcroft, and Murphy 1997: 20)

Zbigniew Brzezinski, Brent Scowcroft, and Richard Murphy were not nonentities. Brzezinski was Carter’s NSA, Scowcroft performed the same chores for Bush I, and Richard Murphy was a former assistant secretary of state and a Middle Eastern expert. Elite of (security) elites, their *Foreign Affairs* article interpreted what was “vital to U.S. interests”; and “vital” was the Persian Gulf—at the time largely unknown to most Americans. The Gulf is a body of water flowing from the Indian Ocean through the Straits of Hormuz into the heart of the Middle East. Most of the eastern shore of the Gulf is Iran; the western shore is Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates; to the north is Iraq.

Why, when the US economy appeared to be going to hell in an (economic) handbasket, did the Security Elites 2.0 suddenly start worrying about a nowhere? Furthermore, what had happened during this time to the dreaded monster-alterity, the Soviet Union? Answers to these two questions turn upon the sharpened economic contradictions and the fate of the inter-imperial contradiction. Brzezinski and friends (1997: 317) explained that the Gulf was “vital” because its “oil will continue to be crucial to the economic well-being of the industrialized world for the foreseeable



future.” If the phrase the “industrialized world” is understood to be the US and its imperial clients, then the Gulf was vital because it could provide “economic well-being,” attainment of which would relax the economic contradictions.

An additional reason US security elites began fixating upon the Gulf and its oil was that another contradiction had largely disappeared. The USSR, still fearsome in the 1970s, had by 1989 been largely deconstructed. Removal of the old Soviet monster-alterity relaxed the inter-imperial contradiction—but a new monster-alterity arose to terrorize US security elites. The hermeneutic politics within this story are told in the next few sections, beginning with the Nixon and Ford administrations.

*Relaxing the Inter-imperial Contradiction:  
The Nixon Doctrine and the Twin Towers*

Kissinger claimed in his memoirs that the US had withdrawn from Vietnam on “honorable terms” (1999: 92). Anybody who saw the films of the Americans fleeing the CIA station in April 1975 knew that they had fled in dishonor.<sup>11</sup> Thereafter, the New American Empire itself appeared to be in “turmoil” (ibid.: 99). Within the continental US, starting in the late 1960s and continuing through the 1970s and 1980s, there were riots and assassinations. Outside its continental borders, client-nations were nervous about their Washington connections, and foes looked for gains. The Nixon administration was especially worried that Moscow might seek “to destabilize Europe and other strategic regions” (ibid.). Nixon and Kissinger judged the situation to be one requiring threat reduction. Accordingly, they sought détente with the Soviets and China (Litwak 1986; Bowker and Williams 1988).

Strategic arms limitation talks with Russia were initiated and resulted in the SALT I Treaty (1972), which reduced the numbers of nuclear missiles menacing the two countries. Additionally, the Helsinki Accords (begun July 1973, finalized August 1975) were negotiated, guaranteeing post-World War II European states’ territorial integrity and formalizing their agreement to refrain from the threat or use of violence between them. With regard to China, the US lifted its trade embargo (April 1971) and Nixon visited China (February 1972). Détente between America and its monster-alterity reduced the inter-imperial contradiction. But whereas one contradiction appeared relaxed, another began to be perceived.

Oil nationalization, OPEC’s growth, and the Arab-Israeli War’s oil embargo all happened during Nixon’s presidency, flooding his security elites’ I-spaces with the sense that there was a new difficulty in the world. Kissinger put it as follows in a speech of December 1973:

We must bear in mind the deeper causes of the energy crisis: It is not simply a product of the Arab-Israel war; it is the inevitable consequence of the explosive growth of worldwide demand outrunning incentives for supply. The Middle East war made a chronic crisis acute, but a crisis was coming in any event. Even when prewar production levels are resumed, the problem of matching the level of oil that the world produces to the level which it consumes will remain. (1982: 896)

Kissinger's "energy crisis" was a recognition, and interpretation, of the land/capital contradiction, in the sense that it acknowledged a "crisis" based on capital's great demand for petroleum energy, a demand that might outstrip its supply.

Unquestionably, however, the New American Empire still aimed to dominate, which posed a new hermeneutic puzzle. In the era of "energy crisis," while being nice to communists, who, and how, did you plan violence in order to dominate? The Nixon Doctrine was an initial answer to this question. Announced during a presidential press conference in Guam (1969), it specified that "in cases involving [non-nuclear] aggression, we shall furnish military and economic assistance when requested in accordance with our treaty commitments. But we shall look to the nation directly threatened to assume the primary responsibility of providing the manpower for its defense" (Nixon 1969). There were two parts to this doctrine. The first said that if a country was "directly threatened," it would have to defend itself with its own "manpower." Here was a promise to ordinary Americans that there would be no more sending of their "boys" to die in jungles.

However, the second part of the Nixon Doctrine meant that allied countries linked by treaties would receive "military ... assistance." So it proposed indirect global warring and military satrapies in the [developing] far reaches of the empire, and in doing so was an iteration of the global domination public *délire*. Michael Klare (2004) has noted that its implementation initiated US military assistance to the Persian Gulf. The Nixon Doctrine, then, answered the question, who do you kill when the Soviets become less threatening? The answer was, you choreograph killing of those who threaten US control over Persian Gulf oil.

In 1973, during his 4th Report to Congress, Nixon announced that Iran and Saudi Arabia had become the "twin towers" of US foreign policy in the Persian Gulf. As such, they were a bit like the marcher lords in medieval England, who as proxies for the British crown protected the imperial boundaries from Welsh or Scots raiders. Iran and Saudi Arabia, armed by the US, would do the same for America's Middle Eastern interests. Nixon told one audience that this policy was desirable because the "assurance of the continual flow of Middle Eastern energy resources is increasingly important to the United States, Western Europe, and Japan" (in Nakhieh

1982: 99). However, it would turn out that the Nixon Doctrine contributed to a US “strategic insolvency” in the Persian Gulf. Such insolvency is any situation where the force resources available for procedural choreographing are insufficient for the intended operation.<sup>12</sup> This insolvency emerged in the presidencies following Nixon’s, considered next.

### *The Carter Administration’s Very Busy Time*

Tricky Dicky succumbed to a temptation to steal information about his rivals in the 1972 presidential campaign. Due to the ensuing the Watergate Scandal over this theft, Nixon resigned the presidency on 9 August 1974.<sup>13</sup> Vice President Gerald Ford succeeded Nixon and largely continued his predecessor’s policies. This included détente. The Helsinki Accords were signed in 1975. Ford lost the 1976 elections to a relative newcomer to national politics, Jimmy Carter, a Plains, Georgia peanut farmer and governor (1971–1975). He would have a busy time of it.

The man from Plains (1977–1981) assumed the presidency as the cyclical economic contradictions of the long downturn manifested themselves as stagflation (high inflation and low employment). Carter would strengthen Nixon’s Persian Gulf policy; wrestle with the Soviet monster-ality, which would be first perceived as less threatening and then as very much more threatening; suffer the failure of Nixon’s Persian Gulf policy because of US strategic insolvency; and, finally, devise a fix of it. All of this made for a very busy time of it during his administration.

*Sam Huntington and the Clash of Civilizations*: President Carter took office in 1977. Immediately thereafter, his NSA Zbigniew Brzezinski set up office and invited Sam Huntington, a safe Soviet hand, to be his coordinator of planning. Huntington was a friend from Harvard days when they were both young professors denied tenure. Harvard would later repent and invite both back. Only Huntington returned to Harvard and a career as high-class hermeneut.

*The Clash of Civilizations* was perhaps his most celebrated text. Here he claimed, “The West won the world not by the superiority of its ideas or values or religion, but rather by its superiority in applying organized violence” (1996: 51); that is, Westerners killed well. Another affirmation—the one considered most prescient or outrageous—was that civilizations were cultures, and that there would be future conflict between Islamic and Western civilizations because their cultures clashed. Following Carter’s election, Brzezinski needed someone to help formulate the administration’s Soviet and other foreign policies. Huntington responded by cultivating a new interpretation of the USSR. Additionally, he authored a hermeneutic de-

ception based on his prediction that the future of US warring involved hostilities between Islam and the West. A word is in order concerning what was happening to the Soviets at this time.

The economic problems of the Soviet Union paralleled those of the US. In fact, the Bear was in far worse shape. According to one study, “Soviet growth over 1960–1989 was the worst in the world” (Easterly and Fischer 1994: 1). As early as 1971 the Soviets were admitting their economy had “slowed to a crawl” (Cahn 1998: 18). This period of real difficulties began about the mid 1970s, something the Russians themselves recognized. Gorbachev called this time an “era of stagnation” and insisted it was “the lowest stage of socialism” (Ulam 2002: 275). The downturn might have been worse, had it not been for Soviet oil and gas resources.

At the same time that Soviet economic problems were emerging, some in the US—elites and ordinary folk—were warming to the Bear. In part, this was a fruit of *détente*. Following a survey of attitudes toward the Soviets, Anne Cahn reported, “in 1974, the general mood of the United States was positive and upbeat concerning relations with the Soviet Union” (1998: 7). It was in this context of a faltering Soviet economy and increased US tolerance of the Bear that Huntington formulated the new Carter administration’s security policy. The result was Presidential Directive (PD) 18, signed by Carter on 26 August 1977.<sup>14</sup>

PD 18 began by announcing, “in the foreseeable future, US-Soviet relations will continue to be characterized by both competition and cooperation” (PD 18 1977: 2). Further,

In the competition ... the United States continues to enjoy a number of critical advantages: it has a more creative technological and economic system, its political system can adapt more easily to popular demands and relies upon freely given popular support, and it is supported internationally by allies and friends who genuinely share similar aspirations. (Ibid.)

Here was an interpretation of the Soviets that differed from the early Cold War one. Nietzsche’s “fanatic” and “ruthless” USSR was absent in PD 18, replaced by a social being with whom there could be “cooperation.” Huntington’s Bear seemed a Teddy Bear in contrast to Nietzsche’s nightmarish monster-alterity. Huntington’s softened view of the Soviets was backed by Carter, who in a 1977 Notre Dame University speech advised that the US should eschew “inordinate fear of Communism” (in Brzezinski 1983: 460). Together Huntington and Carter might be said to have constructed a Teddy Bear hermeneutic of the Soviets, in which perceptually they were not to be feared, and procedurally there could be cooperation as well as competition.

Nevertheless, even though there was cooperation, the Carter administration believed there should be military support for any competition that might occur. PD 18’s “Global Contingencies” section declared an important change in US military policy. It announced that “the United States will maintain a deployment of force of light divisions with strategic mobility independent of overseas bases and logistical support. . . . These forces will be designated for use against both local forces and forces projected by the USSR based upon analyses of requirements in the Middle East” (PD 18, 1977: 5). Implicit in PD 18 was that the “light divisions” would be used, if necessary, to protect US oil interests. Betts (2004: 8), commenting on PD 18’s significance, states, “The Carter administration was the first to turn military planning toward the Persian Gulf and to missions only partly defined by the Soviet threat.” Betts is not entirely correct—recall that Nixon had announced that protection of Persian Gulf oil would be “increasingly important” for the New American Empire, and had inaugurated the twin towers as military neo-colonies to do this protection. So it was Nixon’s security elites that started Persian Gulf military planning. However, it was Huntington, speaking for the Carter administration, who for the first time sanctioned sending US soldiers to defend Middle East interests. The Nixon Doctrine was an iteration of the global domination public *délire* instituting planning for indirect global warring in the Persian Gulf. PD 18, another iteration of this public *délire*, went a step further and recommended *direct* use of US troops there, though no “light divisions” were ever actually committed under Carter.

It is at this juncture that the tale of “Huntington’s Hermeneutic Deception” can be told. In the early 1990s, following the fall of the Soviets, there was curiosity about what a post-Cold War world would look like, and Huntington’s idea of Islamic-Western conflict found favor.<sup>15</sup> Cultural (including religious) identity would be the primary source of post-Cold War conflict, and clashing Islamic and the Western identities would be a primary source of war. This view made Huntington into a “rock star” hermeneut. He was the seer who had peered ahead and seen the future: an Islamic monster-alterity (living, of course, where the oil was).

However, nowhere did Huntington tell readers that in 1977 he himself had initiated a plan to send US violent force to the Middle East to assist in the defense of the New American Empire’s oil interests there. Withholding this information was deceptive because it hid how Persian Gulf conflict resulted from implementation of a policy begun under Nixon, strengthened under Carter, that allotted US violent force to the Middle East where it was used in ways Security Elites 2.0 believed would help to control oil. The sham in Huntington’s hermeneutic deception is that it attributes US–

Middle East conflict to cultural differences, thereby obscuring the fact that the conflict was about the ability to control oil to help in the empire's reproduction. It is time to move beyond Huntington to changes that bedeviled Carter toward the end of his presidency, when one of the twin towers collapsed and the Bear went over the mountain.

1979—*Bad Times*:

**Goat fuck:** *a monumental screwup.* (Urban Dictionary, )

Refined types might label a bad year "*annus miserabilis*." Those of an earthier disposition might call it "a real goat fuck." Perhaps the latter term better expresses the actuality of the third year of Carter's presidency. His 1979 miseries were ultimately over threats to the empire's control over energy.

Early in his administration Carter had given a remarkable nationally televised speech (April 1977) suggesting a new energy policy. In that speech he announced that America faced "a problem unprecedented in our history," which if not fixed could lead to "catastrophe" (Carter 1977: 1). Strong language: "unprecedented" trouble that could lead to catastrophe. The problem was that the US was "running out of gas and oil" (*ibid.*: 1). Here was a second indication, following the Nixon administration's discovery of the energy crisis, of a growing fixation upon petroleum resources.<sup>16</sup> The catastrophe Carter worried about was believed to be something for the future. Meanwhile, another sort of oil problem emerged then and there in Carter's third year.

The old Iranian memoirist whom readers have already encountered in the analysis of the coup against Mossedegh had opined, "All your trouble started in 1953" (Kinzer 2008: xxv). The "trouble" was "blowback" (originally a CIA term for an unintended power of some exercise of force), which started when Eisenhower and the Dulles brothers eliminated Mossedegh in favor of the shah. One unintended power generated by the coup—the blowback—was resistance to the shah and his repression. On 17 January 1979, this opposition culminated in the shah's flight. Two weeks thereafter (1 February) his strongest critic, the Ayatollah Khomeini, returned from exile. Two months later, with Khomeini firmly in control, Iran became an Islamic Republic (1 April). OPEC's response was to raise oil prices (28 June) by 24 percent, sending energy costs for Americans sky-high. Two months thereafter President Carter, while out canoeing in the bogs of Plains, was attacked by a "killer rabbit" (Combs 2010).<sup>17</sup>

On 4 November 1979, "students" seized the US embassy staff in Tehran, who would end up being held hostage for 444 days. The blowback was complete. To make matters worse, at the very end of the year the Red

Army crossed the Hindu Kush mountains and invaded Afghanistan (27 December). Now that they controlled Afghanistan’s high ground, the Soviets were within striking distance of Persian Gulf oil. At this juncture the strategic insolvency of the Nixon Doctrine became clear. One of the military satraps supposed to defend US interests had become an enemy. There were almost no US violent force resources in the Persian Gulf—there was only Huntington’s PD 18 suggestion that such resources should be moved there. The oil crisis had considerably worsened for the US Leviathan. Now, tied to the actuality that peak oil was approaching, was the fact that the empire was doubly politically threatened, for even as Washington had lost control over Iranian oil, the Soviets had placed themselves in a position more favorable to seizing Persian Gulf reserves.

Carter had other problems too, closer to home. Earlier it was noted that on 15 July 1979 Carter spoke to the country in a nationally televised speech, warning that the country faced a “fundamental threat,” a “crisis of confidence” (Carter 1979). He had been speaking largely about energy problems, but certain Republican elites thought with confidence that the problem was Carter’s, not the country’s. During the 1970s they adapted an existing institution to boost conservative hermeneutic politics by offering non–Teddy Bear interpretations of the Soviets, which would be used to help terminate the Carter presidency. Ponder next the development of this institution, the “think tank”—the heavy artillery of hermeneutic politics.

*Think Tanks and a Return to the Monster-Alterity Hermeneutic:* In 1971 Lewis Powell (1971), a tobacco industry lawyer who became a Supreme Court Justice, wrote a memorandum to the US Chamber of Commerce urging conservatives to “finance think tanks, reshaping mass media and seeking influence in universities and the judiciary.” Think tanks are, and were, institutions for creating hermeneutics reflecting some elite group’s interests; that is, they were, and are, private agencies conducting policy research that brings their hermeneutics’ “expertise” to bear on how to perceive problems and what to do about them.<sup>18</sup>

Think tanks had existed prior to the 1970s, but during this period, as the US supposedly drifted without “confidence,” wealthy patrons created a number of new ones promoting conservative interests. The Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute were the two most important. Think tanks could conduct more forceful hermeneutic politics for their controllers because they concentrated more hermeneutics upon hermeneutic puzzles to better prepare compelling interpretations of those puzzles. So what did the Republican think tanks think during the 1970s?

One puzzle they delighted in solving was, how to understand the Soviets? A new strand of conservative politicians offered a solution to this

puzzle. These were the “neoconservatives” (or “neocons”); a term coined by Michael Harrington (1973) to describe a brand of US conservatism that emphasized aggrandizing US economic and, especially, military power. Its origins were in the 1960s and the revolt of certain Democratic media hermeneuts, especially Irving Kristol and Norman Podhoritz, against the then prevailing Democratic Party’s dovish politics.<sup>19</sup> Neoconservatism spread rapidly among Republicans during the 1970s, particularly in the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute. It influenced young Ford administration officials such as Richard Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and Richard Pearle. The American Security Council, a neocon think tank led by John Fisher, created the Coalition for Peace through Strength, which warned perceptually that the Bear was *not* a Teddy Bear but the ravening monster-alterity conjured by Nietzsche. This group was in full voice by 1979.

Notable among the hermeneuts who adopted anti-Soviet politics were Harvard’s Richard Pipes and the ex-president Richard Nixon, who sought to be born again by abjuring détente and converting to the neocon faith. In his book *The Real War*, Nixon claimed the US was already in World War III with the Soviets and warned that between the end of the Vietnam War and 1979, eight countries in the developing world had been “brought under communist domination”—a hundred million people in five years, he worried—to which the US must respond by rolling “back the tide of Soviet advance by ... showing a steadfast determination to do what is necessary” (1980: 3, 305). The neocons were warning that the inter-imperial contradiction was still intense, and that consolidating the ability to implement violent reproductive fixes for this situation was prudent. This Republican, neocon hermeneutic was actually a return to the 1950s monster-alterity hermeneutic originally formulated by Democratic old boys in NSC 68.

Was this hermeneutic questionable? The CIA certainly appeared to believe so. Some developing countries—Nixon (1980: 3) named Angola, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, South Yemen, Mozambique, Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam—had adopted “socialist” regimes in the 1970s. Still, how much this was due to Soviet action and how much to the countries’ own nationalist politics was a matter of debate. Critically, according to CIA analysts, it was clear that the USSR was in economic trouble. A 1985 NIE, largely the CIA’s handiwork, judged that “the growth of the Soviet economy has been systematically decelerating since the 1950s” (Berkowitz and Richelson 1995). Furthermore, the CIA regularly reported decline in Soviet growth rate and called attention to the deep structural problems that pointed to continued decline” (MacEachin 2007). So the CIA, if unchallenged, suggested that the neocon anti-Soviet hermeneutic was fantasy.



To counter the CIA, influential conservatives managed to convince the Ford administration to evaluate the CIA's interpretation of Soviet strength. The group of neocons that made this evaluation came to be known as "Team B" and was headed by Richard Pipes with assistance from Paul Wolfowitz and Paul Nitze. Team B's principal finding, initially kept secret, was that the CIA underestimated the Soviets, who were involved in a "drive for dominance based upon an unparalleled military buildup" (Committee on the Present Danger 1977; see also Pipes et al. 1976).

Today, Team B's conclusions are dismissed as incorrect. Fred Kaplan, for example, reported, "In retrospect, the Team B report (which has since been declassified) turns out to have been wrong on nearly every point, while the CIA's reports in those same years look pretty good" (F. Kaplan 2004; see also R. Morris 2007a: 5). Given such actualities, Anne Cahn, who worked for the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and wrote the most complete evaluation of Team B (1998), declared Team B's findings of Soviet military strength to be "fantasy" (in Hartmann 2004). Even Kissinger had offered "condemnation" of Team B's report (Vest 2001: 20).

However, as the Ford administration drew to a close, certain neocons in it—particularly Rumsfeld and Richard Cheney (then White House chief of staff)—defended Team B's findings, not by demonstrating that the critiques of it were invalid but simply by asserting its message to be true. Rumsfeld, for example, who has just been seen unfavorably comparing US to Soviet military strength, nevertheless insisted that "no doubt exists about the capabilities of the Soviet armed forces" and that these capabilities "indicate a tendency toward war fighting" (in Vest 2001: 20). Thus, at the end of Carter's first term as a new election approached, a fierce hermeneutic politics vied over two competing interpretations of the Soviets. Ronald Reagan, the conservative Republican challenger in the 1980 presidential campaign, battered Carter with the neocon monster-alterity hermeneutic, promising to restore America.

### *Restoration?*

At the 1976 Republican Presidential Convention leading up to the election Carter won, Reagan gave a speech vowing "To Restore America." Ford won the Republican nomination that year but lost to Carter. Four years later, campaigning on a neocon platform, Reagan—nicknamed Dutch by his father, who thought he looked like a little fat Dutch boy—returned the Republicans to the White House. Many of his followers believed, and still believe, that he was able to successfully "restore" the country. Before considering this restoration, it will be helpful to know something of Reagan's approach to governing.

Bob Woodward, one of the journalists who broke the Watergate story, interviewed Reagan's CIA Director, Robert Casey, one of Dutch's close political allies, concerning the president's management style:

Casey continued to be struck by the overall passivity of the President—passivity about his job and about his approach to life. He never called the meetings or set the daily agenda. He never once told Casey “Let’s do this.” ... Casey noted in amazement that this President of the United States worked from 9 to 5 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday, and from 9 to 1 on Wednesday, when he would take the afternoon off for horseback riding, or exercise; and on Friday he left sometime between 1 and 3 for Camp David. During the working hours in the Oval Office, the President often had blocks of free time—two, even 3 hours. He would call for his fan mail and sit and answer it. (B. Woodward 1987: 403–404)

Did Dutch restore the US before or after answering fan mail?<sup>20</sup>

Restoration was to be through two “core programs”: accelerated military spending and Reaganomics (Oye, Lieber, and Rothchild 1987: 5). One component of the military budget was the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI or Star Wars), which proposed utilization of ground- and space-based anti-ballistic weapons to defend against incoming nuclear missiles. Star Wars proposed exotic weaponry—X-ray lasers, chemical lasers, hypervelocity rail guns, and the like—and was criticized by a number of experts as technologically unfeasible (FitzGerald 2001).

A second component of Reagan's increased military spending involved what came to be known as the Reagan Doctrine (J. Scott 1996). Bodenheimer and Gould (1989) credit the conservative Heritage Foundation, especially Michael Johns, with developing the ideas behind it. In 1985 the doctrine was formally presented in a speech Reagan made to Congress, though it had actually been in implementation since the early days of the administration. The Reagan Doctrine provided military support, covert or overt, to anti-communist rebels in countries that had adopted communist governments. The increased military spending, it should be noted, actually continued expenditures that had begun late in Carter's tenure, including assistance to anti-Soviet rebels in Afghanistan. The Reagan Doctrine might be seen as another procedural iteration of the global domination public *délire*.

Reaganomics, the second of the “core programs,” was the most complete implementation of neoliberal public *délire* attempted up to that time. Tax cuts for the upper class were central to this neoliberalism, with the Economic Recovery Act (1981) reducing the top rate of taxation from 70 percent to 50 percent of total income and the Tax Reform Act (1986) further reducing it from 50 percent to 28 percent of total income. Reduced tax payments by the wealthy permitted them to become still richer, fueling

inequality between wealthy and the rest. Reduced revenue from tax cuts in conjunction with increased military spending obliged sharp increases in government borrowing, with the nominal national debt going from \$900 billion to \$2.8 trillion during the Reagan administration. Once it started, the debt continually developed to such a magnitude that by 2012 it was at \$16 trillion, exceeding the 2010 US gross domestic product. This debt level was said to threaten global economic stability.<sup>21</sup> Thus, if one consequence of implementing Reagan’s two “core programs” was initiation of a borrowing trend that elevated national debt to dangerous levels, it is arguable that Dutch began a string of events increasing the New American Empire’s fiscal vulnerability.

Importantly, there was foreign policy overlap between the Carter and Reagan administrations. This included endorsement of the strategic importance of the Persian Gulf. As Lieber reported, “Reagan reaffirmed the position of his predecessors in maintaining American interests in the Persian Gulf” (Oye et al. 1987: 183). One way he did so was to follow Carter’s lead and “bolster” a US military force capable of handling “possible Gulf contingencies” that became known as the Rapid Deployment Force and “accounted for substantial increases in the defense budget” (ibid.: 182). Let us summarize the chapter’s arguments to this point.

### *Times ‘A-changin’*

Recall that Bob Dylan had said, for the period under discussion, that the times were “a-changin’”. The changes had to do with two sets of contradictions. The US was transitioning from economic good times to more distressed ones as the New American Empire faced intensifying cyclical and systemic contradictions that rendered its reproductive fixes fixless. But even as the US experienced economic problems, the Soviets faced graver ones, throwing US-Soviet relations into flux as the hermeneutic puzzle of the state of the inter-imperial contradiction became more puzzling. There were two responses to this trouble over contradictions. The first was the emergence of a hermeneutic politics anxious to address the reproductive vulnerability of the increasing economic contradictions by controlling the world’s energy. The Near East became recognized as a place to control—violently, if necessary, since oil was the major energy source and most of it was there. This recognition was expressed in the Nixon Doctrine and PD 18 iterations of the global domination public *délire*. However, strategic insolvency developed because neither iteration provided sufficient violent forces resources to actually control the Persian Gulf.

The second response was a hermeneutic politics that also went in two opposing directions regarding the inter-imperial contradiction. Nixon’s

détente and Huntington's announcement that there could be "cooperation" with Moscow, in conjunction with the Soviet economic debacle, led to the Teddy Bear perception of the Soviet threat. Hermeneuts in neocon think tanks responded to this perception with a fierce counterhermeneutic politics that revived the Soviet monster-alterity.

Consequently, the masters and commanders of US imperialism sailing the [economically] troubled seas of 1975–1989 worried both about a new enemy out there—whoever threatened US control of Persian Gulf oil—and the old enemy, who might be a Teddy Bear or a monster-alterity Bear, depending upon who was talking. This dual-enemy time is the context in which the global wars the New American Empire was involved in at this time are considered. Let us introduce global warring between 1975 and 1989.

US global wars during this period reflect the Security Elites 2.0's dual-enemy interpretations of what threatened the US imperial project in the roiling contradictory seas of the time. The Security Elites 2.0 entered global wars in response to events pertaining to either the inter-imperial contradiction or the economic contradictions, and the need to control oil to manage them. They directed global wars in the Middle East and Central Asia, including the Lebanon Civil War (1975–1990), the Afghanistan-Soviet War (1979–1989), and the Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988); in Africa they masterminded conflicts in Libya (in the 1980s), Angola (1981–1989), Mozambique, and Sudan. There were also wars throughout the period in the Americas.<sup>22</sup>

In terms of magnitude the hostilities fall into two categories. There were major wars utilizing huge amounts of violent force over many years with tremendous casualties; and there were lesser ones that one observer termed a "theatrical micromilitarism" (Todd 2003: 144). Even though the theater featured smaller exercises of violent force over shorter times, it often involved very considerable killing. The major wars were the Afghanistan-Soviet War and the Iran-Iraq War. All the others were far lesser.

Three wars of this period are analyzed. They include the two greatest conflicts: Afghanistan I, where the Americans sided with Afghan rebels against the Soviets; and the Iran-Iraq War, in which the US sided with both Iran and Iraq, eventually coming down on the side of Saddam Hussein. These hostilities were about how the US dealt with the inter-imperial contradiction (in Afghanistan I) and with the need to control petroleum resources due to the economic contradictions (in both Afghanistan I and the Iran-Iraq War). Additionally, the Libyan conflict—one of the more "theatrical" of the micro-wars—is considered for its importance in developing an iteration of the global domination public *délire* that set the stage

for the New American Empire’s violence after 1990. For now, attention turns to the remote, rugged land of Afghanistan.

## Afghanistan I

. . . they plotted to personally “give the Soviets their Vietnam” as Brzezinski was fond of saying. (R. Morris 2007a: 7)

Warfare in Afghanistan is analyzed twice in this text. The first analysis covers the years 1979–1989, when the Soviets fought Muslim rebels (*mujahideen*) who were rebelling against the Bear’s client regime in Kabul. During this war, the Americans handed the Soviets their Vietnam, “as Brzezinski was fond of saying.” The second treats the time from 2001 to the present, when the Americans took on those same mujahideen, who gave US security elites a Vietnam all over again. The first war is termed Afghanistan I, the second Afghanistan II. Afghanistan II is a topic in a later chapter. The story of Afghanistan I is what happened after the Bear went over the mountains.

### *The Bear Went Over the Mountains*<sup>23</sup>

The Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev sent the 40th Army across the Hindu Kush to Kabul on 25 December 1979. There it assassinated President Hafizullah Amin and replaced him with Babrak Karmal. Nine years later the final Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, ordered withdrawal to commence on 15 May 1988. Withdrawal ended on 15 February 1989. Two years further on, the Soviet Union ceased to exist.<sup>24</sup> Let us first consider why the Soviets went over the mountains.

“A *Fatal Mistake*”: In 1954 John Foster Dulles decreed that Afghanistan was of no “security interest” to the US (Kakar 1995: 9)—it was too far away, with no obvious natural resources. Consequently, the New American Empire was largely indifferent to it through the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. The only US initiative was a big, 1950s United States Agency for International Development irrigation project in the Helmand Valley (Zakhilwal 2009). However, Afghanistan had been of security interest to the Soviets since Czarist times. After all, it was on their southern border. Here the Russian and British Empires had played the “Great Game” competing for Central Asian dominance. Great Britain had unsuccessfully tried to colonize Afghanistan starting in 1836, but by the late nineteenth century it had be-

come an independent country with a monarchy. When the Soviets came to power they sought good relations with their southern neighbor.

In 1953, Mohammad Daoud became prime minister of Afghanistan under his first cousin, King Mohammed Zahir Shah, and the country entered Cold War politics for the first time. Daoud wanted to modernize his homeland. The Soviets were interested in supporting him to thwart Afghanistan's entry into the US camp. By the early 1960s Kabul was thoroughly "entangled" with Russia in "economic, military, and educational fields" (Kakar 1995: 10). The Afghan communist party, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, formed in 1965. It came to have two fiercely opposing factions. The Parcham (Flag) was a more urban bloc, more moderate and pro-Moscow, whose most important leader was Babrak Karmal. The Khalq (Masses) was more rural, radical, and at times equivocal toward the Soviets. Its two main leaders were Nur Mohammed Taraki and Hafizullah Amin.

Daoud was obliged to leave the prime minister's office in 1963. A decade later he staged what came to be known as the Republican Revolution, overthrowing the monarchy and, as President, instituting a modernizing republic. All this was done with the assistance of Parcham military officers, giving them influence within Daoud's government and drawing Afghanistan closer to Soviet client state status. The new government's various "modernization schemes" stirred "the emergence of an Islamist movement in Afghanistan" that fervently opposed such policies (Kakar 1995: 85). President Daoud responded with heavy-handed, repressive anti-Islamist measures that provoked a widespread but failed insurrection in 1975. Furthermore, he purged his Parchami colleagues in government. Finally, he turned on the Khalq. At this point, Amin instructed Khalq military leaders to overthrow the government. This became the 25 April 1978 Saur Revolution (Saur being the Persian name for April). It succeeded. Daoud was assassinated, and Parcham's head, Babrak Karmal, fled to Russian exile, leaving the Khalq to govern.

Taraki became president and signed a Twenty-Year Treaty of Friendship with the Soviet Union (December 1978), greatly expanding Soviet aid to his regime by making Afghanistan the Soviets' "newest client state" (Grau and Gress 2002: xxii). It is important to note that the USSR had a particular public *délire* bearing upon their clients. This was the Brezhnev Doctrine (first articulated in 1968), which asserted that if anti-socialist forces tried to move a socialist state toward capitalism, the USSR would intervene (Ouimet 2003).

Unfortunately for the Russians, Afghanistan would turn out to be the client state from Hell, in large measure because of the two strings of events that dominated Afghan politics for the next year and a half. First, by implementing socialist policies the Khalq stoked growing Islamist fury, sparked

especially by Taraki's launching an unpopular land reform (January 1978) in addition to permitting women to enter political life and attempting to end forced marriage. The Islamist opposition erupted into violence that came to be known as the Herat Uprising (March 1979). A second string of events, occurring concurrently with the growing revolt, stemmed from intensifying intra-Khalq competition between Taraki and Amin over the presidency.

The Herat Uprising had been grave. Russians were killed, and Russians were required to contain it. After the uprising Taraki traveled to Moscow to request additional military support. In a 1979 telephone conversation with Taraki, Premier Alexei Kosygin asked about the gravity of the uprising. Taraki responded, "The situation is bad and getting worse" (Kosygin and Taraki 1979). Startled, Kosygin next asked, "Is there anyone on your side?" Taraki replied, "There is no active support on the part of the population" (ibid). The conversation continued as Taraki pleaded for Soviet intervention. Kosygin refused, explaining that "we believe it would be a fatal mistake to commit ground troops. ... If our troops went in, the situation in your country would not improve. On the contrary, it would get worse" (in Walker 1993: 253). He was prescient.

At roughly the same time, Taraki and Amin were doggedly launching assassination attempts against each other. One of Amin's succeeded, and Taraki was smothered (14 September 1979). Consequently, in the fall of 1979 Moscow faced a situation in which its client regime had proven dysfunctional due to intra-clique competition, while bloody rebellion spread throughout the land. The new president, Amin, was both excessively repressive and desperate to find new allies. A month into his rule he told the US chargé d'affaires, "If Brezhnev himself should ask him [Amin] to take any action against Afghan independence ... he would not hesitate 'to sacrifice his life' in opposition to such a request" (in Kakar 1995: 42); effectively signaling he was nobody's client and wanted "independence."

This situation imposed a hermeneutic puzzle on the Bolshevik security elite: What to do about an Afghanistan "spun out of control" (Grau and Gress 2002: xxiii)? Minutes of a 4 October conversation between Brezhnev and Eric Honecker, the leader of East Germany, indicated Brezhnev's state of mind regarding Amin and the state of affairs in Afghanistan. Brezhnev worried that "In some provinces ... military encounters continue with the hordes of rebels who receive direct and indirect support from Pakistan and direct support from Iran, from the USA and from China" (Brezhnev 1979). A month later (31 October 1979) the Soviet Politburo registered concern that Amin was cozying up to the Americans while also seeking alliances with members of the "conservative opposition" (Kakar 1995: 44). Amin seemed to be betraying his own revolution. Karmal, in Russian exile, de-

nounced Amin as “an agent of the CIA” (in Bonosky 1985: 41).<sup>25</sup> Thereafter matters moved quickly.

Yuri Andropov, head of the KGB, informed Brezhnev in a memorandum in early December that “alarming information” had “started to arrive about Amin’s secret activities, forewarning of a possible political shift to the West” (Andropov 1979). The exact date of the memorandum is unclear, but according to Anatoly Dobrynin, then the USSR’s ambassador in Washington, it was an important factor in Brezhnev’s decision on Afghanistan. Brezhnev called a meeting of the inner circle of the Politburo, attended by Andropov, Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, Second Secretary of the Communist Party and chief ideologue Mikhail Suslov, and Defense Minister Dmitry Ustinov. Andropov and Ustinov argued for direct Soviet intervention, justifying such action as a response to the CIA’s efforts to create a “new Great Ottoman Empire which would have included the Southern republics of the USSR” (Lyakhovsky 1995: 109–112). Four days later, on 12 December 1979, the Politburo met and decided to replace Amin and dominate Afghanistan through Karmal and his Parchami.

For the Soviets, then, the hermeneutic puzzle of Afghanistan was solved by the end of 1979. Perceptually it was understood that their worst enemy, imperial America, sought to loosen Moscow’s grip on a new client, a situation calling for application of the Brezhnev Doctrine. Consequently, procedurally, the Bear went over the mountain (the Hindu Kush range to be precise), and the 40th Army invaded on Christmas Day. As Kosygin had warned, it was a “fatal mistake.”

*Rollback:* From 1980 to 1985, the Soviets occupied Afghanistan’s cities and main communication routes. In response the mujahideen waged a guerrilla war, locally organized by regional warlords. After four years of war, mujahideen bands were operating from at least 4,000 bases (Roy 1990). Most of them were affiliated with, and supplied by, seven expatriate Islamic parties headquartered in Pakistan. Major commanders included the brutal Gulbuddin Herkmatyar, who led the Hizb party and was favored with CIA funding (Bergen 2001: 69); Ahmad Shah Massoud, leader of the Northern Alliance, called the Lion of Panshir because of his fighting skills; and another skilled guerilla fighter, Jalaluddin Haggani, whom Congressman Charlie Wilson called “goodness personified” (Crile 2007). Commanders typically led three hundred or more men, controlled several bases, and dominated a district or subdivision of a province. Massoud was a “deeply read student of Mao” (Coll 2004: 116), and his and other commanders’ tactics were Maoist in the sense that they sought to “avoid the solid, attack the hollow; attack; withdraw.” Mujahideen operations therefore relied heavily on sabotage, including attacks on Soviet military installations,



government offices, power lines, pipelines, radio stations, air terminals, hotels, cinemas, and the like.

The Soviet Army countered with large-scale offensives against *basmachi* (“bandits,” the dismissive Russian term for their opponents) territories. Nine offensives were launched between 1980 and 1985. Six went into the strategically important Panjshir Valley, successfully defended by Massoud. Heavy fighting also occurred in provinces bordering Pakistan that were safeguarded by Haggani. Nothing worked for the Soviets. Roughly 60 percent of the country had effectively escaped Soviet control by 1984 (Coll 2004: 89).

The Soviets were not only faring poorly against the *basmachi*: at the same time, they were also experiencing rapid regime turnover. Brezhnev died in 1982 after an eighteen-year reign, followed by Yuri Andropov (12 November 1982–2 September 1984), and then Konstantin Chernenko (13 February 1984–10 March 1985). The Central Committee of the Communist Party elected Mikhail Gorbachev the Politburo general secretary and head of the Soviet Union on 11 March 1985. He won by a single vote over hardliner Viktor Grishin. Change at the top strained policy making—the Soviet Union had had four rulers in four years, at the end of which came Gorbachev, a “new man” (Konchalovsky 2011: 5). He was young, the youngest member of the Politburo at the time and the first head of the USSR to have been born after the Revolution. Worried about his country’s economic stagnation, he advocated innovative ideologies, notably *perestroika* (restructuring) and *glasnost* (openness, transparency).<sup>26</sup>

Another new idea of Gorbachev’s was to end the Afghan conflict within one or two years, the 40th Army being granted this much time to win, if they could. There followed a “surge” in 1985. Troop strength was raised to 108,000 soldiers. Some 2,000 *spetsnaz* (special forces) were introduced in elite commandos supplied with advanced Mi-24D Hind attack helicopters. In response, in September 1986, the US shipped Stinger missiles to the rebels, rendering the Hind helicopters vulnerable. The result was the bloodiest year of the war.

Nothing worked for the 40th Army. It had been given its chance, and after two years fully 80 percent of Afghanistan was under mujahideen control. The Politburo met on 13 November 1986 and authorized pulling out from Afghanistan. On 14 April 1988 the Geneva Accords were signed between Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Soviet Union, and the US concerning the string of events that would serve as the Russian’s withdrawal. A few months later the first troops left. By February 1989, the last troops were gone. The Bear had slunk back over the mountains to its lair, itself abuzz with *perestroika*. Secretary of State George Shultz (1993: 1094) rejoiced: “The Soviets had been rolled back.”

The conflict had been grim. According to Russian sources some 14,500 Soviet soldiers were killed, between one and two million Afghans died overall; about another three million were wounded; and five million were made refugees (RT 2014). Concerning the fighting, one ordinary Russian private announced that he knew “the smell of a man’s guts hanging out; the smell of human excrement mixed with blood ... the scorched skulls grinning out of a puddle of molten metal, as though they had been laughing, not screaming as they died” (Alexievich 1992: 16; [insert added for clarity]). The US got rollback. Ordinary folk got “the smell of a man’s guts hanging out.” Politburo elites got a “fatal mistake.” Had it all been the Soviets’ doing? Was there American meddling in Afghanistan? Answering these questions leads to a hermeneutic politics at the highest levels of authority in the Carter Administration during that goat fuck of a year.

*“Open-mouthed shock”: The Hermetic Seal  
in the Hermeneutic Politics of Afghanistan I*

Christopher Hitchens (2007: 1) reported that Carter reacted with “open-mouthed shock” when informed of the Soviets’ Christmas Day invasion of Afghanistan. Such a response suggests that indeed, the US had not been earlier involved in Afghanistan’s domestic politics and that the Soviet invasion came as a surprise. Certain information, however, suggests another interpretation of Carter’s shock. This evidence bears upon the Carter administration’s hermeneutic politics vis-à-vis the Soviets’ Afghan adventures. These politics involved three principal security elites with authorities over the exercise of violent force: Carter himself, NSA Brzezinski, and Secretary of State Cyrus Vance. Let us specify the main puzzle of the politics.

The 1978 Saur Revolution meant that the US/Soviet inter-imperial contradiction was intensifying. After the fall of Saigon, Nixon said seven dominoes had fallen. Now there was an eighth, Afghanistan. This posed a hermeneutic puzzle: what to do about Afghanistan turning communist? The resolution of this problem turned on a hermetic seal that removed one of the principals from contributing to its resolution.

*“The power to interpret”: The Making of a Lord High Hermeneut:*

The Carter Administration was affected by deep divisions on national security issues between the “hawks and the doves.” (MacEachin, Nolan, and Tockman 2005: 9)

During the Vietnam War, the Kennedy and Johnson administrations had been divided between hawks and doves. In the Carter administra-

tion the same division re-emerged in the hermeneutic politics concerning the USSR. Doves during the Vietnam War wanted less aggressive action against North Vietnam; hawks wanted more. In Carter’s time doves wanted to strengthen the process of US-Soviet détente. Hawks largely accepted neocon ideology and sought Soviet rollback, violently if necessarily.

Vance was the administration’s chief dove. He told readers in his memoirs, written immediately after leaving office, that “American military strength alone, although fundamental ... was no longer a sufficient guarantee of nuclear stability” (1983: 26). To ensure this “stability,” he said he had “supported a policy of regulated competition coupled with reciprocity ... ‘détente’” (ibid.: 6, 27). Brzezinski (sometimes called Zbig, sometimes losing the Z and sounding like Big) was the administration’s chief hawk—though a sly one, for at times he cooed like a dove. For example, at the beginning of his memoir, he declared that in the early stages of his relationship with Carter, “I repeatedly emphasized that détente with the Soviet Union was bound to be competitive and that we must strive to inject into it some genuine reciprocity” (1983: 50). Brzezinski seems to have been echoing his friend Huntington by saying there could be “cooperation” if there was reciprocity.

However, there was another Brzezinski, one who believed that in the “contemporary world” there were “ugly realities,” the USSR being especially ugly due to its becoming “more daring” and showing a “growing self-assertiveness” (ibid: 42, 146, 56). Specifically, he worried about a supposed Soviet military expansion, telling readers on the very first page of his memoir, “I had become increasingly concerned about longer-term political implications of growing Soviet military power, and I feared that the Soviet Union would become increasingly tempted to use its power either to exploit Third World turbulence or to impose its will in some political contest with the United States” (ibid.: 3). In this quotation Brzezinski reveals the neocon hawk concealed within the wings of a dove.

The term “rollback” was not in Brzezinski’s vocabulary, nor is it in the index of either his memoirs or his later *The Grand Chessboard* (1997). Following the Saur Revolution, though, he became a master of its implementation, to Vance’s distress. Brzezinski (1983: 39) noted that the “prevailing wisdom in Washington” during the Carter years was that he and Vance were “bitter enemies.” Whether their enmity was bitter is difficult to assess. However, they certainly were enemies, and Brzezinski was, as we shall see, able to hermetically seal his opponent out of participation in interpreting the puzzle of what to do about communist Afghanistan. Let us follow their rivalry.

Brzezinski (1983: 17) wrote, “My position in the Administration depended entirely on my relationship with Jimmy Carter.” Carter’s remarks

at the swearing-in ceremony for his Cabinet members (23 January 1977) indicate what that position was. The new NSA was introduced as the president's "closest advisor in tying together our economics, foreign policy, and also defense matters" (in Brzezinski 1983: 17). Carter (1982: 54) wrote in the memoirs of his presidency, *Keeping Faith*, that he and Brzezinski "got along well" and that, "next to members of my family, Zbig would have been my favorite seatmate on a long-distance trip." What of Carter's relations with Vance? The president once confided to Brzezinski "that he was frustrated by the inability of the State Department to come up with any innovative ideas" (1983: 42)—a big problem, because Carter was in effect complaining that Vance's State Department didn't help him know what to do.

Another problem was deeper and less susceptible to articulation—a "guy thing" that the Kennedys would have understood. Zbig put his finger on it when he observed that Vance had a "deep aversion to the use of force" and that this antipathy was "a most significant limitation on his stewardship" (ibid.: 44). Put differently, when push came to shove, Vance was not man enough to shove. Nevertheless, Carter (1982: 51) also said that Vance and his wife became "the closest personal friends to Rosalynn and me" during his administration. Accordingly, Carter "got along well" with Brzezinski, and Vance was his "closest" friend.

What advantages did the former have over the later? Vance may have been Carter's "closest" friend, but Brzezinski was his "closest advisor" on foreign policy and defense. After all, State did not produce "innovative ideas." Additionally, Brzezinski had far more direct access to the president than Vance because his office was in the White House and every morning he briefed the president on intelligence matters. This meant, he recalled in his memoirs, that on "a typical day, the president would phone me several times, asking me to drop by, or to make a factual inquiry" (Brzezinski 1983: 65). So Brzezinski was Carter's closest foreign policy guy, physically located to exploit this role, and not squishy on violence like Vance.

Another reason Brzezinski was so influential with Carter had to do with the way Zbig had organized security decision-making within the administration to favor himself. It is Vance who tells this story. The National Security Council in the Carter Administration handled most foreign policy and security matters. It consisted of "only two committees: the Policy Review Committee (PRC) ... and the Special Coordination Committee (SCC)" (Vance 1983: 36). Vance controlled the PRC, which was concerned with formulation of policy; Brzezinski, the SCC, which dealt with crisis management. However, the SCC's functions were broadly written to include handling of "cross-cutting issues requiring coordination in the development of options and the implementation of Presidential decisions" (in ibid.: 36).

The SCC had policy-making authority because policy, by its very nature, involves “cross-cutting issues.” Further, “Brzezinski proposed and the president approved a procedure for recording the views and recommendations coming out of the SCC and the PRC. . . . Brzezinski would submit a presidential directive (PD) to Carter for signature” (ibid.: 37). The PDs were not “circulated to the SCC or PRC participants for review before they went to the president” (ibid.: 37).

This allowed Zbig to frame all matters going up to the president from the NSC as he saw fit. Vance, understandably, “opposed this arrangement” (ibid.: 37). Carter overrode Vance’s opposition, effectively handing Brzezinski, as Vance expressed it in his memoirs, “the power to interpret” (ibid.: 37). In short, Brzezinski’s backing from his president made him Mr Big, a real Pooh-Bah—the lord high hermeneut of foreign policy hermeneutic puzzles. In the next section, the lord high hermeneut goes Bear hunting.

*The Pooh-Bah Traps a Bear:* The 28 April 1978 Saur Revolution meant the dominoes were falling again, posing a hermeneutic puzzle: what should be done about this? Vance (1983: 385) advised that the US should “continue limited economic aid” to maintain influence with Kabul. From a hawkish perspective, this was a policy of appeasement. A few months after the coup, rumors began to surface from Kabul hinting at the possibility of a westward turn. Vance advised that the US “not get involved” (ibid.: 386). Vance’s memoirs do not mention what Brzezinski was doing in the time between April 1978 and December 1979. In fact, Zbig was busy outing his neocon hawk persona. Non-involvement coupled with appeasement was the last thing he intended as he went about implementing his interpretation of the Saur Revolution. But to understand what this was, we need to return to Brzezinski’s Columbia days.

In 1968–1969, during the pandemonium of Columbia University’s student rebellion, Brzezinski ran a seminar on “Soviet Nationalities Problems.” It plotted rebellion. One of the participants in the seminar was Alexandre Bennigsen, a count from St. Petersburg whose family had sided with the White Russians during the Bolshevik Revolution and was accordingly obliged to flee. The Polish and Russian ex-aristocrats were reported to have formed a “natural affinity” during the seminar (Dreyfuss 2005: 252). Bennigsen “fostered a movement of scholars and public officials who believed in the viability of” what he called “the Islamic card” (ibid.), believing that some ethnic groups within and bordering the USSR harbored anti-Soviet grievances that would erupt in reactionary rebellion if certain lines were crossed. For Muslim nationalities, such lines were breached upon implementation of policies and practices that violated deeply felt Islamic belief. Playing the Islamic card was a neocon enterprise that involved aiding those

Muslim nationalities' rebellions, which flared subsequent to Russian red-line transgression. Two other neocon scholars—Harvard's Richard Pipes and Princeton's Bernard Lewis—largely agreed with Bennigsen's views (Dreyfuss 2005).

Brzezinski concurred with all three scholars' opinions. Their views might be said to have constituted an Islamic card hermeneutic whose perceptual recognition was that some Soviet actions violated red lines of Islamic belief and/or practice, provoking rebellion; and whose procedural choreography was to aid those in rebellion against Soviet violation of Islamic doxa. Bennigsen, Lewis, and Pipes were largely ivory-tower scholars in no position to actually play the Islamic card. Brzezinski—lord high hermeneut—did it for them in 1977 by organizing the Nationalities Working Group (NWG), an "inter-agency" body including the State Department, NSC, CIA, and Defense Department, which collaborated on policy designed to weaken the USSR by inflaming ethnic grudges against it, especially those of Islamists (Dreyfuss 2005: 251–256). Brzezinski's founding of the NWG might be said to have been the founding of an Islamic card iteration of the global domination public *délire*.

Even before the Saur Revolution, according to Roger Morris (2007a), the CIA had a record of supporting Islamist mujahideen against the Afghan government. In 1973 the agency, in conjunction with Pakistan, Iran (then still under the Shah), and China, covertly assisted Islamic rebels against the newly installed Daoud regime. Three weeks after the Saur Revolution, again according to Morris (2007a), Brzezinski was in China drumming up support against the USSR by warning of a "Soviet peril" in Afghanistan. Further, still according to Morris, "By fall 1978, more than a year before Soviet combat troops set foot in Afghanistan, a civil war, armed and planned by the U.S., Pakistan, Iran, and China ... had begun to rage in the same wild mountains of eastern Afghanistan" (2007a).<sup>27</sup>

According to Richard Cottam, a CIA official advising the Carter administration at this time, in 1978 Brzezinski was arguing for a "*de facto* alliance with the forces of Islamic resurgence" (in Dreyfuss 2005: 241). Henry Precht, a State Department official participating in the decision making, also recalled Brzezinski insisting "that Islamic forces could be used against the Soviet Union. The theory was, there was an arc of crisis, and so an arc of Islam could be mobilized to contain the Soviets" (in P. Scott 2007: 67). Hence, both State and CIA officials reported Brzezinski as advocating playing the Islamic card in 1978.

US government planning vis-à-vis Afghanistan began to quicken in early 1979, at least in part because the mujahideen rebellion was strengthening. The fact that the mujahideen were already fighting meant that whatever Washington did had to recognize that the time for peaceful fixes

had passed. The mujahideen rebellion, in this sense, granted the Carter administration Shultzian Permission. Gates ([1996] 2007: 144) reported that on 5 March the CIA sent Brzezinski’s SCC a “covert actions options” memorandum proposing different possibilities of exploiting this situation. The very next day the SCC met and requested more details concerning these options. Slightly over three weeks later (30 March), there was a follow-up mini-SCC meeting, at which “Walt Slocombe, representing Defense, asked if there was value in keeping the Afghan insurgency going, ‘sucking the Soviets into a Vietnam quagmire?’” (ibid.: 144–145). Arnold Horlick, representing the CIA, according to Eric Alterman’s (2001) account of it, “warned that this was just what we would expect.” A week later at a full-scale SCC meeting (6 April), the policy of covertly intervening on the side of the mujahideen was formally accepted. Roger Morris (2007a) claimed that after this gathering, “Gates, Brzezinski, and Carter” had “a deliberate plot to ‘suck’ the Russians into Afghanistan.” This string of meetings indicates that by early April 1979, Brzezinski’s Islamic card iteration of the global domination public *délire* was moving toward implementation in a “plot” to “suck” the USSR into a “Vietnam quagmire.”

By May 1979, according to Alfred McCoy (2003: 475), the CIA had begun working with rebels and other mujahideen leaders, especially Gulbiddin Hekmatyar, as chosen by the Pakistani Directorate for Inter-Services Intelligence. Hekmatyar, who would receive about half of all US funding to the mujahideen, was relished by at least some CIA officials, perhaps because of his brutality, which included a reputation for skinning prisoners alive (Dreyfuss 2005: 267–268). On 3 July Carter signed the first “finding” to covertly assist the mujahideen. In principle, this document authorized nonlethal assistance, but in actuality it allowed “support” that took “the form of cash” (Gates [1996] 2007: 146) that could be used to purchase weapons.

The July finding began actual implementation of the Islamic card. As Brzezinski (1998: 76) has acknowledged, on “that very day I wrote a note to the president ... [saying] that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention.” Further, Brzezinski (1983: 427) reports in his memoir that a month later Carter asked him for “contingency options” outlining US choices in case of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. So the Bear trap was baited and the mujahideen supported it. On Christmas Day the Soviets invaded and the trap was sprung. All this suggests that Carter responded to the Soviets’ aggression with “open mouth shock” out of astonishment at the success of his lord high hermeneut’s Bear trap.<sup>28</sup> A point remains to be clarified: where was Secretary of State Vance?

Gates ([1996] 2007: 143–149), who was in Carter’s security apparatus at the time, makes almost no mention of Vance in his account of the

decision making that led up to Carter's making the Islamic card a public *délire*. In fact, Foggy Bottom is mentioned only once in his account (at the 30 March SCC meeting). Roger Morris (2007a), speaking of the period between the Saur Revolution and the Soviet invasions, says there were CIA "covert actions" and that this "intervention" was "kept secret from their hated rival, Secretary of State Vance." Marshall Schulman, a steady hand who had worked for Dean Acheson and was Vance's special adviser for Soviet affairs, confirmed Morris's assertion when he said Vance, "was unaware of the covert program at the time" (Alterman 2001). How is one to construe Vance's and Foggy Bottom's obliviousness?

Brzezinski has said that judgments about what to do after the Saur Revolution "were being made in a highly charged atmosphere." Among other things, Carter's political stock was plummeting. At precisely this time, according to Brzezinski (1983: 437), Carter "gave increasing signs of dissatisfaction with Vance," so he (Brzezinski) became even more the "primary" security adviser; shutting Vance and the entire State Department out of decision making. Vance was hermetically sealed out of the hermeneutic politics concerning what to do about the Saur Revolution, leaving only the lord high hermeneut whose interpretation was to implement the Islamic card hermeneutic. It was done. The trap was set and sprung. It remained to kill the Bear.

*Killing the Bear I*: Allowed to stand, the Saur Revolution worsened the inter-imperial contradiction, threatening another domino's fall. Brzezinski's Islamic card iteration of the global domination public *délire* solved this reproductive vulnerability with a violent reproductive fix. The problem now became to ensure that the fix worked, because the full weight of a Soviet army was committed to ensuring that the Afghan domino did fall.

Brzezinski described in 1997 what the Carter administration did to ensure that the trapped Bear was killed, saying he had gone

to Pakistan a month or so after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, for the purpose of coordinating with the Pakistanis a joint response, the purpose of which would be to make the Soviets bleed for as much and as long as is possible; and we engaged in that effort in a collaborative sense with the Saudis, the Egyptians, the British, the Chinese, and we started providing weapons to the Mujaheddin, from various sources again—for example, some Soviet arms from the Egyptians and the Chinese. (Brzezinski 1997: 2)

So it would be a death by bleeding. In the above quotation Brzezinski describes its initial organization. The CIA, from the American side, would organize the bloodletting in Operation Cyclone, the longest and most expensive CIA covert operation up to that time. By July 1980 the operation had been "dramatically expanded" (Gates [1996] 2007: 148–149).



The year 1980 would be Carter’s last as president. As indicated earlier, it was another difficult year, featuring an unpopular boycotting of the summer Olympics in response to the Russian invasion; mortification at the hands of the Iranians who had captured US embassy staff in Tehran and refused to return them, compounded by a failed attempt to rescue them (which earned Vance’s resignation); and perhaps even greater humiliation at the hands of Carter’s political opponents—Teddy Kennedy on the left and Reagan on the right, the latter of whom trounced Carter in the next presidential election. Among the last acts of the Carter Administration “was a meeting between Turner [Carter’s CIA Director] and Brzezinski on October 29, where the latter complained ‘over and over’ that he didn’t think CIA was providing enough arms to the insurgents and wanted the Agency to increase the flow” (Gates [1996] 2007: 149). Brzezinski would get his wish.

*Killing the Bear II*: The Reagan administration, which began 21 January 1981, killed the Bear. However, a strategic question was how much support for the mujahideen was so much that it would provoke the USSR to act beyond the Afghan border, possibly destabilizing Pakistan. Howard Hart, the CIA bureau chief in Pakistan and a Security Elite 2.0 par excellence, had the answer in 1983, telling his superiors, “The fuckers haven’t got the balls, they aren’t going to do it ... so don’t worry about it” (in Coll 2004: 70). The “fuckers” were the Soviets. The “it” they were not going to do was to extend military operations into Pakistan. “The stage was set,” according to Gates, for a “vast future expansion ... all run by the CIA” ([1996] 2007: 149).

This expansion would be propelled in part by the activities of Representative Charlie “Good Time” Wilson, a tall, alcoholic Texas congressman with a “maniacal” desire to assist Operation Cyclone. Beginning in 1984, he “began to force more money and more sophisticated weapons systems into the CIA’s classified budget” (Coll 2004: 91). A year later Reagan signed National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 166 (1985), which led to “massive escalation” of the CIA’s role in Afghanistan.<sup>29</sup> In April 1986 US Stingers (ground-to-air missiles) were authorized for the mujahideen. They entered operation at the end of September.<sup>30</sup> By 1987 funding to the mujahideen was at the level of \$630 million per year. But by then it was all over: on 13 November 1986 the Politburo decided to evacuate Soviet troops. The Reagan administration took credit for the victory. Secretary of State Shultz (1993: 1094) exulted: “The Soviets had been rolled back. The Brezhnev Doctrine had been breached ... the event was monumental.” Certainly the Bear was killed during the Reagan administration, but the Reaganites organizing the killing were mere actors playing their roles in

strings of events earlier choreographed along the lines of Brezinski's Islamist card. Let us draw together the strands of the analysis of Afghanistan I.

The Saur Revolution appeared to hand the Soviets a new chunk of territory for their empire, worsening the inter-imperial contradiction between themselves and the US. The security elites' hermeneutic politics to resolve the reproductive vulnerability posed by the increased contradiction resulted in Vance being hermetically sealed out of fixing the puzzle; leaving his nemesis, Brzezinski, responsible for finding a fix. The difficulty of the hermeneutic puzzle facing the lord high hermeneut increased once the mujahideen began armed insurrection against the communists in Kabul, both because the uprising took nonviolent fixes of the vulnerability off the table, granting Shultzian Permission, and because of the dangers to US should it directly violently oppose the Soviet Union. Brzezinski responded to this situation by interpreting it as one requiring the playing of the Islamic card. Carter's 3 July 1979 finding started its implementation. Reagan's March 1985 NSDD 166 authorized a "massive" increase in the violent force allocated to implementation. Consequently, the New American Empire fixed the reproductive vulnerability imposed by the Saur Revolution by engaging in covert, indirect global war in Afghanistan. It worked. By 1989 the mujahiddin had killed the Bear. Two years later on 25 December 1991, Gorbachev resigned and the Soviet Union itself was history. The Cold War was over. The Security Elites 2.0 congratulated themselves on winning it.

One final observation and a query bear mention here. The observation is that although Afghanistan I was a Cold War conflict related to the US/Soviet inter-imperial contradiction, it also concerned the emerging economic contradictions and attempts to fix them through the control of oil, discussed earlier in the chapter. Afghanistan was geographically a place from which a determined country could strike at the Persian Gulf. If Afghanistan was an imperial Soviet client, the Bear was therefore poised for assault on Middle Eastern oil. The security elites, as the chapter made clear, were aware of this reality. To warn off the Soviets and anybody else from oil country, Carter, in his State of the Union address on 23 January 1980, proclaimed what became known as the Carter Doctrine. Perceptually, it began by observing that

the region which is now threatened by Soviet troops in Afghanistan is of great strategic importance: It contains more than two-thirds of the world's exportable oil. The Soviet effort to dominate Afghanistan has brought Soviet military forces to within 300 miles of the Indian Ocean and close to the Straits of Hormuz, a waterway through which most of the world's oil must flow.

Procedurally, it warned,

Any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force. (Carter 1980)

The Carter Doctrine was, and is, blunt: The New American Empire claimed control of the Persian Gulf, and by implication its oil, for itself. Attempts to eliminate this control would “be repelled by any means necessary”—tough talk. The Carter Doctrine might be called the oil-control iteration of the global domination public *délire* and is, as will become clear in the following sections, a central iteration of that public *délire* in the post–Cold War period.

The query is whether the US Leviathan’s conduct of covert, indirect global warring actually won Afghanistan I and caused the dissolution of the Soviet Union. If so, then Brzezinski’s, Reagan’s, and the CIA’s covert warfare killed the Bear not only in Central Asia but everywhere, a great triumph of US arms. As might be imagined, this question is debated. Brzezinski certainly thought he had won the Cold War. He had told his *Le Nouvel Observateur* interviewer that Afghanistan I had “finally” led to “the break up of the Soviet Union” (1998: 76). Reagan’s partisans are convinced that it was his tough anti-Soviet stance, including support for Afghanistan I, that ended the Cold War. On the other hand, some analyses highlight the damaging effect of the USSR’s dismal economy as key to its disintegration (Strayer 1998: 56–60). Still others speak of a multiplicity of causes (Halliday 1992). Above all, the last Soviet president sought perestroika (restructuring) and got more of it than he had ever bargained for. I believe James Mann’s (2009: 346) terse observation is acute: “Reagan did not win the Cold War; Gorbachev abandoned it.”<sup>31</sup>

But there is an alternative view that does not understand Afghanistan I as a triumph. It argues that the New American Empire’s “giving billions of dollars and high-tech weaponry to Afghan jihadis was a huge catastrophe, contributing to the creation and rise of al-Qaeda and setting the background for the emergence of the Taliban” (Cole 2013a). It is certain that Afghanistan I led to the Taliban and al-Qaeda; that the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) emerged from al-Qaeda; and that ISIL recently declared itself the Islamic State, claiming a worldwide caliphate. Equally certain is that the US has spent a great treasure in money, human lives, and time fighting these groups, a subject of later chapters.

Attention now turns to a conflict where Cold War antipathies were less important. Rather, because times were “a changin’,” security elites worried not about the inter-imperial but the land/capital contradiction, and US control over oil. This conflict is the Iran-Iraq War, which occurred largely concurrently with Afghanistan I.

## The Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988)

Iraqi air forces struck Iran, seeking to destroy the young Islamic Republic, on 22 September 1980. Though largely unsuccessful, the attack was followed a day later by a ground invasion involving six divisions along a 644-kilometer front. On that day, Carter (2010: 467) reported in his diary that there were “very serious problems on the Iran-Iraq border,” further noting that “both countries have ceased shipment of oil. . . . This involves almost three million barrels of oil per day.” Thus the Iran-Iraq War began with the US president noting to himself that it had implications for oil.<sup>32</sup> The following analysis reveals how US operations during the Iran-Iraq War to maintain some control over this oil largely involved covert, indirect global warring, which after seven years became direct global warring. The outcomes of this warring would include solution of the strategic insolvency problem discussed earlier; transformation of the Persian Gulf into a deeply violent place; and establishment in this violent place of a new US surrogate to replace Iran. First, however, consider the Iran-Iraq War.

### *Old Irritants and a New (Mis-)Interpretation: A War of Four Phases*

The Iran-Iraq War had four phases (Hiro 1991): 1980–1982, when Iraq invaded Iran; 1982–early 1984, during which Iran counterattacked, invading Iraq; mid 1984–1985, at which time a reinforced Iraq counterattacked Iran’s counterattack; and finally 1986–1988, a ferocious endgame in which Iran re-attacked Iraq and Iraq re-attacked the re-attack as the war became increasingly subject to direct US global warring. The causes of the war lay in old irritants and a new (mis-)interpretation.

*1980–1982, Iraqi Invasion of Iran:* Iran and Iraq have shared a 1,458-kilometer border since the 1600s. Iraq, the easternmost province of the Ottoman Empire, was contiguous with the Persian Empire, its border extending roughly along the Tigris River watershed in a line running from the Shatt al-Arab in the south to Kuh e-Dalanper in the north. Over the centuries, numerous border disputes vexed the two empires. One of these centered upon the Shatt al-Arab, the river formed by the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers at Al Gurnah that flows 200 kilometers south to the Persian Gulf. Control over the waterway and questions of its border have been debated since the seventeenth century. The latest flare-up of this dispute ended in 1975 when Saddam Hussein, fifth president of Iraq, and the shah of Iran signed the Algiers Accord, fixing the boundary between the two countries along the deepest channel of the river. The Shatt al-Arab was, and is, Iraq’s only Persian Gulf outlet. Placing the boundary in the

river meant that Iraq lacked unimpeded access to the Gulf, a worrisome situation for the Iraqi government. Saddam only signed the accord because Iran promised to stop aiding Iraqi Kurds in their rebellion against Baghdad. Attempting to right the wrong of the Algiers Accord was an element in Saddam's later decision to invade Iran.

Another factor that perhaps more significantly motivated Saddam's desire for war was Iran's revolutionary Ayatollahs' attempt to export their revolution to Iraq. The revolution had installed Khomeini's interpretation of Shiite Islam. The majority of Iraq's population was Shiite, but the country was ruled by a secular, Baathist party.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, "tension between the Shia masses and the regime built up steadily" in Iraq, producing anti-government disturbances in 1977 and 1979 (Hiro 1991: 24). The "tension" was aggravated when Khomeini's government endeavored to spread Iran's Islamist revolution to Iraq, culminating in an 1980 unsuccessful attempt (1 April) to assassinate Deputy Premier Tariq Aziz. Saddam responded to the attempt by executing Muhammad Baqir Sadr (8 April), Iraq's most respected Shiite Ayatollah, provoking Khomeini to call for Saddam's overthrow. So another motivation—a strong one, indeed—for Saddam to destroy Khomeini was that Khomeini sought to destroy him.

Two final causes had to do with prizes to be won and prospects for success. Consider first the prizes. The Middle East had figured in UK imperial politics since the eighteenth century, reaching a high point upon Iraq's transfer from the Ottoman to the British Empire at the end of World War I. However, in 1968, Her Majesty announced the UK's departure from the Middle East in order to assume military responsibilities in NATO and the defense of Europe. This left a Persian Gulf power vacuum. Nixon's Twin Towers policy was supposed to fill this void, but the policy crumbled when the Iranian tower came tumbling down.

Saddam's attack on Iran was another attempt to fill that vacuum, for as Teicher and Teicher (1993: 65–66) report: "By ... September 1980 Iraqi oil production had reached nearly four million barrels per day, second only to the production of the Saudis. Had Iraq succeeded in seizing Khuzestan Province (where Iran's oil was) and Iran's Kharg Island oil terminal, Saddam would have had control over eleven million barrels per day of oil production capacity, nearly one fifth of the world's global oil consumption at the time," which would have given him extensive "financial and political power." With such prizes, Saddam would fill the Persian Gulf vacuum. According to Teicher and Teicher (1993: 66) this was Saddam's "fundamental rationale" for invading Iran.

Moreover, it appeared to be a propitious time to invade. Iran (636,372 square miles and roughly 75 million inhabitants) is a far larger country than Iraq (169,234 square miles and roughly 34 million inhabitants).

While the shah ruled Iran as a US client-satrapy, Iran had been lavishly armed, so Baghdad prudently refrained from militarily challenging Tehran. However, in the months following the Islamic Republic's founding Saddam received intelligence that Iran had experienced "rapid military, political and economic decline," "low morale among military officers ... and rapid deterioration in the effectiveness of ... weaponry"; compounded by "conflict between the Iranian president Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr and religious leaders" (Hiro 1991: 36). Furthermore, Saddam "had the active co-operation of the recently deposed Iranian military and political leaders, who possessed vital information and commanded the loyalties of hundreds of Iranians in key positions" (ibid.: 37). Such intelligence and collaboration became the basis of an interpretation on Saddam's part, which was that Khomeini's purge of the military had rendered Iran "practically defenseless" (Pelletiere 1992: 18). Bani-Sadr (1991: 69–70), the Islamic Republic's first president, recalled sending Saddam a warning just prior to the onset of fighting: "You imagine you can finish Iran with a lightning war because our army is disorganized. You dream of becoming the pre-eminent power in the region. ... You can start a war, but you cannot decide its outcome." Nevertheless, Saddam—harboring ancient grievances such as that over the Shatt al-Arab, enraged by Khomeini's attempts to overthrow him, imagining Persian Gulf pre-eminence, and emboldened by his interpretation that Iran was "defenseless"—ignored his opponent's counsel. Unfortunately for Iraq, Saddam's interpretation turned out to be a (mis-)interpretation, as events revealed.

Four of the six invading Iraqi divisions were sent against Khuzestan, which borders Iraq to the west and the Persian Gulf to the south. Khuzestan was largely Arab in ethnicity and, as earlier noted, was a center of oil production, so Saddam reasoned that an attack there might secure both support from the inhabitants and his oil prize. Regrettably, the Iraqi troops advancing into Iran in 1980 lacked offensive skills. The invasion encountered unexpectedly fierce resistance and had stalled by December 1980. In Bani-Sadr's (1991: 91) judgment, "Militarily, then ... we were in a position to impose a peace advantageous to Iran."

At this point Saddam announced that Iraq was switching to defense, and for about a year and a half thereafter there was little change at the front. In mid March 1982 Iran began an offensive, and the Iraqis were obliged to retreat. By June that year, this counteroffensive had recovered most of the areas earlier lost to Iraq. Saddam prudently chose to completely withdraw his armed forces from Iran, deploying them instead along the countries' international border. Further, he announced (20 June 1982) that he would acquiesce to a ceasefire on the basis of the prewar status quo. There was spirited deliberation among the Iranian ruling elite as to whether to ac-

cept Saddam’s offer. One faction, including Army Chief of Staff General Ali Sayad Shirazi, was for acceptance; another, led by Speaker of Majlis Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, favored rejection. Khomeini sided with Rafsanjani and demanded elimination of the Baathist regime and its replacement with a Shiite Islamic republic, thereby extending the war six more years.

*1982–Early 1984, Iranian Invasion of Iraq:* Khomeini proclaimed on 21 June 1982 that Iran would invade Iraq and would not stop until an Islamic republic governed that country. Iran’s offensive employed human wave attacks led by *pasdaran* (Revolutionary Guards) and *basij* (teenage paramilitary volunteers), the latter wearing wooden keys around their necks to open Heaven’s gates upon their martyrdom. Iranian units crossed the border in force on 13 July making for Basra, Iraq’s second most important city. By this time, however, Saddam had more than doubled the Iraqi army, enlarging it from 200,000 soldiers (12 divisions and 3 independent brigades) to 500,000 (23 divisions and 9 brigades). Now it was the Iranians who encountered a tough defense. On different occasions during the advance on Basra, the *basij* were obliged to clear Iraqi minefields with their feet in order to allow the *pasdaran* to advance. Five human-wave attacks were repulsed by withering Iraqi fire and chemical weapons.

The 1982 Iranian summer offensives failed. Undaunted, Iran launched five major assaults along the front in 1983. None met with significant success. With the ground war substantially deadlocked, Saddam ordered aerial and missile attacks against Iranian cities on 7 February 1984. Iran retaliated against Iraqi cities. These exchanges became known as the “war of the cities.” The aerial attacks did not diminish Tehran’s taste for the offensive.

Some setbacks followed, but the Iranians had a major success when they captured part of the oil-rich Majnun Islands (16 March 1984). Despite an Iraqi counterattack featuring liberal use of mustard and sarin nerve gases, the Iranians maintained their gains and continued to hold them almost until the end of the war. The Iranian offensive ended on 19 March 1984. The Iraqis were unable to recapture their lost territory, but Iran was stopped from advancing upon Basra. Neither Khomeini nor Saddam showed interest in a truce.

*Mid 1984–1985, Stalemate:* By the middle of 1984, Iraq had been supplied with a varied, lethal ordnance from a large number of US clients. To break the Iranian land offensives, Baghdad began attacking Iranian tankers and Iran’s oil terminal at Kharg Island in early 1984. Tehran responded by attacking tankers carrying Iraqi oil, largely those of other Persian Gulf states,

especially Kuwait. Saddam hoped that attacks on Iranian shipping would provoke Tehran to take extreme measures in retaliation, such as closing the Strait of Hormuz. It did not, but an important naval dimension had been added to the conflict, with the “tanker war” involving 53 Iraqi and 18 Iranian raids on shipping in 1984 (Hiro 1991: 291).

Rearmed by US clients, on 28 January 1985 Saddam began a ground offensive, the first since early 1980. It produced no significant gains and prompted Iran to respond with its own offensive, again directed against Basra (beginning 11 March 1985), which succeeded in seizing a part of the Baghdad-Basra highway that had earlier resisted capture. Baghdad replied to these reverses by launching chemical attacks against Iranian positions, initiating a second “war of the cities” with a massive air and missile campaign against Iranian urban areas. Bani-Sadr (1991: 209) reported that, at least for Iran, by “1985, general pessimism concerning a military solution to the war overwhelmed both the population and a large majority of the political officials.”

1986–1988, *Endgame*: “Pessimism” notwithstanding, Iran initiated yet another major offensive in southern Iraq on 9 February 1986 designed to break the stalemate. The offensive was directed against the Fao Peninsula, a marshy region adjoining the Persian Gulf in Iraq’s extreme southeast between Iraqi Basra and Iranian Abadan. It was the site of Iraq’s two main oil tanker terminals and controlled access to the Shatt al-Arab (and thus access to the port of Basra). The Fao attack succeeded. Iraq immediately began counteroffensives to retake it. All failed. Fao’s loss boosted Iranian morale and diminished Saddam’s credibility, raising the possibility that Iran might just prevail.

In May 1986 the Iraqis seized the Iranian border town of Mehran and offered to exchange it for Fao. Tehran rejected the offer and in July retook the town. That September Tehran attacked to the north in Iraqi Kurdistan; in October it organized a commando raid, in conjunction with Kurds, against Kirkuk; and in December, to end 1986 with a flourish, it directed a major assault against Basra. The New Year of 1987 began with a wave of Iranian offensives into northern and southern Iraq. Basra and the southern oil fields were the major objective. The Basra attack failed, but the Iranians met with greater success later in the year in the north, especially around Suleimaniya, opening the way to Kirkuk and the northern oilfields. However, Tehran was unable to consolidate these gains. Little land actually changed hands in 1987, and after seven years of violence an effective impasse once more prevailed.

On 20 July 1987 the United Nations Security Council passed the US-sponsored Resolution 598, calling for an end to fighting and a return to



prewar boundaries. Iraq accepted the resolution. Iran did not, prompting Iraq to return to the offensive in 1988. Saddam began his final and most deadly of the “war of the cities” in February. His troops retook the Fao Peninsula in April. Immediately thereafter, they began a sustained drive to clear Iranians out of all of southern Iraq, against which the Iranians put up little resistance.

At the same time that Iraq was in the process of expelling the Iranians from its territory, a series of US-Iranian naval and aerial engagements, discussed in the next section, alarmed Iran’s ruling elite, who worried that the US was intervening and doing so on Saddam’s side. Anxiety sharpened on 20 June when the US Navy blasted an Iranian passenger airline from the sky, killing all 290 persons on board. One Iranian scholar reports that “the Iranians interpreted [this action] ... as a sign of American resolve to force Iran to accept the resolution” (Tousi 1997: 60). At this point Rafsanjani, instrumental in extending the war in 1982, had had enough. He urged ending the conflict. Khomeini acquiesced, and on 20 July 1988 Iran announced acceptance of Resolution 598. A month later Iraq also complied and the war ended.

Iran settled for the terms it had rejected six years earlier in 1982. Many, many more people had died or were wounded. There were over a million casualties. Much treasure was wasted. Iran lost 40 to 60 percent of its land-force military equipment in the last months of the war, and overall military expenses were in the order of a trillion, 1980 dollars (Hiro 1991: 1). The preceding narrative has told a grim tale of Iran and Iraq’s war. Absent from the story is the New American Empire’s role in it, an absence corrected in the upcoming section.

### *US Participation in the Iran-Iraq War*

This section shows how the Security Elites 2.0 intervened in the Iran-Iraq war in ways that upgraded the US’s own capacities for exercising violent force in the region, while also “tilting” toward Iraq, attempting to transform it into a client satrapy.

*The Carter Administration during the Iran-Iraq War:* Recall that the majors had lost control over oil due to nationalization and OPEC, worsening the oil company/petro-state contradiction in the 1970s. The “energy crisis” declared during Nixon’s administration was the cultural discourse in which the land/capital contradiction’s intensification was recognized. The Nixon Doctrine was a public *délire* designed to fix the “energy crisis” vulnerability. However, the fix became unfixed when Iran collapsed as a “twin tower,” branding the US as the “Great Satan.” Worse, the Iran-Iraq War further

aggravated the situation because whoever won might dominate much of Near Eastern oil, preventing the US from controlling it. Thus, by 1980, the oil company/petro-state and land/capital contradictions agitated the I-spaces of the Security Elite 2.0.

When the Iran-Iraq War erupted, Carter did not speak of contradictions. Rather, two days after Iraq's attack he wrote in his diary, "I conducted a National Security Council meeting. We agreed to do everything we could to terminate the Iran-Iraq conflict as soon as possible, to stay strictly neutral, ... and to keep open the Strait of Hormuz" (2010: 467). Matters were not quite as simple as that. The US did a great deal to inflame the conflict and was anything but neutral.

A key problem was that the US was "virtually powerless" to influence hostilities at their onset (El-Azhary 1984: 89), an actuality that was recognized by the Carter administration. Gary Sick, a member of Carter's NSC, reported that among NSC security officials at this time there was "a growing awareness ... the United States was left strategically naked, with no safety net" (in O'Reilly 2008: 148). This provoked the hermeneutic puzzle of how to fix the problem of a "strategically naked" New American Empire—or, put differently, what should be done now that the Nixon Doctrine had failed to protect US Persian Gulf oil interests?

Actually, the Carter Doctrine, announced ten months earlier, already pointed the way to a fix. It was designed to discourage Soviet Persian Gulf meddling but contained a more general implication, warning, "Any attempt ... to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be ... repelled by any means necessary, including military force." The procedural message was clear. Violent force would be used to control the oil-producing Middle East if other means failed. So understood, as earlier noted, the Carter Doctrine is understood as an "oil control" iteration of the global domination public *délire*.

However, a big procedural puzzle remained; US Middle Eastern strategic insolvency. This began to be resolved, Brzezinski (1983: 454) recalled, because the events of 1979–1980 prompted "formal U.S. recognition" of "three, instead of two, zones of central strategic importance to the United States: Western Europe, the Far East, and the Middle East." Thus, a procedural message of the Carter Doctrine was to add a new, third area of central strategic importance to the US, the Middle East. In an area of such strategic importance, the US had to "establish a military presence" (Pelletiere 1992: 153), which got the Security Elites 2.0 into the development of violent force. There were three major ways to accomplish this: they could dedicate specific American military units to operations in the Gulf; they could "tilt" toward Iraq, hoping to make it a satrapy; or they could do both. The Carter administration opted for the third possibility.

First, it moved to augment its Gulf forces. This had, in principle, begun when Carter signed PD 18 in the summer of 1977, a part of which authorized a mobile force, composed of two Army divisions and one Marine division, capable of responding to worldwide contingencies. These units were the forerunner of the Rapid Deployment Force. Though authorized, this force was not implemented because it was largely unfunded, nor was it targeted toward the Persian Gulf. Two years later, Carter publicly announced he would actually establish such a force and that its area of operations would be the Near East. The Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (RDJTF) began on March 1980 at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. Its mission was to "help maintain regional stability and the Gulf oil-flow westward" (Clementson 1983: 260). Earlier, between April and August 1980, Carter administration diplomats had negotiated troop and materiel access agreements with Kenya, Somalia, and Oman. They had equally negotiated landing rights in Morocco for US planes (O'Reilly 2008: 151).

The question of whether to seek allies in the region was more complicated and involved a fair amount of hermeneutic politics within the NSC. The logical, geostrategic candidate for such an ally was Iran. Now, however, under Khomeini, Iranian elites regarded the "Great Satan" as a "wounded snake" and held its diplomats hostage as its masses chanted "Down with America" while torching US flags on television. The alternative to Iran was Iraq, but here too there were problems. Foremost among these was that Iraq was something of a Soviet client, having signed a treaty to this effect in 1972. Moreover, Saddam was judged an extreme dictator.

One of the factions in the hermeneutic politics that emerged over Iraq was led by Brzezinski, who by the spring of 1980 "began to suggest publicly that Iraq was the logical successor to Iran as the dominant military power in the Persian Gulf" (Teicher and Teicher 1993: 62). Earlier Howard Teicher, then a mid-level bureaucrat in the Defense Department and his wife, Gayle Teicher, had written a report arguing that Iraq under Saddam was a country that could not be trusted to defend the US's interests (ibid: 62–70). The politics between the extremely powerful Brzezinski and the very much junior Teicher was asymmetrical. Teicher found his position ignored. It "ran contrary to those of most of the national security bureaucracy" (1993: 69). A month after the RDJTF was founded, Carter lost the election to Reagan. Nevertheless, the work of choreographing US Middle Eastern violent force had begun. The US was a bit less "naked." This work might be characterized as a "twin towers redux plus" policy. The "redux" part of the policy was the intention to bring back Iraq as a new twin to replace the defunct one. The "plus" part of the policy was that the US had begun the RDJTF to be able to put boots on the ground in the Middle East when required.

“Back in the saddle again”: The Reagan Administration during the Iran-Iraq War: Reagan had campaigned against Carter by promising to get the US “back in the saddle again.” This was the first line of the signature song of the singing cowboy Gene Autry, who in the 1940s and 1950s had entertained Hollywood audiences with his voice and acting. The lyric “back in the saddle again” evoked remounting a horse after a fall and being in charge once more, “out where a friend is a friend” while “totin’ my old 44.”<sup>34</sup> Reagan’s theme song implied that with him as president, America would recover dominance after the tumble suffered during Carter’s presidency. Moreover, this America would be totin’, that is, carrying its 44 revolver in world where a friend is a friend; which is to say that Reagan’s America would stand armed and violent, with friendly clients that acted as friendly satrapies.

Promises and reality can diverge. Carter had established his Carter Doctrine as the public *délire* for addressing Persian Gulf vulnerability. His administration had begun the task of implementing this *délire* by instituting the RDJTF and beginning the tilt toward Iraq. Very early in his first administration Reagan endorsed the Carter Doctrine, saying that with it the US intended “to safeguard the West’s oil lifeline in the Persian Gulf area” (in O’Reilly 2008: 151). In October 1981, the Reagan administration extended the Carter Doctrine with what is sometimes called the Reagan Corollary.

At the beginning of the Iran-Iraq War there was concern that the fighting could spill over into the other twin tower, Saudi Arabia, and harm it. The Reagan Corollary was designed to address this situation, declaring that “Washington would take on any state in the area that threatened U.S. interests” (ibid.: 152). This “corollary” was not an alternative to the Carter Doctrine. It was an iteration strengthening it: if a state *outside* of the Middle East (say, Russia) threatened US oil interests, the US reserved the right to militarily react; if a state *in* the Middle East (like Iran or Iraq) endangered US oil interests there, the US could militarily respond. Teicher and Teicher (1993: 146) insist that the Reagan Corollary laid “the policy groundwork ... for Operation Desert Storm.” Actually it was the Carter Doctrine that laid the groundwork for the Reagan Corollary. The Reagan administration’s acceptance of Carter’s public *délire* meant that “the United States embarked upon a decade of military improvements” (O’Reilly 2008: 151), actually begun under Carter. The “improvements” were twofold: replacement of the 44 with more forceful weaponry; and a new “friend,” Iraq governed by Saddam. Implementation of these “improvements” is recounted next.

Casper Weinberger was Reagan’s Secretary of Defense. He had been nicknamed “Cap the Knife” because of his cost-cutting proclivities as head

of Nixon’s Office of Budget and Management. Under Reagan the old moniker disappeared, replaced by a new one, “Cap the Ladle,” because he was charged with “directing the largest military buildup” in US history (up to that time) (Brownstein and Easton 1983: 450). Considerable funding for the “buildup” went to high-tech weapons systems, like Star Wars. However, Cap also ladled money to the strengthening of military units, such as the RDJTF.

Grasping how Cap the Ladle reinforced the RDJTF requires knowledge of how the New American Empire organized, and organizes, its violent force. The 1947 National Security Act provided the legal foundation for the Joint Chiefs of Staff to create unified commands in strategic areas, places designated as potentially violent. At the end of World War II, Europe and Northeast Asia were strategic areas. Under Carter, at Brzezinski’s urging, the Middle East became a strategic area. A “unified command” was, and is, an organization capable of exercising violent force that includes at least two of the military services “unified” under a common leadership, the better to choreograph their cooperation.

The Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1958, a result of Eisenhower’s conviction that the days of independent service action were finished, strengthened the National Security Act. It sought complete unification of all military planning, combat forces, and commands. Central to this act was the unified command plan, which designated the Unified Commands, or more simply, Commands. Two types of functional and geographic commands exist. “Functional” commands are those with specialized tasks. For example, different types commando units in the Army, Navy, and Air Force are all placed in a Special Operations Command. Geographic commands have areas of responsibility (AOR). The two earliest commands were those in Europe (EUCOM) and in the Asian Pacific (PACOM). AOR commands have a broad continuing mission and are led by a commander in chief. Eisenhower’s Reorganization Act established a clear chain of command from the president to the secretary of Defense to the commanders in chief.<sup>35</sup>

By the time Weinberger became defense secretary a lively hermeneutic politics about Carter’s RDJTF had emerged—not over whether to have rapid deployment forces, but over how to proceed with them. One faction in this politics was critical of the existing RDJTF. Jeffrey Record (1981: vii), then of the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, was a leader of this bloc and insisted that the RDJTF was a “fatally flawed military instrument for the preservation of uninterrupted access to vital Persian Gulf oil” because it had (1) unsuitable equipment for desert warfare, (2) inadequate mobility, (3) confused and divided command structures, and (4) insufficient funding. Solve these faults, Record swore, and the RDJTF would work.

Weinberger championed Record's position and "addressed immediately" (Morrissey 2008: 107) the RDJTF's faults, principally by transforming the RDJTF into its own unified command and increasing its funding to acquire equipment necessary for desert warfare and increased mobility. Weinberger announced in April 1981 that the RDJTF would become a separate geographic unified command with Southwest Asia, its AOR. "Southwest Asia" was Pentagonese for the Persian Gulf and surrounding countries. In the Pentagon's positional culture Southwest Asia came to be known as the "Central Region" (ibid.: 118).

Consequently, on 1 January 1983 the RDJTF became the Central Command (CENTCOM), which included nineteen countries. Its commander became commander in chief of CENTCOM. In 1983, CENTCOM had 220,000 troops at its disposal. By 1986, it could call upon 400,000 soldiers. From the Army, it had one airborne division, one mechanized infantry division, one light infantry division, and one air cavalry brigade; from the Navy, three carrier battle groups, one surface action group, and five maritime patrol air squadrons; from the Air Force, seven tactical fighter wings and two strategic bomber wings; and from the Marines, one and one-third Marine amphibious forces.

CENTCOM was an "over the horizon" command, meaning its troops were stationed for the most part outside of Southwest Asia with the notion that they would be "projected" there as needed. CENTCOM's key logistical problem was to get troops and equipment to the Middle East fast. To address this problem, "the Pentagon was procuring additional C-5 cargo aircraft and KC-10 cargo tanker aircraft, improving current aircraft such as the C-141 through wing modification and a stretch modification of the fuselage, and acquiring additional capacity through a restructured Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) enhancement program" (Isenberg 1984). Additionally, once US troops arrived in the Middle East, they needed strongholds. To provide these, "the Pentagon also continued to improve its access to facilities in the Southwest Asia area. The funds for military construction programs in that area for FY 1983–87 totaled nearly \$1.4 billion, a 30 percent increase over the FY 1982–86 levels" (ibid.). As a consequence of the preceding, CENTCOM became "the military ... instrument of the Carter Doctrine" (Morrissey 2008: 107), putting the New American Empire "back in the saddle again" to dominate the Middle East and its energy resources. But it still needed a friend, after Iran's perfidy.

So Reagan's Security Elites 2.0 did some diplomatic browsing in search of a friend. Iraq became their candidate, but recall that in principle Iraq was a Soviet ally.<sup>36</sup> Early in 1981 Alexander Haig, Reagan's first Secretary of State (1981–1982), had signaled "some shift" that had made Iraqi policy

more “moderate” (in El-Azhary 1984: 94); “moderate” being the State Department’s positional cultural term for a country not wedded to the USSR. Consequently, Reagan’s security elites began a courtship, wooing their possible new friend.

Courtships—diplomatic or matrimonial—involve gift exchanges. First off, the US offered Iraq a present of intelligence (June 1982) that was “quickly accepted”; thereafter Saddam’s relationship with the US “began to improve rapidly” (Teicher and Teicher 1993: 207). In January 1983, a counter gift was offered: Baghdad repudiated its USSR alliance, declaring “that Iraq had never been part of the Soviet strategy in the region” (Hiro 1991: 119). This so fired up the courtship that by the autumn of 1983 the NSC declared an Iraqi defeat would be a “major blow to US interests” (ibid.). Donald Rumsfeld, who was as prominent in Ford’s administration as he would be in that of Bush II, was sent to Baghdad in December 1983 as a sort of *shadchan* (Yiddish, matchmaker) to declare Reagan’s approval of Iraq. Unfortunately, Iraq’s battlefield situation was faltering during this courtship. In response, the NSC concocted a really big present for Saddam, NSDD 139 (1984), a “plan of action to avert an Iraqi collapse” (in Battle 2003). So Iraq and the US, after the courtship, finally got politically married, establishing diplomatic relations in November 1984. Was it to be an enduring matrimony? Time would tell; but for now Saddam was delighted, seeing the US, according to one diplomat, as a “huge candy store full of high-tech goodies,” the better to kill with (in Timmerman 1991: 77).

Military “goodies” began to flow to Baghdad in enormous quantities (Phythian 1997).<sup>37</sup> They included the ingredients necessary for brewing the chemical and biological weapons (Riegle 1994) that were a distinctive mark of Iraqi war making. Some of this assistance involved denying weapons to Iran. Operation Staunch, begun in 1983, involved diplomatic pressure to prevent countries from arming Tehran. Further, two sorts of intelligence were provided: first, that of Iran’s battlefield dispositions, so that Saddam’s generals knew where Iran would attack, and with what numbers of troops and weaponry; second, that of Iraq’s own troop placements, which, when compared with those of Iran, allowed Baghdad to know if its soldiers were poorly placed.

In 1987 Reagan’s then NSA Frank Carlucci told *US News and World Report* he saw no reason ever to withdraw from the Persian Gulf (Tousi 1997: 56). Why should they? They had the new “44”—US CENTCOM—and the new “friend,” a heavily armed Iraq. Critically, the US had solved the problem of its Persian Gulf strategic insolvency. It was time to do some killing.<sup>38</sup>

“In 1987, President Reagan issued CENTCOM with its first forward deployment order” (Morrissey 2008: 109). This was to defend Kuwaiti tank-

ers that had been reflagged as US ships. By law the US Navy was allowed to protect only US ships, so Kuwaiti ships were re-registered as American. Then, when Kuwait's tankers took Iraq's oil to market, Iran would attack these ships to damage Iraq's oil exports. By the end of 1987, CENTCOM had a flotilla of forty-eight vessels in the Persian Gulf (Pelletiere 1992: 129).

The armada was soon in action. The reflagged Kuwaiti supertanker *Bridgeton*, escorted by the US Navy in the first convoy after the reflagging, was hit by an Iranian mine on 24 July 1987. A month later US naval helicopters destroyed the Iranian ship *Iran Ajr*. On 8 October they sank three Iranian patrol boats near Farsi Island. In retaliation Iran struck a reflagged Kuwaiti supertanker in Kuwaiti waters with a missile (16 October). Three days later, US warships destroyed two Iranian offshore oil platforms in retaliation for the retaliation. On 14 April 1988 a hole was blown in the side of a US ship, the *Samuel B. Roberts*, followed four days later by an American counterattack on two Iranian oil rigs in the Gulf, the destruction of an Iranian frigate, immobilization of another frigate, and the sinking of a patrol boat.

By this time Iran was engaged in two fights: a naval war against the US Navy; and a land war against the Iraqi counteroffensive in the Fao Peninsula. Pelletiere (1992: xiv) reports that by 1986 Iraq had established "an excellent general staff (shaped by the traditions of the Prussian military), which by the war's end had developed the army into a first class fighting institution." Additionally, their air force had secured dominance by 1987 and "regularly targeted Iranian oil platforms, electrical grids, railways, and key cities. For example, they struck at Iran's holy city of Qom" (ibid.: 132). By 1987 events were bleak for Tehran.

They would become grimmer. On 3 July 1988 the US cruiser *Vincennes* was covertly in Iranian waters. Some crewmembers nicknamed the ship "Robocruiser" in reference to *Robocop* (1987), a recent film about a policeman transformed into a cyborg killing machine. The *Vincennes* was fitted out with an Aegis defense system that robotically tracked and attacked presumed enemy targets, and its Captain, Will Rogers III, was celebrated for his pugnacity (D. Evans 1993; Chomsky 1998). The *Vincennes* sailors' designation of their ship as Robocruiser was thus a fitting allusion to its cybernetic belligerence. On that July morning, Air Iran Flight 655 had just taken off and was climbing to cruising altitude above the *Vincennes*. Rogers mistakenly believed his Aegis system had detected the aircraft descending in attack mode. Robocruiser performed its robotic duty and blasted Flight 655 out of the sky. Bodies and other collateral damaged rained down in the sea around the *Vincennes*.



Now they understood in Tehran. Now they knew what it meant to fight the Great Satan, with its Robocruisers and Saddamite satrapy. Now the Iranians ended the war. In a radio address at the time, a broadcaster read an announcement by Khomeini, voicing his sorrow concerning the cease-fire. The old Ayatollah, soon to die, who had led his people through an Islamist revolution avenging Kermit Roosevelt’s coup, mourned: “Happy are those who have departed through martyrdom. Happy are those who have lost their lives in this convoy of light. Unhappy am I that I still survive and have drunk the poisoned chalice” (in Bullock and Morris 1989: 1). In 1990, the US awarded Rogers the Legion of Merit for outstanding service in the killing of 290 innocents.

As Dylan had said, the times were indeed “a-changin’”: economic contradictions developed as Cold War political ones receded. The land/capital and oil company/petro-state contradictions emerged. To US Security Elites 2.0, this was, as Kissinger (1999: 666) expressed it, an “energy crisis.” They understood that to fix this vulnerability, they had to control oil, which meant they had to dominate the Middle East. However, they perceived that the US was militarily “naked” in Southwest Asia, posing a hermeneutic puzzle: How was the strategic insolvency of the Persian Gulf to be resolved?

The Carter Doctrine and the Reagan Corollary instituted the oil-control iteration of the global domination public *délire*, procedurally based upon the twin towers redux plus policy. The “redux” part of the policy was the return to twin towers, achieved by replacing Iran with Iraq. The “plus” part of the policy was the instituting of a US command, CENTCOM, to project violence force into the region. Nonviolent fixes to the Iran-Iraq War were not possible once Saddam had invaded Iran. Shultzian Permission was granted because the choice for the US was either to fight or to acquiesce to one of the opposing sides having enormous control over Persian Gulf oil. Washington began implementing the oil-control public *délire* with, first, indirect global warring by providing support to Saddam, and then direct, overt global warring in the form of naval operations.

Hence, by 1989 the Middle East was a violent place patrolled by CENTCOM and the Iraqi military. In supporting Saddam’s regime, as Timmerman (1991: x) recognized, “Saddam Hussein was our creation, our monster.” Make no mistake about it: if there was hostility between the US and Islamic countries, it was not because of any conflict between Western religion and Islam, as Huntington proposed, but because Security Elites 2.0, like Huntington himself, had projected enormous violent force into the region to dominate its oil and thereby help reproduce the US Leviathan. It is time now to turn to another region in CENTCOM’s command, Libya, and to Reagan’s desire to do some carpentry on an opponent’s genitals.

## Libya I

You know what I'd do if Qaddafi were sitting here right now? I'd nail his balls to this bench and then push him over backwards. (President Ronald Reagan speaking with the catcher on the Baltimore Orioles baseball team, in Gates [1996] 2007: 354)

US security elites have attacked Libya twice, first in the 1980s and second in the early years of the twenty-first century. What follows is an investigation of that first aggression, called Libya I. On 7 April 1986, following a meeting between the president and his senior security officials concerning what to do about Gaddafi, Reagan traveled to Baltimore to throw out the first pitch at the opening game of the baseball season. Prior to performing this ritual, he waited in the dugout, talking to the Orioles' tough-as-nails catcher, Rich Dempsey. The president's mind must have still been on the earlier meeting, because conversation turned to Libya; hence the president's claim of a desire to "nail" the Libyan ruler's "balls" to the "bench."

Chadians—Libya's southern, impoverished neighbors—used to refer to Libya as *sakitbus* (Chadian Arabic, "nothing"). After all, at independence in 1951, Libya was "one of the poorest countries in the world" (El-Kikhia 1997: 28), "a barely self-sustaining agricultural and tribal society" sprawled across the Sahara (Vandewalle 1998: 42). Average income was estimated at £15 a year (First 1974: 144). Though the seventeenth largest country in the world territorially, Libya had only an estimated 1.8 million people in 1968 (*ibid.*: 31). Its food-production was dominated by nomadic pastoralism and an irrigated agriculture that threatened scarce water supplies. It lacked raw materials and skilled labor, so its "major revenue sources were sales of scrap metal left behind by the belligerents during the war, sales of esparto grass, and rent from military bases leased by the United States and Great Britain" (Vandewalle 1998: 42). What could possibly be enraging about a sandbox in which essentially nobody was there; and where those few who did exist went about hawking junk metal and grass? Why did the president of the most powerful social being ever want to sexually torture the head of an insignificant and weak country?

Oil features prominently in the answer to this question. Commercially exploitable petroleum deposits were discovered in Libya in 1959 and put into production in 1961. Immediately thereafter Libya became "one of the largest oil producers in the Middle East" (Vandewalle 1998: 42). Salvaged metal and grass ceased to be leading economic sectors. Moreover, after Gaddafi's regime began in 1969, Libya developed into one of the most aggressive nationalizers of its petroleum resources (First 1974: 199–200, 210–120; J. Wright 1989: 235–251; Vandewalle 2006: 59–60). Oil was nationalized in 1973 by a decree that gave the Libyan government 51 percent

of the “assets and business of the major oil producers” (Sicker 1987: 24). Nationalization placed Libya at the center of intensification of the oil company/petro-state version of the dominator/dominated contradiction.

Overnight, Libyan “government revenues rose spectacularly” (First 1974: 144). Gaddafi spent his new riches on “spectacular economic and political experiments” (Vandewalle 2006: 7), and it was the latter—in the judgment of Robert Gates, observing the Reagan administration from his CIA position—that drove the Reaganites to be “obsessed” with Gaddafi and to want to get him “in the worst way” ([1996] 2007: 352).<sup>39</sup> Obsession, it will become clear, led to invention of another monster-alterity—the second since the old boys’ creation of the Soviet monster-alterity—and you have to destroy monsters. Drive a stake through their heart if the monster is a vampire. Hammer a nail through his balls if he is a monster-alterity.

The position essayed below maintains that not only was Libya at the center of the oil-company/petro-state contradiction, but by Gaddafi’s time, the New American Empire had replaced the old empires as the target of the dominated in the dominator-dominated contradiction as dominated peoples resisted the US Leviathan, some violently. Gaddafi’s “experiments” were part of this resistance, to which Reagan’s Security Elites 2.0 responded with a new hermeneutic. The argument proceeds first by documenting the nature of Libya-US warring. It then describes resistance to US imperial domination that developed both outside and inside Libya, and finally shows how this resistance provoked a new hermeneutic that created the new monster-alterity of the “terrorist”—as well as a new, anti-terrorist iteration of the global domination public *délire*—for the New American Empire to hunt down in Libyan sands.

### *Libya I: Getting Gaddafi in the Worst Way*

From the perspective of most in the world, especially ordinary Americans, Libya I was a war that never was. No such a conflict appears on Wikipedia. Some, perhaps, remember that back in the 1980s there were “off shore skirmishes” over the Gulf of Sirte between US and Libya (Jentleson and Whytock 2005: 58), but a few skirmishes do not a war make.<sup>40</sup> Few books or articles treat a First US-Libyan War.<sup>41</sup> However, there is a widespread American English slang expression for wanting something very, very much: you want it “in the worst way.” Below it is shown how Reagan and his security elites, “obsessed” with Gaddafi, wanted in the worst way to destroy him and provoked over eight years (between 1981 and 1989) of covert and overt, direct and indirect global warring. The war had two theaters. One was in Libya itself, especially along its Mediterranean coast. The other was in the Republic of Chad, Libya’s southern neighbor. Events in the former

theater were overt and covert as well as largely direct; those in the later theater were chiefly covert and indirect. Let us consider first the warring within Libya itself.

*Overt Warring—The USS Monster Steams into Naval Action:* Reagan imagined Gaddafi was “insane” (Reagan [2007] 2009: 233), a “mad dog,” a “terrorist” (in Shultz 1993: 686). Further, he appears to have believed the Libyan leader was gay, at one point remarking about his flamboyant clothing that “Gaddafi can look in Nancy’s closet anytime” (in B. Woodward 1987: 441). Nancy was Reagan’s wife, and gay men were supposed to cross dress in women’s clothes.<sup>42</sup> Alexander Haig judged Gaddafi a “cancer” (McGehee 1996). John Whitehead, Deputy Secretary of State, compared him with “Hitler” (in Thompson, Kaldor, and Anderson 1986: 8). Gaddafi, then, was a Hitlerian, cancerous, crazed, terrorist queer—definitely a bad guy. Therefore imperial America steamed into naval action. Actually, there were four major engagements; details of which follow.

On 11 October 1973 the Gaddafi government decreed an extension of its territorial waters to include the entire Gulf of Sirte, a great Mediterranean bay extending into Libya, roughly between Tripoli and Benghazi.<sup>43</sup> Tripoli, using a hyperbolic rhetoric, warned that transgressing this new border was crossing a “line of death.” Five months later the US State Department pronounced Libya’s decree “a violation of international law” (Stanik 2003: 28). Thereafter throughout the 1970s the US Navy regularly challenged Libya’s claim by sending carrier battle groups across the “line of death” in what were termed “freedom of navigation” (FON) exercises.<sup>44</sup> FON challenges throughout the 1970s ended without any engagements.

Immediately on assuming the presidency, Reagan authorized two aircraft carrier battle groups to cross the “line of death,” which they did on 18 August 1981, drawing mock attacks from Libyan aircraft. The next day two US F-14 Tomcats flew a combat air patrol in support of other US aircraft engaged in a missile exercise. They were approached by two Libyan Sukhoi S-22 aircraft, Russian-built bombers that were no match for the F-14s. One of the Sukhois fired a missile at the Americans, who returned fire, destroying both the Libyan planes. This was the first encounter. The score from the US perspective: two planes for the guy with the “old 44.”

A second encounter in the Gulf of Sirte occurred in March 1986. This was Operation Prairie Fire. It was another FON exercise, but this time a monumental US armada was assembled: three carrier battle groups, forty-five ships, two hundred planes, and advanced nuclear powered submarines. The “line of death” was crossed. On 24 March, with this vast force bearing down upon them, Libya launched a number of Russian surface-to-air (SAM) missiles against the F-14s flying in support of the battle group.

The SAMs missed, and the armada returned fire. The score was an estimated 72 killed, 1 corvette sunk, 1 patrol boat sunk, 1 corvette damaged, 1 patrol boat damaged, and a number of SAM sites damaged or destroyed for the guy with the "old 44"; nothing for Libya.

A third engagement, the gravest, occurred three weeks after Operation Prairie Fire. In a television broadcast on 15 April 1986, Reagan declared: "My fellow Americans, at 7 o'clock this evening, Eastern time, air and naval forces of the United States launched a series of strikes against the headquarters, terrorist facilities, and military assets that support Muammar Qaddafi's subversive activities" (in Bearman 1986: 287). The attack, called Operation Ghost Rider, involved thirty F-111 bombers. The targets were two airfields (one in Tripoli at the former US Wheelus Air Force Base; the other in Benghazi), air defense networks in Tripoli and Benghazi, the Bab al-Azizia barracks in Tripoli, and the Jamahiriya barracks in Benghazi.

White House spokespersons stressed "that the targets ... were only terrorist installations" (*ibid.*). This was untrue. The Murat Sidi Bilal camp housed a Palestinian Liberation Organization school, but the other targets were Libyan military installations, with the exception of the Bab al-Azizia barracks, which contained Gaddafi's family dwellings, among other things. A total of nine F-111 fighter-bombers were supposed to bomb the Bab al-Azizia barracks—more than attacked any other target in the raid, which supports Seymour Hersh's contention that their target was "Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi and his family" (1987). Libyan figures placed their dead around one hundred, with double that number wounded: "Among the known casualties were members of Gaddafi's own family; his wife Safia and three children suffered pressure shock from the blast of a 2,000 lb bomb which hit their accommodation" (Bearman 1986: 287).<sup>45</sup> Gaddafi himself was unhurt. One US official claimed it was "pure serendipity" that he was present at the barracks (Teicher and Teicher 1993: 350), but this claim rings hollow, especially in the light of evidence that US officials had been closely tracking Gaddafi's movements prior to the attack (S. Hersh 1987). Note that in 1981 Reagan had signed Executive Order 12333, which stated, "No person employed by or acting on behalf of the United States government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, assassination" (in B. Woodward 1987: 366). On the night of 15 April 1986, the New American Empire was in the business of assassination.

A fourth round of hostilities occurred three years later in 1989. US-Libyan relations had grown especially twitchy following Operation Ghost Rider. They became still twitchier when Pam Am flight 103 exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland (21 December 1988), with intimations of Libyan involvement. Finally, in the waning days of 1988 and the beginning of 1989, twitchier became twitchiest when Reagan security officials began warning

of the construction of a large chemical weapons facility at Rabta, forty miles south of Tripoli. There was discussion about destroying the facilities (Silverberg 1990). In a threatening move, the aircraft carrier *USS Kennedy* was sent with its battle group to the Gulf of Sirte. On 3 January 1989 four Russian Mig 23 Floggers began threatening two F-14s on patrol. The US planes took evasive action. The threats continued. The F-14s shot down two of the Floggers. The Libyans had not fired on the Americans. This was the third encounter in the Gulf of Sirte and the fourth between the US and Libya during the Reagan administration. The score that day: two planes for the guy with the “old 44.”

Thus imperial America sailed into four naval encounters. Each was announced to the public and so was overt, the better to impress Reagan’s will to “nail” his opponent. Gaddafi emerged unscathed from each attack. However, overt operations were only part of the Reagan administration’s global warring against Libya. Clandestine conflict is reported next.

*Making Contras in the Desert:* Reagan signed an intelligence finding (18 June 1981) early in his presidency directing Casey’s CIA to provide support and training to anti-Gaddafi exiles. Four months later the CIA, with Saudi Arabia’s assistance, sponsored Muhammad Mugharief, a former Libyan diplomat, to found the National Front for Salvation of Libya (NFSL). At this time the CIA, implementing the Reagan Doctrine, was setting up “contras” in Nicaragua to fight the Sandinista revolutionary government that had overthrown the Somoza dictatorship.<sup>46</sup> Vincent Cannistraro had headed the CIA Central American task force that supervised covert operations, including those of the Contras. He applied the Nicaraguan Contra model to Libya.

Little is known about the personnel and activities of the NFSL. Mostly anti-Gaddafi exiles and especially ex-soldiers, they are reported to have had US and Israeli training. In the 1980s Libya invaded Chad with unpleasant consequences, one being the capture of a large number of its soldiers by the Chadians, a matter discussed in the following section. Some of the captured Libyans appear to have been placed in CIA custody. One of these was a Colonel Khalifa Hifter, who prior to capture had been a commander of the Libyan expeditionary force. The CIA recruited Hifter and in the mid 1980s provided him with the training and weaponry to create a contraforce, called the National Liberation Army (NLA), with approximately 700 troops. The NLA appears to have been integrated into the NFSL as its military arm. The only known NFSL operation was apparently directed by Cannistraro and Donald Fortier, an NSC officer. It was a May 1984 attack on the Gaddafis’ Tripoli residence. The attackers were sharply repulsed.<sup>47</sup> There were to be further Reagan administration interventions in Chad.

“*Bleeding Gaddafi*”—*Covert Warring in Chad*: On Casey’s third day in office he received a Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) entitled “Libya: Aims and Vulnerabilities.” In part this was in response to Libya’s armed intervention in Chad. In total there would be four Libyan occupations of different parts of Chad in 1978, 1979, 1980–1981, and 1983–1987. The SNIE contained a “Key Judgment” that “Gaddafi’s recent success in Chad ensures that his aggressive policies will pose a growing challenge to U.S. and Western interests” (in B. Woodward 1987: 94). Of course, such a key judgment provoked a hermeneutic puzzle: what to do about the “growing challenge”? The last line of the final paragraph of the SNIE noted that conservative Arab states like Sadat’s Egypt opposed Libya by “focusing their resources on quietly bleeding Gaddafi at his most vulnerable point—his overextension in Chad and the dangers this poses for him at home” (in *ibid.*: 96). “Quietly bleeding” Gaddafi in Chad seemed to Casey a splendid procedural solution to the hermeneutic puzzle. But why was Gaddafi in Chad, and just what operations would lead to his “bleeding”? This warrants a brief foray into Chadian post-Independence history.

François Tombalbaye was the first president of independent Chad (1960–1975). He led a southern, non-Muslim government that many Muslims, who resided in the northern two-thirds of the country, found objectionable. Starting in 1963, northern opposition to Tombalbaye turned violent. A Front de Libération Nationale du Tchad (FROLINAT) was organized in 1966 by individuals, one of whom had ties to the Muslim Brotherhood, to wrest control of the state.<sup>48</sup> The French military intervened in support of Tombalbaye’s regime in the 1970s when it became clear that the Forces Armées Tchadiennes (FAT) could not defeat FROLINAT, which itself devolved into two major military factions that were increasingly hostile to each other: the Forces Armées du Nord (FAN) under Hissen Habré, and the Forces Armées Populaires (FAP) under Oueddei Goukouni. Chadian losses multiplied. FAT officers, fearful of the southern regime’s future, staged a coup against Tombalbaye in 1975. Félix Malloum, a FAT general, became the new president. Nevertheless, FAT losses to FROLINAT continued.

Malloum bowed to the inevitable and in 1978 signed a Charte Fondamentale granting FROLINAT equal power in the central government, raising the question of the relative influences of the rivals Goukouni and Habré in that government. Habré became prime minister and immediately sought to dominate the government, provoking years of harsh conflict (1979–1982). By 1979, southern influence in the central government had ended and Habré was in control, though Goukouni challenged him.

Libya had assisted FROLINAT since before Gaddafi. After the 1969 revolution, this support increased: first there was provision of nonlethal assistance; next, supply of lethal assistance; and, finally, starting in 1978,

direct commitment of the Libyan armed forces. There were two reasons for increasing Libyan backing of FROLINAT. The first was that Gaddafi generally supported Islamic revolutionary movements. The second had to do with regulation of a colonial Chad-Libya border dispute. In 1935, France, Chad's imperial dominator, acceded to a treaty that awarded to Italy, Libya's dominator, the Aouzou Strip, a band of land in Chad's extreme north. World War II intervened, and France and Italy never signed the treaty. Gaddafi hoped to press his claim on the Aouzou Strip via his Chadian meddling.

The problem for Libya was which of the two FROLINAT armies—FAN or FAP—it was to support. For a number of reasons Gaddafi chose Goukouni. Habré was a Daza, from the southern part of the Chadian desert. He had studied political science in Paris in the 1950s, absorbing some Maoist Marxism, to which Gaddafi was indisposed. Goukouni, on the other hand, was the son of the *derdei* (chief) of the Toubou, the northernmost ethnic group straddling the Chad-Libya border. Toubou in Libya were supportive of Gaddafi, so he felt more comfortable allying with their Chadian kin. In January 1978 Libyan soldiers invaded Chad for the first time, in alliance with Goukouni and in opposition to Habré.<sup>49</sup> Now we return to Washington, and Casey's contemplation of his SNIE.

Upon reading the SNIE, Casey knew that Habré opposed Goukouni and Goukouni was supported by Gaddafi, which meant the way to “bloody” Gaddafi was to support Habré. Casey appears to have discussed this policy with then Secretary of State Haig, who assented to it. A number of meetings followed, and a “second track,” as opposed to a first policy track, was developed. First-track policy was that of normal diplomacy, “second-track” was that of covert operations. The second track was presented to Reagan and led to him signing the 18 July 1981 intelligence order “releasing ... covert support to Habré” (B. Woodward 1987: 97).

Over the following seven years, this support grew to hundreds of millions of dollars as the US, assisted by France, fought Libya by providing all sorts of assistance to Habré, short of US soldiers.<sup>50</sup> The strings of combat went as follows: Libya would invade, reaching Chad's capital, N'Djamena, at some point; then retreat following Chadian and French counterattacks, usually as far as the northern desert area called the Tibesti. By the beginning of 1987 the Libyans still had a force of 8,000 soldiers in northern Chad, backed by 300 tanks. They faced a Chadian army of 10,000 using Toyotas equipped with MILAN anti-tank missiles, with much of the materiel and training coming from covert US sources. There followed what has been called the “Toyota War,” in which the lumbering tanks proved no match for the nimble Toyota. Libyans were routed, and the following year they withdrew permanently from Chad. It was a triumph of covert US warring. Thousands of Libyans died; thousands were captured.<sup>51</sup>



In sum, throughout Reagan’s administration the Security Elites 2.0 globally warred overtly and covertly against Libya, chalking up victories at sea, in the air, and on the ground in the desert. Nevertheless, their intended purpose, nailing Gaddafi, went unachieved. Why did the Reagan administration fight Libya I “in the worst possible way”?

*The Making of a New Monster-Alterity:  
Anti-imperialism, Oil, and “Terrorist Goons”*

We are sending a secret or private warning from me to him that harm to any of our people by his terrorist goons will be considered an act of war. (Reagan [2007] 2009 : 54).

The above quotation is from Reagan’s diary in January 1981. The “him” in the above quotation is Gaddafi. By the end of the 1970s, astute people outside America had penetrated the Leviathan’s camouflage. Old empires were dead. The New American Empire, the “shining city on the hill,” was a dominator in the business of exploitation, repression, and domination. Recognition of this provoked resistance, some of it violent. The Security Elites 2.0 interpreted the violent resistance as the work of “terrorist goons,” as Reagan put it in his diary in January of 1981. They attempted to eradicate the “goons” and in so doing revealed an explanation for Reagan’s obsessive warring against Gaddafi.

*Resistance to the New American Empire:* Since their earliest days, empires have always met with resistance. It was, as earlier discussed in chapter 3, a normal manifestation of the dominator/dominated contradiction. Skirmishes against British Redcoats at Concord and Lexington in 1776 ignited the American Revolution; bombs thrown at the czars or their officials in Imperial Russia eventually led to revolution in 1917; assassination of Austria’s Archduke Franz Ferdinand sparked the beginning of World War I. Most such violent resistance took, and takes, the form of “terrorism,” a term whose meaning is contested.

“Terrorism” might be heuristically defined as a form of warring whose perpetrators want to achieve their ends by exercising violence specifically to strike horror and dread into their opponent. Terrorism’s victims do what their adversary wants because they are terrified of the alternative. Horror and dread may be attained by striking politically powerful elites or innocent bystanders. Assassination, mutilation, bombing, torturing, hijacking, burning, and hostage-taking are common terrorist practices. Two types of terrorism occur. “Nonstate” terrorism is performed by individuals or groups against states. “State” terrorism is executed by governments against their opponents or their opponents’ supporters. A distinction is commonly made

between “domestic” and “international” terrorism, with the former terrorist practice *within* and the later terrorist practice *across* countries.<sup>52</sup>

Immediately following World War II, as explained in the previous chapter, the old empires encountered overwhelming internal, terrorist resistance. At the same time, people in the developing world, especially those parts of it most touched by the US, began to speak of a novel dominating force in the world—*Yanqui imperialism*, as they put it in Latin America. The event that most galvanized this recognition was the US Leviathan’s assault on Vietnam. American support for its client states and their elites (especially in Central America, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Iran) further motivated resistance in these areas.

US security elites often term terrorism a tactic of asymmetrical warfare (Buffaloe 2006). Their narrative, especially among neocons, is that terrorism in asymmetrical warfare is produced by religion, and specifically by fundamentalist Islam, which gives the narrative a Huntingtonian twist. Robert Pape and James Feldman (2010) conducted an analysis of a particularly grim sort of terrorism, that involving suicide bombing. They collected a sample of 2,100 cases of suicide terrorism in the Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia between the years 1980 and 2009. They found that most cases were fueled by US military intervention.<sup>53</sup> Labeling terrorism an aspect of asymmetrical warfare obscures the fact that it is a tactic of resistance to military intervention. The term “resistance terrorism” is a more accurate designation of the violent tactics employed against the New American Empire and its clients.

Often, resistance terrorism targeted the US elites handling the empire: on 1 May 1961 a Puerto Rican hijacked a US commercial airliner to Havana; on 28 August 1968 the US ambassador to Guatemala was assassinated by a rebel faction; on 3 September 1969 the US ambassador to Brazil was kidnapped by a Marxist revolutionary group; on 31 July 1970 a USAID advisor in Uruguay was kidnapped and killed by the Tupamaros. On 5 September 1972 there came a spectacular terrorist act: Black September, a Palestinian organization tied to Arafat’s Palestinian Liberation organization, kidnapped and eventually killed eleven Israeli athletes and their trainers at the Munich Olympics.<sup>54</sup> Though directed at a US client, this action was bloody enough to grab the US government’s attention, putting terms like “international terrorism” and “counterterrorism” into Washington security elites’ cultural vocabulary for the first time (Naftali 2005). The Office for Combating Terrorism was initiated in the State Department.

After the Olympics attack, the pace of resistance terrorist acts quickened: on 2 March 1973 the US ambassador to Sudan was assassinated by Black September; on 4 May 1973 the US consul general was kidnapped in Mexico by the People’s Revolutionary Armed Forces; on 17 December

1973 five terrorists from an unknown organization attacked Pan Am Flight 110 in Rome, killing thirty-one; on 19 August 1974 the US ambassador to Cyprus was shot and killed by a sniper outside his embassy; on 27 January 1975 Puerto Rican nationalists bombed a Wall Street bar, killing four and injuring sixty. A 1976 CIA report noted an "enduring upsurge" in terrorism since 1967 (Milbank 1976: 1). The CIA certainly seemed correct, as on 4 February 1979 the US ambassador to Afghanistan was assassinated in Kabul.

Finally, on 4 November 1979 there came a dramatic blow: Iranian students took the entire US embassy in Tehran hostage. Everyone watched it live on television. It was the first reality TV, and it starred President Carter's impotence at freeing the hostages. One colleague remarked to me at the time, "He can't get it up to get 'em out." But Carter did try to "get it up." Operation Eagle Claw was sent with Delta Force Special Ops to rescue the hostages on 24 April 1980. Unfortunately, the eagle crash-landed—literally—because the operation's commanders forgot to account for the *haboob* (Persian for "dust storm"). The storm occurred, the mission's helicopters malfunctioned, and the mission was aborted, leaving Carter looking even more impotent, his political career terminated. At this moment, Secretary of State Vance chose to resign.

So by 1980, as Brian Jenkins (1980: 1) put it in a Rand Corporation report, "terrorism" had "become part of our daily news diet. Hardly a day passes without news of an assassination, political kidnapping, hijacking, or bombing somewhere." Security elites, especially those destined to occupy positions in the Reagan administration, got it: terrorism was part of the "daily ... diet," and it could be politically devastating. Carter was savaged by reality TV that portrayed him as hopeless and hapless against terrorists. The rabbit didn't get him—the media did, which had implications for warring in Libya.

### *The Making of a New Monster-Alterity:*

Reagan thought the hostage crisis ... had condemned the Carter administration ... [so when he] came into office ... hostages and terrorism were on everyone's mind. (Nicolas Veliotos, assistant secretary of State, 1981–1984, in Toaldo 2008: 58)

Nicolas Veliotos, Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Johnny Otis's younger brother, was assistant secretary of State for Near Eastern affairs at the outset of Reagan's administration. Veliotos reported that Reagan attributed Carter's loss to the terrorism of the "hostage crisis." This meant that a new, job-threatening hermeneutic puzzle faced the incoming administration: How to deal with international terrorism? During the transition—the

period between the election and the inauguration of a new president—the CIA, along with other agencies, was asked to prepare position papers suggesting courses of action for the incoming president. Elaine Morton, a State Department official, recollected a conclusion of these documents: “The issue of international terrorism was used to demonstrate that the US could be forceful again. In a sense, terrorism was the weapon of the weak. Weak countries were starting to use it successfully against us so we had to fight against the instability brought by international terrorism in order to maintain our hegemony” (in Toaldo 2008: 58–59). A central point of this quotation is that even before Reagan took office there was understanding that the US “had to fight ... terrorism ... to maintain our hegemony.” Note the verb is strong. The US “had to” fight—not should fight or might fight, but *had* to fight. If the term “hegemony” is replaced with “empire,” and if “terrorism” is understood as US security elites’ interpretation of the resistance produced by the dominator/dominated contradiction, then what Morton was saying was that resistance terrorism so threatened the empire’s reproductive vulnerability that it “had” to “fight” it.

Reagan accepted this view. In a welcoming speech (27 January 1981) for the hostages freed from their Iranian captivity, he warned, “Let terrorists be aware that when the rules of international behavior are violated, our policy will be one of swift and effective retribution” (Reagan 1981). The next day, Alexander Haig reiterated Reagan’s point in a way that emphasized the new administration’s difference from Carter’s, when he said, “terrorism will take the place of human rights in our concern, because it is the ultimate abuse of human rights” (in Stanik 2003: 34). Carter had made defense of human rights a centerpiece of his foreign policy. Reagan assigned terrorism to take this place in his foreign policy.

A hermeneutic politics emerged in the first year of the Reagan administration concerning procedural difficulties in the fight against terrorism. A first issue was the trouble of detecting terrorists who operated in secrecy. How could you deliver “swift ... retribution” without knowing who did the act? A second set of questions turned on terrorism’s relationship to the Soviets. There were some, notably the CIA’s Casey, who believed the USSR managed a vast terrorist network. Others, largely in the State Department, were less convinced of Soviet terrorist activities.<sup>55</sup> These debates were resolved in two National Security Decision Directives (NSDDs) and the founding of several institutions to wage the fight against terrorism.

Reagan signed the first of the directives, NSDD 30 on “Managing Terrorist Incidents,” on 10 April 1982. It announced that “the United States is committed, as a matter of national policy, to oppose terrorism domestically and internationally” (NSDD 30 1982: 1). NSDD 30 further specified who, in what institutions, would combat terrorism. Authority to combat

terrorism was delegated to “lead agencies.” These were the State Department for international terrorism and the FBI for domestic terrorism. For any terrorist incident, a Special Situation Group was to convene to advise the president. A Terrorist Incident Working Group drawing its membership from a number of government agencies was formed to “support” the Special Situation Group (ibid.: 2). An Interdepartmental Group on Terrorism, chaired by the State Department, was to “be responsible for the development of overall US policy on terrorism” (ibid.: 2). NSDD 30 made combating terrorism “national policy” and identified the agencies to lead the combat.

Reagan next signed NSDD 138 (3 April 1984) after an especially grim upsurge of Middle Eastern terrorism. On 3 October 1983, the Islamic Jihad Organization bombed the US Marine barracks in Beirut, killing 241 soldiers and wounding 60 others. For the Marines, it was the largest number of casualties since the Battle of Iwo Jima in World War II. A little over three months later the same group struck again, assassinating the president of the American University in Beirut (18 January 1984). Two months after that Hezbollah kidnapped, tortured, and killed the CIA Beirut station chief. A difficulty posed by these attacks is that it was not entirely clear who did them. For example, no one really knew who the Islamic Jihad Organization were—perhaps Hezbollah, perhaps not. NSDD 138 attempted to address this, among other, problems.

It was largely the work of Robert C. McFarlane, then Reagan’s NSA. NSDD 138 remains secret; all that is publicly available of it is an extract prepared by NSC staff. The extract begins by announcing that terrorism “is a threat to our national security” (NSDD 138 Extract 1984: 1). The extract proclaimed, “States that actively practice terrorism or actively support it, will not be allowed to do so without consequence” (ibid.: 1). This was an attempt to solve the problem of the elusiveness of terrorists. If particular terrorist perpetrators were difficult to identify, the states that supported them were less so, and any state that sponsored terrorism would suffer the “consequence.”

Still, secret portions of the “directive endorsed, in principle, the use of ‘proactive’ operations—that is preemptive raids and retaliatory strikes—to fight terrorist organizations and states that support them” (Stanik 2002: 93). News of this aspect of NSDD 138 reached the press. The *Los Angeles Times* stated that “Reagan had signed a new policy directive that authorized the use of preemptive strikes ... against terrorists operating overseas” (ibid.: 93). This meant that violent force was to be the “consequence” meted out to terrorists *before* they did anything. Remember that the “old boys” had explicitly rejected the idea of preemptive warfare at the founding of the New American Empire. NSDD 138 approved it. The directive

also authorized formation of CIA and FBI covert action teams to administer the violence. NSDD 30 made it US policy to oppose terrorism. NSDD 138 made it clear that this was because terrorism threatened US “security,” that states sponsoring terrorism would be targets of US violent force, and that this force might be preemptive.

Together, the two NSDDs specified a new iteration of the global domination public *délire*, that of “anti-terrorism,” with the hermeneutic that if responsible officials perceptually found terrorists, they were procedurally authorized to use violent force against them. Further, this public *délire* may said to have spawned a new monster-alterity—not a political regime, like the old Soviet monster-alterity, but a particular choreographing of violence: that of terrorists. Fervent Security Elites 2.0, like Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North of “Irangate” notoriety, urged racing out and killing “cocksucker” terrorists (B. Woodward 1987: 361). What does all this have to do with Libya? It is time to explain why Reagan and his Security Elites 2.0 went after “cocksucker” Libyans.

“*Special Attention*”—*The Should, Could, and Did of Global War on Libya*: The Reagan administration attacked Libya because it should and it could, and so it did. First consider the “should” of Libya I. The new anti-terrorist public *délire* was a general proposition. US government policy prescribed that it should go after terrorists anywhere. Some reason or reasons were needed to apply it to Libya. Actually, Libya had been in the crosshairs well before Reagan took office. On 2 December 1979 a mob demonstrating support for the taking of Americans hostage in Tehran attacked and burned the US embassy in Libya’s capital, Tripoli. Carter’s government responded by formally designating Libya a state sponsor of terrorism (Vandewalle 1998). Why?

The reason has to do with the way Gaddafi positioned Libya vis-à-vis the dominator/dominated contradiction. Under Idris I, who ruled Libya as a king, there was “support for pro-Western regimes” (El-Kikhia 1997: 66), so much so that Libya became known as “a base for Imperialism” (J. Wright 1989: 84). Further, Idris’s government showered “unabashed distribution of wealth to its friends,” that is, to its wealthy supporters (El-Kikhia 1997: 72). Gaddafi had been born in open desert south of the city of Sirte, the son of a semi-nomad. He was sent at ten to school in Sirte, where he was treated as a poor *bedu* (pastoralist). Four years later he was sent to the Sebha Preparatory School, where he began “to feed his new-found interest in current affairs by listening to the radio, turning mostly to the Nasserist, anti-Western ‘Voice of the Arabs’ ... and by absorbing forbidden books and pamphlets.” (J. Wright 1989: 125).<sup>56</sup> As a result, there formed an anti-imperialist who became a military officer and then, with certain fellow of-

ficers, led a coup that swept the reactionary Idris I from his throne. The new regime made it crystal clear where it stood. Gaddafi announced, "We support all the world liberation movements" (in Sicker 1984: 124).

He was specific about opposing the US, announcing over Tripoli radio, "America is determined to subjugate the Arab homeland to its interests and its will. We on our part, are determined to resist America" (ibid.: 127). And Gaddafi did resist, by closing the US's Libyan military base, nationalizing oil, supporting and financing the Palestinian cause, promoting anti-imperialist attitudes, and intervening regionally to challenge Western-oriented leaders, all undertakings facilitated by his oil wealth. Additionally, the regime stopped Idris's practice of rewarding his "friends" and initiated one of aiding the poor, for as Ahmida (2005: 82) has reported, "The Libyan revolution brought about many positive changes for ordinary Libyans (especially women) including free medical care, a modern infrastructure, and free education." Libya was not only fighting imperialism, it was aiding its "ordinary" folk, and it was doing so using wealth derived from its Western oil sales. Imperialist dollars were paying for Libyan resistance to imperialism.

Briefing of the incoming Reagan administration during the transition included reports of Libyan resistance. For example, one of the papers passed to Reaganites was "Patterns of International Terrorism: 1980," an annual survey of terrorist events conducted by the CIA's National Foreign Assessment Center (NFAC 1981). It began by announcing that there were "more casualties" from terrorism "in 1980 than in any year since the analysis of statistics related to terrorism began in 1968" (NFAC 1981: ii). Americans were identified as terrorism's "primary targets" (ibid.). Importantly, NFAC judged, "The government of Colonel Qadhafi is the most prominent state sponsor of and participant in international terrorism" (ibid.: 9). Remember that three days into office, Casey received the "Libya: Arms and Vulnerabilities" SNIE, which announced that Libya, with its aggressive support for terrorists, posed "a growing challenge to U.S. and Western interests" (in Burr and Collins 1999: 139). Libya was the "most prominent" sponsor of resistance terrorism.

Reagan's Security Elites 2.0 perceived that Gaddafi had closed the US airbase in Libya. He had nationalized Libyan oil. He supported liberation movements throughout the world. He tried to topple "moderate" leaders (i.e., US clients). Worst, he took dollars earned from selling oil to the US Leviathan and its clients and used them to attack the US Leviathan and its clients. Shultzian Permission should be given, because nothing peaceful stopped the string of anti-imperial resistance. Hence, Reagan and his henchmen interpreted Gaddafi and his henchmen as "terrorist goons." Accordingly, Gaddafi, because of his "support for international terrorism," was

“selected for special attention” at the very first (21 January 1981) meeting of Reagan’s NSC (in Stanik 2002: 32). This was the “should” of the matter. Next considered is the “could.”

On the same day that Reagan signed NSDD 138, Secretary of State Shultz gave a speech in which he identified Iran, Syria, North Korea, and Libya as state sponsors of terrorism (ibid.: 94). In effect, Shultz was saying that America was threatened by a number of terrorist monster-alterities. Libya was certainly a resister of the New American Empire but—and this is crucial—to the US, Libya was an annoying fly. Why waste time swatting the fly? Why were other state-sponsors of terrorism not selected for “special attention”? Not all terrorist monster-alterities are the same.

Raymond Tanter, an NSC member at the time, remembered, “Libya was more doable: it had fewer friends than Syria because it wasn’t really in the Soviet orbit. . . . On the other hand, the resupply of our troops would have been easier in the case of Libya because we could go there from Great Britain through Spain” (in Toaldo 2008: 66). Robert Gates, also at the NSC at the time, supports Tanter by saying that security officials believed that an attack on Iran would just “piss them off” and one against Syria would have an even worse consequence because it would “bring a conflict with the Soviets” (Gates [1996] 2007: 351). Consequently, Libya “became the target for U.S. retaliation against all state-supported terrorism” because “it was in the poorest position to sustain itself against U.S. action” (ibid.: 352). So the Security Elites 2.0 did Libya because it was “doable”—or at least, they thought it was.

Each of the bouts of warring in Libya I was sparked by implementation of the anti-terrorist hermeneutic. Consider the first August 1981 Gulf of Sirte naval engagement. As has just been shown, the transition papers prepared for the incoming Reagan administration identified Libya as a terror-sponsoring state, and on day two of his presidency Reagan had warned, “terrorists beware.” This was a perceptual cultural interpretation. The procedural cultural response was to send the navy into the Gulf of Sirte, with the result being the downing of two Libyan planes. While conducting this overt warring, the Security Elites 2.0 began covert warring against Libya in Chad. Why Chad? This has to do with the earlier discussed SNIE on Libya that Casey had read in his first week in office, which had pointed out that Gaddafi’s regional opponents (Egypt and Sudan) were “quietly bleeding Gaddafi at his most vulnerable point—his over extension in Chad” (Stanik 2002: 40). Casey and, then, Secretary of State Haig thought “bleeding” was great. They believed “that a Libyan defeat in Chad would foment widespread disaffection within the officer corps of the Libyan armed forces,” and that Habré could hand Gaddafi this “defeat” because they found him to be the “quintessential desert warrior” (ibid.). In sum, Casey and Haig,



using the SNIE, arrived at a procedural interpretation of what to do about Gaddafi, which was that the way to eliminate him was through Chad. They made their case to Reagan, who concurred with their interpretation and signed a covert "finding" (February 1981) supporting Habré. Covert operations were under way by the summer of 1981 and would last until 1988.

Operations Prairie Fire and Ghost Rider in 1986 were directly tied to particular terrorist incidents. Earlier in 1985 terrorists hijacked TWA Flight 847 (14 June), and later that year (27 December) they attacked the Rome and Vienna airports, with serious loss of life. The Reagan administration claimed Libya was responsible for them. The next year Reagan's security elite believed they had acquired "smoking gun" evidence of Libya's involvement in the 5 April 1986 attack on the La Belle discotheque in West Berlin, which killed one US soldier and injured sixty others (Gates [1996] 2007: 353).<sup>57</sup> At a (mid July 1985) meeting of the security elite after the TWA hijacking, McFarlane opened by asserting that economic sanctions and diplomacy had failed against Gaddafi. Casey, Shultz, and Weinberger agreed (B. Woodward 1987: 409). This meant that nonviolent procedures had failed. It was time for violence. McFarlane (NSA), Poindexter (deputy NSA), and North (deputy director NSC for politico-military affairs) proposed a full-scale US and Egyptian invasion of Libya. This was voted down at a 22 July NSC meeting (Gates 2007: 353). Reagan recorded in his diary that at a later National Security Planning Group meeting on 6 January 1986 he exhorted, "We must do something in view of the massacres in the airports of Rome and Vienna" (Reagan [2007] 2009: 381), and so they did, proceeding to the aerial raids that were Operations Prairie Fire and Ghost Rider.

The final US overt attack on Libya, the 3 January 1989 raid, followed the pattern of the previous two attacks. First, there was a terrorist incident. In the case of the 3 January attack there were two incidents. The first was Pan Am Flight 103, which exploded over Lockerbie in Scotland on 21 December 1988, killing everyone on board. It was suspected and then concluded, to the satisfaction of the Security Elites 2.0, that Gaddafi was behind the bombing of Flight 103.<sup>58</sup> Then, to make matters worse, in December of 1988 US intelligence discovered that the Libyans were building a chemical weapons plant at Rabta. Such a plant would open a whole new realm of possibilities for Libyan sponsorship of terrorism. Reagan ([2007] 2009: 664) remarked in his diary that the "plant ... threatens the entire Middle East." These cultural perceptions of a terribly threatening Libya were passed on as orders to the US navy to proceed once more into the Gulf of Sirte, once again with fatal consequences for elements of the Libyan air force.

Observe the string of events in this global warring. First there was a terrorist incident or incidents. Next the anti-terrorist iteration operated

with a perceptual cultural interpretation that the terrorism resulted from Libyan state-sponsored terrorism, provoking a procedural cultural interpretation to attack Libya. Finally there was the attack.

Treasury Secretary Donald Regan (1988: 329) remarked, concerning the April 1986 attack on Gaddafi's residence, "however much it may have shocked liberal opinion here and abroad, it had a chilling effect on state-sponsored terrorism." This view is correct but for reasons the Reaganites might not imagine. Jentleson (2006: 47) and Whytock, following a survey of the evidence bearing upon terrorism during and following the Reagan years, concluded that exercise of military force against resistance terrorism "largely failed" to stop it. In fact, according to another source, "Between 1989 and the end of the twentieth century, militant Islamist groups became more violent and thus posed an increased threat for the United States and its allies" (Couch 2010: 17). Reagan's aggression toward Libya did not stop the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center, and certainly this attack had a chilling effect on the opinion that Reagan had solved the problem of terrorism. Let us recapitulate the arguments concerning the global warring in Libya I.

Gradually, dominated peoples in the 1970s and 1980s got it: there was a new imperial dominator out there in very late modernity the New American Empire. Opposition to it increased, which can be explained as the dominated resisting oppression and exploitation. The Security Elites 2.0 had a radically different understanding of the situation. They saw resistance as terrorism, an intensifier of the dominator/dominated contradiction that threatened US "security," and consequently was a serious reproductive vulnerability. This provoked hermeneutic politics to fix the vulnerability, which was fixed by instituting the new anti-terrorist iteration of the global domination public *délire*.

When Reagan's security elite perceived the failure of nonviolent ways of stopping Gaddafi's support of terrorism, they granted Shultzian Permission and implemented the anti-terrorist public *délire*. In part they did so because Tripoli, notwithstanding its oil wealth, was so weak they could. The ensuing global warring, Reagan's "obsession," lasted from 1981 through 1988. It "largely failed." Resistance terrorism persisted—as did Gaddafi, though he had been categorized as a terrorist monster, and would face troubles ahead, a topic in a later chapter.

## Conclusion

To review this chapter's work: Dylan got people in the 1970s and 1980s thinking that the times were "a-changin'." They were. The contradictory

currents in the seas of modernity were altered: economic contradictions intensified; political ones were more complex. The inter-imperial contradiction led to violence in the Americas and a final flare-up with the Bear during the Soviet-Afghanistan War, but abruptly relaxed with the Soviet Union’s demise. The dominated/dominator contradiction intensified after the Vietnam War as some dominated folk resorted to resistance terrorism against the American imperium. Political and economic contradictions coalesced.

In their different ways, the wars analyzed in this chapter were responses to the shifting contradictory forces, the strings of events in each war being consistent with the global warring theory. The Bear went over the mountain in Afghanistan I, intensifying the inter-imperial contradiction. Shultzian Permission was granted when Islamic rebels starting fighting, making peaceful fixes moot; whereupon US security elites, operating on the basis of the global domination public délire, went after the Soviet monster-alterity. The Iran-Iraq War responded to intensification of the land/capital contradiction. Shultzian Permission was granted because once Baghdad and Tehran began hostilities, the US had to participate militarily or risk losing considerable control over Persian Gulf oil. Carter and Reagan instituted the oil-control iteration of the global domination public délire, and Reagan conducted US military operations by implementing it. Finally, Libya I was a response to intensification of the dominator/dominated contradiction in a situation where the control of oil was an issue. Shultzian Permission was granted because Gaddafi’s provocations did not cease. To address this reproductive vulnerability Reagan instituted and implemented the anti-terrorist iteration of the global domination public délire.

So some of the changes Dylan sung about in the 1970s and 1980s were in the means of interpretation of violence. After 1989, the NSC 68 iteration of the global domination public délire faded. In very late modernity the New American Empire would be guided to battle by the oil-control and anti-terrorist iterations of the global domination public délire. The consequences of these changes are the story of the following chapters.

## Notes

1. The old boys were either dead (Forrestal, Stimson, and Marshall) or ancient and superannuated (Truman, Acheson, Kennan, and Lovett). You read about them in books. Charlie Wilson, for example, a key player in the Soviet-Afghan War, remembered reading “*Kennan’s prescription for dealing with Communism*” (in Crile 2003: 26).

2. Reagan had been in the army during World War II. Far from any combat, he made propaganda movies. However, Bush I was a naval pilot and had been shot down in the Pacific. Alexander Haig, Reagan’s first secretary of state (1981–1982) fought as an army officer in

both Korea and Vietnam, and was awarded medals for valor. George Shultz was a World War II combat Marine Corps officer. Casper Weinberger was a World War II army infantry officer. CIA Director William Casey was an OSS officer. Treasury Secretary Donald Regan was a Marine present at the battles of Guadalcanal and Okinawa. Younger members of Reagan's security elite included NSA Colonel Bud MacFarlane (1983–1985), a Marine officer in Vietnam; NSA Admiral John Poindexter (1985–1986), commander of a naval destroyer squadron; NSA Frank Carlucci (1986–1987), a naval officer in the Korean War; and NSA General Colin Powell (1987–1989), an army officer in Vietnam.

3. Harvey (2005), Duménil and Lévy (2011), Campbell (2005), and Stedman-Jones (2012) analyze neoliberalism.

4. Free trade zones, also termed Export Processing Zones (EPZs), are areas within a country, situated in places favorable to trade (e.g. rivers, ports), where goods may arrive or be exported, manufactured or reconfigured, under relaxed tax regimes. They have become “the predominant locations for light industrial manufacturing, with around seventy million workers in 3,500 EPZs” (Neveling 2015: 64). They have been largely placed in developing countries with low labor costs.

5. A “derivative” is a financial instrument—created by agreement between two people or parties—whose value is determined by an agreed price of an asset. Profits are made on derivatives when a person contracts to sell an asset at a price that turns out to be above the market price. For example, I might contract in January to sell a bushel of corn at \$5. If the harvest has been abundant and the corn sells in September for \$3 dollars per bushel, then I make a handsome profit because due to my derivative contract I sell at \$5.

A collateralized debt obligation (CDO) is a security backed by a pool of bonds, loans, and other assets. If the pooled assets of a CDO remain good, its owner receives a profit. If they do not, perhaps the CDO holder should have arranged a credit default swap (CDS). A CDS is a contract in which the buyer of the CDS pays the seller a certain sum to ensure the buyer receives a payoff if a given credit instrument (typically a bond or loan) goes into default. That is, the buyer of a CDS acquires protection against a credit instrument going bad. A mortgage-backed security (MBS) is an asset-backed security or debt obligation that represents a claim on the cash flows from mortgage loans, most commonly on residential property. MBSs became worthless when poor mortgage holders started being unable to make their mortgage payments in 2006.

6. Weart (2008), Giddens (2009), and Joshua Howe (2014) discuss the hermeneutic politics of global warming.

7. The environmentalist/anti-environmentalist debate over global warming has been nasty, brutish, and long. A good point of insertion to it is Michael Crichton's *State of Fear* (2004), a novel depicting eco-activists as terrorists.

8. Development of the oil industry is discussed in Adelman (1995), Bromley (1991), Yetiv (2004), Yergin (1993), Juhasz (2009), and Mitchell (2011).

9. Kobrin (1984) and Ayoub (1994) provide an overview of oil nationalization. Petras, Morley, and Smith (1977) discuss it in Venezuela, Brown (1979) in Iraq, Elm (1994) in Iran.

10. Ghadar (1977), Terzian (1985), and Euclid Rose (2004) document OPEC.

11. Films of the US evacuation of the Saigon Embassy can be viewed on YouTube (Laurie 2010).

12. The notion of strategic insolvency appears to be been introduced by Walter Lippmann (1943).

13. Persons working for the Republican Party burgled the Democratic National Headquarters at the Watergate Apartments on 17 June 1972. The robbery became the “Watergate Scandal,” which Nixon tried unsuccessfully to cover up.

14. Since the end of World War II, sixteen acronyms have been used for federal national security directives. “NSC,” made famous by NSC 68, was used from the Truman through the

Ford administrations. The “PD” acronym was favored during Carter’s administration (Relyea 2007)

15. Said (2001), Gusterson (2005), and Fox (2005) offer criticism of *The Clash of Civilizations*.

16. Carter’s proposed energy policy was in considerable measure the work of S. David Freeman. In the early 1970s Freeman had been the director of energy policy at the Ford Foundation and authored the report *A Time to Choose: America’s Energy Future* (1974), which became “the foundation of Carter’s energy policy” (Freeman 2007). Freeman, an engineer, was able to digest the data warning of peak oil and communicate its significance to Carter, another engineer (Kreisler 2003: 2).

17. The “attack rabbit” incident was as follows: Carter was in Plains fishing in a canoe on 20 April 1979, when a rabbit, chased by hounds, jumped in the water and swam toward the canoe. The media made this into a big story.

18. Rich (2005), Weidenbaum (2011), and Abelson (2006) provide accounts of the rise and influence of think tanks in the US. The Brookings Institution, founded in 1916, was the first think tank.

19. Discussions of neoconservatism can be found in Stelzer (2004), Steinfels (1979) and Irving Kristol (1995).

20. My mother surprised me by remarking that she had gone on one date with Reagan when he was a baseball announcer on Des Moines radio. I asked her what she had thought of him. She took a long drag on a Marlboro, reflected a while, and said, “I can’t remember.”

21. There is a considerable literature discussing Reaganomics, some supportive (Niskanen 1988); much critical from both conservative (Bartlett 2009) and progressive (Scheer 2010) perspectives.

22. US warring in the Americas occurred in the Caribbean (Grenada 1983); in Central America (El Salvador 1981, Panama 1989, and Nicaragua 1981–1989), and throughout South America (Chile, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Uruguay, and Bolivia). With the exceptions of Grenada and Panama, the US was not a direct participant in these hostilities. Intervention occurred because Security Elites 2.0 believed a country was in danger of becoming communist due to Soviet or Cuban subversion. Hence, intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction, in ways that elites believed harmed the US, led to hostilities. Additionally, as Greg Grandin (2006: 6) has put it, the wars involved “imperial violence through proxies”; that is, Washington made indirect war, keeping its hand largely covert. A particular institution, the School of the Americas, was especially important as a US army training center for Latin American officers. Founded in 1946 in the Panama Canal Zone as the Latin America Ground School, it became the School of Americas in 1946 and moved to Fort Benning in Georgia in 1983, becoming in 2001 the Western Hemisphere Institute of Security Cooperation. By the early twenty-first century it had trained over 60,000 officers in combat-related skills, especially those related to counterinsurgency. The SOA took young military officers, often trained to conduct warfare against external foes, and taught them the skills of massacring, torturing, and raping their own. All the while, as Lesley Gill notes (2004: 66), it facilitated their acquisition of, “the ideology of the ‘American way of life’ by steeping them into a vision of empire that identified their aspirations with those of the United States.” The resulting conflicts have been termed “dirty wars” because they featured massacres, torture, and rape; and because it is so often difficult to distinguish insurgents from noncombatants, meaning that those abused tend to be peasant or urban poor civilians. In sum, SOA transformed Latin American officers into hybrid imperial elites who killed their own because it was the “American way.”

23. The phrase “the Bear went over the mountains” seems to have originated in a collection of junior Soviet officers’ vignettes of their combat in Afghanistan. The US military became interested in the text for its “tips” on how to fight mujahideen (Grau 1996).

24. Useful references concerning Afghanistan I from the US perspective include Coll (2004) and Crile (2003); from that of Russian soldiers Alexievich (1992) and from that of a

Russian journalist Borovik (1990), Girardet (2011), Hauner (1991), Amin (1984), Overholt (1980), and Kakar (1995) are accounts of the war at its different stages. Roy (1990) and Fiefer (2009) offer general accounts.

25. The question of whether Amin had CIA ties remains unsolved. Western sources tend to dismiss it. Bonosky (1985: 30–42) makes the case that Amin had them. In the early 1960s Amin had studied at Columbia's Teachers College, where he became head of the Afghan Student Association. In 1967 *Ramparts*, a left-wing Catholic journal, revealed that the CIA had covertly funded international student groups since the 1950s, including the Afghan Student Association (S. Stern 1967). If Amin was ever recruited by the CIA, it was likely during his Columbia days.

26. Gorbachev said in his memoirs (2003: x) that his perspective was inspired by Alexander Dubcek's "socialism with a human face," which prevailed during Dubcek's 1968 reforms that were crushed by Brezhnev. Others have said that Gorbachev, who was Andropov's protégé, was actually trying to implement his mentor's views (Konchalovsky 2011).

27. Morris claims that the US began Afghan operations in fall 1978, an earlier start than that named by Robert Gates, then on the National Security Council, who has them beginning in July 1979 ([1996] 2007: 146). I am unable to verify which assertion is correct. Blum (1995: 345), however, reported that the CIA began training mujahideen in Pakistan in 1978.

28. Steve Coll, who has written extensively on the Afghanistan I War, has asserted that "any claim that Brzezinski lured the Soviets into Afghanistan warrants deep skepticism" (2004: 581). I disagree. In the late 1960s Brzezinski was developing the Islamic card hermeneutic. In 1977, he set up the inter-agency NWG to help implement it. In 1978, the Saur Revolution and the ensuing mujahideen rebellion gave him the opportunity to try it in Afghanistan. From March through July 1979 a meeting string through Brzezinski's SCC transformed the Islamic card hermeneutic from a mere hermeneutic into an authorized public *délire*. Brzezinski (1998: 76) admitted as much in an interview with *Le Nouvel Observateur* when he declared, "We didn't push the Soviet's to intervene, but we knowingly increased the probability that they would." At this juncture, Brzezinski's interviewer pointed out that the Soviets had stated that one of the reasons they invaded Afghanistan was to combat secret US involvement there. The interviewer asks Brzezinski if he "regrets" this. Brzezinski (1998: 76) bragged in response: "Regret what? The secret operation was an excellent idea. It had the effect of driving the Russians into the Afghan trap. . . . Moscow had to carry on a war . . . that brought about the demoralization and finally the breaking up of the Soviet empire." Coll may doubt that Brzezinski "lured" the Russians into Afghanistan. Brzezinski, to the contrary, boasts about it, believing it destroyed the Soviet Union.

29. Wilson's role in Afghanistan I is told in a book by Crile (2003), which was made into the popular movie *Charlie Wilson's War* (2007). Coll (2004: 125–125) describes the decision making that led up to NSDD 166.

30. It has been claimed that the Stingers were "decisive" in the war (Crile 2003: 437). Malley (2002) and Peter Scott (2003) believe otherwise. Only 500 Stingers were introduced. They were operational less than two months before the Politburo's decision to end the war. There were too few Stingers and too little time for them to be decisive. More important in ending the war was Gorbachev's desire to restructure the Soviet Union, which started with pulling out of Brezhnev's folly.

31. Gorbachev (2003) himself supports this view, insisting that the Soviet Union was destroyed by internal developments.

32. Works by Murray and Woods (2014), Hiro (1991), Karsh (2002), Bullock and Morris (1989), and Pelletiere (1992) are useful. Rajace (1997) offers Iranian perspectives upon the war.

33. Baathism, the ideology adhered to by the Baathist political party, has been important in Iraq and Syria since 1963. Michel Aflaq and Zaki al-Asuzi were its key founders in the late 1930s and 1940s. Their ideology was a mixture of socialism, nationalism, and Pan-Arabism

inspired less by Islam than by European nationalism (Choueiri 2000: 154–157, 197–206). Sami al-Jundi has said of al-Asuzi’s Baathism, “We were racists. We admired the Nazis” (in Perdue 2012: 72). Of course, there were many racists in the US and Europe who admired Nazis in the late 1930s.

34. A “44” was a 44-caliber revolver used in the Old West. Made by Remington, it competed with the Colt 45 and was arguably the preferred sidearm.

35. Priest (2004: 53) usefully describes the commanders in chief.

36. Iraq had been allied with the USSR since 1958 and in 1972 had signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation.

37. Timmerman describes what the weapons were, their costs, and who they came from (1991: 419–424). The Germans and the French were major weapons suppliers.

38. The US also provided some limited military support to Iran. This was illegal and became the basis of the Iran Contra Affair (L. Walsh 1998). However, Brzezinski had set Washington on the road to favoring Baghdad, a road on which the Reagan administration drove long and fast.

39. Seymour Hersh (1987), the journalist who revealed the US military’s 1969 My Lai massacre of Vietnamese civilians, also reported a Reagan administration “obsession” with Libya.

40. Sirte has a number of spellings in English texts. Sidra and Surt are often employed.

41. The major exception is Stanik (2003).

42. The homophobia of Reagan and Secretary of State Shultz is striking. At one meeting, still fixated on the Libyan leader’s flamboyant attire, Reagan wisecracked, “Why not invite Gaddafi to San Francisco, he likes to dress up so much” (San Francisco being considered a gay paradise at the time), to which Shultz snorted, “Why don’t we give him AIDS?” (in Woodward 1987: 474).

43. Gaddafi’s expansion of Libya’s territorial waters to include the entire Gulf of Sirte has been treated as an example of his megalomania. In fact, the gulf is a rich fishing grounds where bluefin tuna is especially abundant. The expansion of territorial waters was an attempt to protect Libya’s fishermen from developed countries’ fishing industries.

44. A carrier battle group consisted of one aircraft carrier, two guided missile cruisers, two anti-aircraft warships, and two anti-submarine destroyers or frigates.

45. Just as the Nazi Luftwaffe used Spanish cities as targets to test their new bombers during the Spanish Civil War, so the US military profited from Operation Ghost Rider’s use of Libyan targets to try out their new laser-guided missile systems. Hersh (1987) claimed that four of the nine systems on F-111s attacking Gaddafi failed.

46. The term “contra,” Spanish for “overthrow,” was an abbreviation of *contrarrevolución*.

47. This section has used information from Ralph McGehee’s (1996) CIABASE. McGehee is a former CIA officer. CIABASE is an Internet database from public sources.

48. The Muslim Brotherhood is one of the largest and most influential Islamist movements. Founded in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna, it combines political activism with Islamic charity, and holds the Koran and Sunnah to constitute the perfect form of social and political organization. It has been influential throughout the Islamic world since the 1960s (Pargeter 2010).

49. A general understanding of Chad’s civil wars can be found in Azevedo (1998) and Reyna (2003b). Buijtenhuijs (1978) has written a rich account of the rise of FROLINAT. John Wright (1989) discusses Libya’s interests in the Central Sahara.

50. The French, in Operations Manta (1983) and Epervier (1986), did directly intervene in Chad with ground troops and fighter aircraft.

51. Habré governed in Chad as something of a US client until December 1990. His rule became increasingly authoritarian and repressive. With CIA assistance, he created an internal security service, the Documentation and Security Directorate, which murdered and tortured many people in conjunction with other police agencies (Human Rights Watch 2005). Rumor has it that Habré bought land in Colorado, perhaps as a retirement retreat. He never made it there. His increasingly brutal dictatorship was overthrown, with French assistance,

by Idriss Déby, once Habré's army commander. In 2000 Habré was indicted for crimes against humanity.

52. There has been an enormous growth of terrorist studies since 9/11, a discipline that, according to Michael Howard, "attracts phonys and amateurs as a candle attracts moths" (in Hoffman 2008: 136). Crenshaw (1994), Laqueur (2000), and Hoffman (2006) provide useful introductions to the topic.

53. Neocons (Boot 2011) have criticized Pape and Feldman's position as unpersuasive.

54. The Munich Massacre was planned by Abu Daoud, who joined the Palestinian resistance after witnessing the murder of family members and neighbors by Israeli commandos. He claimed that the operation was planned not to kill the Israeli athletes but to exchange them for Palestinian prisoners. The athletes were killed only after a bungled West German attempt to rescue them (Daoud 2007).

55. The debates over the difficulty of identifying terrorists and of the role of Moscow in terrorism are discussed in Toaldo (2008: 59–65)

56. The Voice of the Arabs was a radio station that broadcast from Cairo throughout the Middle East. It was especially influential in the 1950s and 1960s; advocating Pan-Arabism and anti-imperialism, and featuring the legendary singer Umm Kulthum.

57. According to Seymour Hersh (1987), at least some high-level US security officials disagreed that Libya had been involved in the La Belle bombing. At least one Libyan believes these accusations "turned out to be false" (Ahmida 2005: 81).

58. There has been heated debate over Libya's involvement in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103. Iran had an equally strong motivation, as the *Vincennes* had just downed the Iranian airliner. It has even been claimed that the CIA was involved in the downing of Flight 103. Ashton and Ferguson (2001) view the evidence against Libya skeptically.



## THE PERFECT STORM

### *A Tale of Two Elites*

**Perfect storm:** A situation where a calamity is caused by the convergence and amplifying interaction of a number of factors (Wiktionary)

The years 1990 through 2014 saw four US presidents: George H. W. Bush (Bush I, 1989–1993); William J. Clinton (1993–2001); George W. Bush (Bush II, 2001–2009); and finally Barack Hussein Obama (2009–2017). Bob Dylan had said the times were changing. The following three chapters relate the consequences of these changes during the time of the four presidents. The present chapter shows how the cyclical and systemic economic contradictions further intensified and coalesced with an intensifying dominator/dominated imperial contradiction, provoking a perfect storm—an unprecedented coalescence and intensification of contradiction. These contradictions proved impervious to peaceful reproductive fixes. This led to the emergence in the 1990s of two security elites both situationally and experimentally fixated upon oil and terror, and violent fixes.

The chapter is organized as follows. It first presents the new Security Elites 3.0. It then describes the storm of contradictions battering the New American Empire and how attempts to fix them failed; and evaluates the security elites' responses to the fixless fixes. They are revealed to have developed into two factions—Republican Vulcans and democratic liberal hawks—both disposed to violently fix the vulnerabilities of their empire. Finally, Vulcans and Hawks are shown to have become fixated upon oil and terror. The chapter's tale is that of two elites—one economic, frozen into “uncertainty”; the other, the Vulcan and Hawk security factions, out to fix the vulnerabilities produced by the perfect storm with global war. Attention turns to the tale's central actors, the Security Elites 3.0.

### **Security Elites 3.0**

Women, blacks, Italians, Orientals, gays, and Hispanics had been denied elite security status in the times of the Security Elites 1.0 and 2.0. This changed, starting in the 1990s. Gone, for the most part, were the old boys, except for the low-lying Bushes. But even they were not classic old boys. They did have a compound in Maine (where certain locals considered them “summer folk”), but Poppy (Bush I’s nickname) had moved the family to Texas. There they worked in the oil business, and in the case of Dubya (Bush II’s nickname) possessed signs of (wealthy) Texan culture. Dubya could manage a credible Texan drawl; had a ranch, so he could be home on the range; and at one time owned a Texas baseball club. As a young man he had been a party-hearty carouser who reportedly sought “commercial opportunity” while at Yale “selling ounce bags of cocaine” (St. Clair 2013b). He had reformed, found Jesus, and become a devout born-again Christian (something not unheard of for Anglo-Texans).<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, by 2012 multiculturalism and feminism were significant ideologies, helping minorities and women to nestle in the highest government ranks.

Though these elites were not old boys, a number hailed from wealthy circumstances. Bush I’s Secretary of State James Baker’s father was a partner in a flourishing Houston law firm. John Negroponte, Bush II’s Director of National Intelligence, might not have been a WASP, but he was the son of a Greek shipping magnate. First Lady, US Senator, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the daughter of a “successful” tradesperson, grew up living a “privileged life-style in Park Ridge,” a Chicago suburb (Bernstein 2007: 19, 15).

More of the new security elites came from modest backgrounds, however. Brent Scowcroft, Bush I’s NSA, was a grocer’s son from Ogden, Utah. Hillary’s marriage was hypogamous. Her husband, Bill Clinton, was the Arkansas son of a traveling salesman who died before his son’s birth. The future president grew up in Hope, Arkansas, in his mother’s extended family, people of “modest means,” so much so that “they couldn’t afford vacation, rarely if ever went to the movies, and didn’t get television until the mid-to-late 1950s. They went out a few times a year—to the country fair, the watermelon festival, the occasional square dance or gospel singing” (Clinton 2005: 14). Warren Christopher, Clinton’s first Secretary of State, was criticized as wooden, perhaps because he had “survived a difficult childhood in the Dakotas during the depression” (Halberstam 2001: 172). Clinton’s second NSA Sandy Berger’s parents ran an Army-Navy store in Connecticut. George Tenet, CIA director in both Clinton and Bush II’s administrations, was the son of Greek and Albanian migrants, and grew up in Queens, New York, working as a busboy in his parents’ diner. Bush II’s

first secretary of state, Colin Powell, was born to Jamaican parents in Harlem and grew up in the South Bronx, where he worked in a Jewish store, a *schwarz knabe* (“black kid”) selling baby buggies (C. Powell 1995: 18). Dubya’s first NSA and second Secretary of State, Condoleeza Rice, grew up in racist, segregated Birmingham, Alabama, in a middle-class family determined “to maintain their dignity despite the degrading circumstances of Birmingham” (Rice 2010: 14). Her mother, a teacher, had taught Willie Mays (Rice 2010: 21). Obama’s Kenyan father, like Clinton’s, died early, leaving his son in a single-parent family. When Obama’s mother went off to get her anthropology doctorate and work in development, he was raised within her extended family.

Though the old boys had largely disappeared, the educational establishments that had made them flourish, practicing the alchemy of enculturating elite culture. Exeter, Andover, Groton, Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and the like still took the dross lead of teenagers and transmuted them into the gold of masters and commanders in the US Leviathan. Tenet went from his parents’ diner to Georgetown and Columbia Universities. Clinton started poor, but he too went to Georgetown, Yale Law School, and as a Rhodes Scholar to Oxford, where met Sandy Berger, who had gone from an Army-Navy store to Cornell, Harvard, and on to Oxford, likewise as a Rhodes Scholar. Obama graduated from Columbia and went on to a degree at Harvard Law School.

The Security Elites 3.0 were something of a closed shop in the sense that they tended to have been mentored by earlier, older security elites. Brent Scowcroft (Bush I’s NSA) had been deputy NSA under Kissinger. Albright (Clinton’s UN representative and secretary of state) had been a pupil of Brzezinski at Columbia, though he belittled her as “hardly” a special student” (Dobbs 1999: 197). Nevertheless he had hired her for the NSC. Susan Rice, Assistant Secretary of State in Clinton’s administration, and NSA in Obama’s, “grew up with ... privilege and superior social connections,” which came in good measure because “Albright watched Rice grow up with her daughters—hanging out at backyard barbecues, languishing poolside or lunching at McDonalds” (Parker 1998). Colin Powell (NSA under Reagan, chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under Clinton, secretary of state under Bush II) had worked for Frank Carlucci (secretary of defense under Reagan), who was something of a protégé of Donald Rumsfeld during the Nixon administration. Condoleeza Rice (Bush II’s NSA and later secretary of state) had been a student of Albright’s father at the University of Denver and a protégée of Brent Scowcroft. Anthony Lake (Clinton’s first NSA) had been a Kissinger aid; Stephen Hadley (NSA in Bush II’s administration following Rice) had worked with Kissinger in the NSC. Otherwise put, networks counted: you had to “know somebody” to become a Security Elite 3.0.

Security Elites 3.0 became affluent once they achieved the principal level, regardless of their backgrounds. As prosperous people, they lost touch with ordinary folk. Condoleezza Rice said that when she was at Stanford University she had had very little contact with the poor people of color who lived in East Palo Alto. She acknowledged, “I ... realized that I knew very little of the poverty and lack of opportunity just a few blocks from my house.” She further confessed, “I avoided any real contact with East Palo Alto” (Rice 2010: 277). The case of Condoleezza Rice is not unique. Security Elites 3.0 might have been more diverse than their predecessors, but they led lives sealed into elite networks and out of those of ordinary persons.

Certain old boys had come from Wall Street. These ties remained—Treasury secretaries Robert Rubin under Clinton and Hank Paulson under Bush II both came from the investment giant Goldman Sachs. However, a surprising number of Security Elites 3.0, especially in the two Bush administrations, were in some way involved with energy industries. Sandy Berger, Clinton’s second NSA, owned a fair amount of Amoco Oil Company stock. Bush I worked for Dressler Industries, which manufactured oil and gas field machinery. James Baker, Bush I’s secretary of state, had been a lawyer whose firm did business with big oil; Baker was described by one journalist as “a lobbyist for the oil industry” (Palast 2004). Bush II founded Arbusto Energy, an unsuccessful business largely devoted to oil exploration and said to have links with the Bin Laden family (Rodríguez 2006). Vice President Cheney had been CEO of Halliburton Oil, a firm providing a wide variety of oil field services. Condoleezza Rice had been a director at Chevron Oil and had the distinction of having an oil tanker named after her. Rumsfeld enjoyed investments in energy-related firms. A number of the security elites were women, and it is to them that attention now turns.

*Women as Security Elites:* Some have hoped that the inclusion of women into politics, with their “maternal thinking” (Ruddick 1995), might make for a more peaceful world. Certainly feminists have for a long time—at least since 441 BC, if Aristophanes’ *Lysistrata* is to be believed—struggled for peace. Liberal feminist theory (Tong 2008), on the other hand, has advocated inclusion of women in all organizations on the grounds that they will perform just as well as males: if warriors are needed, women warriors will do just fine. The inclusion of six women at the highest levels—Secretaries of State Madeleine Albright and Hillary Clinton; NSA Condoleezza Rice; UN Representative Susan Rice, ultimately President Obama’s NSA in his second term; Head of the Office of Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights Samantha Power, who replaced Susan Rice as Obama’s UN

representative; and Anne-Marie Slaughter, Director of Policy Planning in Obama's administration—provide evidence bearing on this disagreement.

Reflect first that Hillary Clinton has been described by one source “as Barack Obama's most prominent hawk” (Lavelle 2011). She pushed her husband to intervene in the Balkans, voted with Dubya to invade Iraq, and insisted upon Gaddafi's 2011 elimination. Hillary's husband had appointed Albright first to the post of UN ambassador and then to secretary of state. Albright, in her memoirs, reminisced about a time when she had reprimanded General Colin Powell for his reticence to exercise military power, admonishing him, “What's the point of you having this superb military you're always talking about, Colin, if we can't use it” (in Dobbs 1999: 360). Powell's hesitancy concerning warring may have had to do with his Vietnam combat experience. Contemplate a second instance of Albright's violent disposition.

At the US's and UK's insistence, the UN Security Council imposed sweeping economic sanctions on Iraq, embargoing everything from foods to medicines to infrastructure, immediately following the 1990 Gulf War. These constituted a blockade that denied Iraq the goods needed for its inhabitants' well-being. By the mid 1990s there was evidence that the sanctions were killing large numbers of civilians, especially children and the elderly. US security elites knew this, but refused to remove of the blockade. In May of 1996, the TV journalist Lesley Stahl interviewed Albright about the civilian deaths:

Lesley Stahl: We have heard that a half a million children have died. I mean, that's more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?

Madeleine Albright: I think this is a very hard choice, but the price—we think the price is worth it. (In Herman and Peterson 2010: 32)

Dennis Halliday, a UN humanitarian official in Iraq at the time, resigned over the regime of sanctions, calling them “genocidal” (ibid.: 30). If this was genocide, Albright thought it was “worth it.”

Condoleezza Rice, known as the “Warrior Princess” while heading Bush II's NSC (Serafin 2005), was involved in planning and implementing his military adventures, and was equally implicated in the administration's torture policy (Kessler 2009).<sup>2</sup> The other Rice, Susan, was an Obama administration “liberal interventionist,” since the 1990s a prevalent term for a person who believes it is appropriate to go to war in the defense of human rights. During the Clinton administration, Ambassador Rice encouraged Rwanda's 1996 invasion of Congo (which the US covertly aided) to overthrow longtime Congolese President Mobutu (whom the US had overtly supported).<sup>3</sup> More recently, she pressed officials at the UN and in the

Obama regime to violently overthrow Gaddafi on the grounds that he was feeding Viagra to his troops to pep them up for “mass rapes” (MacAskill 2011). No less an authority than “US military and intelligence officials” said “that there is no basis for Rice’s claims” (Garris 2011).

Samantha Power self-reports herself to be a “genocide chick” (Roig-Franzia 2014). Her book, *A Problem from Hell* (2003), which condemned the US for ignoring genocides, caught Obama’s eye and eventually led to her replacing Susan Rice at the UN. She has been a prominent advocate of humanitarian interventionism, arguing that violence in the name of violated human rights, especially of the gravest sort (like genocide), is good. She was one of Obama’s foreign policy advisers during his first presidential campaign and authored the memo “Conventional Washington versus the Change We Need,” announcing that “Barack Obama’s judgment is right; the conventional wisdom is wrong. We need a new era of tough, principled and engaged American diplomacy to deal with 21st century challenges” (Power 2007). The operative word in this memorandum is “tough.” The “genocide chick” channeled the Kennedys in wanting a “tough” America.

Anne-Marie Slaughter, another humanitarian interventionist, has been a strong advocate of “R2P” or Responsibility to Protect—the norm adopted by the United Nations in 2005 specifying that states have the duty, under certain conditions, to violently intervene in other states that grossly violate human rights (G. Evans 2008). Slaughter insisted upon Dubya’s intervention in Iraq and Obama’s intervention in Libya. Writing immediately after the pre-emptive invasion of Iraq, she opined that “the biggest problem with the Bush pre-emption strategy may be that it does not go far enough” (in Slaughter and Feinstein 2004: 136).

It thus appears that women who shattered the glass ceiling in the US security establishment made just as good warriors as their male counterparts—as liberal feminist theory knew all along they would. After all, as Eleanor Smeal, a president of NOW and a liberal feminist, reported, “Peace is not a feminist issue” (in Feinman 2000: 139).

For the most part, the masters and commanders of the New American Empire’s security after 1990 came from a broader, humbler social base than those in the 1.0 cohort. During the course of their lives, they participated in what might be termed “strings of elevation,” whose logic was to pursue rapid upward class mobility, accomplished by attending elite schools, acquiring wealth, and benefiting from mentors drawn from earlier cohorts of security elites. But whether men or women, minorities or old boys, the security elites in the years following 1990 were just as disposed to do their “duty” as were their predecessors, though this time their “duty” was performed in an increasingly turbulent contradictory storm. The following

section explores those contradictions and the reproductive fixes engineered to relax them. At the end of the section, God makes an appearance.

## **A Perfect Storm: Contradictions and Fixless Fixes**

We are in a chaotic situation. . . . We can have a system better than capitalism or we can have a system that is worse than capitalism. Only thing we can't have is a capitalist system. (Wallerstein 2009)

Surely Professor Wallerstein jests. Capitalism has been around a long time and is a tough nut to crack. Then again, global economic elites at the 2012 Davos World Economic Forum insisted that capitalism was “somehow broken” (Frederick 2012), and things that are broken can go kaput. This section examines what happened to have Wallerstein and the capitalist elites so worried about the fate of capitalism. Attention is first focused upon economic contradictions.

### *Cyclical Contradictions*

It will be recalled that neoliberalism was proposed as a fix for capitalism's cyclical problems, and elites had begun its implementation starting in the late 1970s. The high point of the neoliberal fix was in the decade of 1990s. What materialized?

What happened was

a downward shift in the real growth rate of the US economy, which was lower in the 1970s than in the 1960s; lower in the 1980s and 1990s than in the 1970s; and lower in 2000–2007 than in the 1980s and 1990s. Since 2007 the economy has declined further, in the deepest crisis since the Great Depression. (Foster and McChesney 2009: 9)

Manufacturing was especially harmed. In the decade from 2000 to 2010, the US lost a third of its manufacturing jobs. These closings followed on those that had turned a good portion of the US into the Rust Belt in the 1980s. Manufacturing as a percentage of total US GDP dropped from 23 percent in 1970 to 11 percent in 2009 (Smil 2011). As industry declined, so did high-paying jobs. Between 2000 and 2010 the US lost 5.7 million manufacturing jobs and created only 4.9 million service jobs, most of them low-paying (Smil 2011). Consequently, wage levels for the average US worker were over 50 percent less in 2009 than forty years earlier, “down to the same levels as during the Great Depression” (Nielson 2012).

Alex Callinicos (2010: 68) has suggested that the year 1997 was the “turning point for the US and the world economy” because of a double

collapse—the 2001 dot-com crash followed by the 2002 telecom crash, when the US stock market plummeted following major failures of US Internet and telecommunication firms. Approximately \$5 trillion of the market value of technology companies was lost between 2000 and 2002, and around 50 percent of the dot-coms failed (Gaither and Chmielewski 2006). Then, in 2007, unsettling developments emerged in the financial sector, especially as it pertained to US housing.

Neoliberal ideology, it will be recalled, prioritized growth of the financial sector, where profits appeared to beckon. Starting in the 1980s, US banks and other lending institutions began offering mortgage loans that allowed the less affluent to buy houses. Such lending is called “subprime” because it is risky—the recipients have few financial resources. This lending was not done out of solicitude for the impoverished, but as a way of opening new markets for investment in housing. On Wall Street this meant that

the drive was to take advantage of cheap credit conditions to build up leverage as high as possible and thereby to maximize profits. Credit derivatives—above all, collateralized debt obligations ... played a key role getting lending off banks’ balance sheets by selling the loans on in as high a volume as possible. The global market for derivatives rose from \$41 trillion to \$677 trillion in 1997–2007. Loans to less safe debtors—for example, subprime mortgages—were particularly attractive, because the higher the risk, the higher the interest and fees that would be charged. (Callinicos 2010: 74)

Many of the subprime mortgages came with variable rates, where mortgage payments would initially be lower and later balloon to higher amounts. Approximately 80 percent of US mortgages issued to subprime borrowers in the 1990s and 2000s were adjustable-rate mortgages. When the higher rates began in 2006–2007, mortgage defaults rapidly increased. Soon,

the entire speculative house of cards erected by the banks and their partners in the shadow banking system began to fall apart. ... The crisis in the subprime sector undermined the market for market-backed securities, and thereby hauled down the prices of the CDOs into which these securities had been bundled. But, since CDOs—and the credit default swaps (CDSs) used to insure against default—had been taken up throughout the entire financial system ... the entire system seized up. (Callinicos 2010: 81)

The financial wizards had put their money in subprime lending and tripped down the yellow brick road of hazardous finance into the Great Recession. Reflecting on this situation, a group of French economists issued the *Manifesto of the Appalled Economists* in 2010, which—according to its authors—stated the “obvious”: Neoliberalism had “obvious failures” (2010: 2). Why did this happen? One answer opts for overaccumulation.



*Overaccumulation and the Long Downturn*: The tendency toward overaccumulation as the result of an intra-capitalist contradiction was part of Marx's explanation of reproductive vulnerabilities intrinsic to capitalist systems. Harvey (2001: 79–80) refreshes memories of how this contradiction provokes overaccumulation in the following quotation:

A contradiction arises within the capitalist class because individual capitalists, each acting in his or her own self-interest in a context of competitive profit seeking, produce a result which is antagonistic to their own class interest. Marx's analyses suggest that this contradiction creates a persistent tendency toward "over-accumulation," which is defined as a condition in which too much capital is produced relative to the opportunities to find profitable employment for that capital.

Two major sorts of evidence indicate that overaccumulation has, or is, occurring. The first of these is "overproduction" (which conventional economists term "overcapacity"), that is, "surplus of capital relative to opportunities to employ that capital" (Harvey [1982] 2006: 192). An example is the situation where car companies have the ability to produce 40 million cars but have purchasers for only 30 million of them. The second indicator of overaccumulation is reduced, or declining, rates of profitability.

One body of inquiry scrutinizes overproduction during the long downturn. M. K. Venu (2009) actually speaks of it as an "epidemic" since the 1980s. Walden Bello (2006a) documents overproduction in the US computer industry, as well as in automobiles, steel, and telecommunications. Bello (2006b) estimates that over 75 percent of China's industries were burdened by excess capacity at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The former General Electric CEO Jack Welch, speaking from the vantage of capitalist elites, announced recently that there was "excess capacity in almost every industry" (in Bello 2006a). If there is excess capacity in an industry, then supply exceeds demand, meaning profits decline.<sup>4</sup>

There are alternative explanations of the long downturn. Perhaps the most prevalent of these derive from different formulations of supply-side economics. However, a considerable body of research has come from conventional economists who challenge supply-side theory as "crackpot" (Chait 2008), especially when it was applied to the problem of explaining the long downturn (Krugman 1995). Additionally, some have attempted to explain the "Great Recession" purely as a result of problems in the financial sector. Brenner (2009) has vigorously critiqued this approach for ignoring the causes of the financial difficulties, which he lays at the door of overaccumulation.

Step back and contemplate the economic world revealed by this analysis, which takes us to the person known as the "Iron Lady": Baroness

Margaret Thatcher, the Tory prime minister (1979–1990) who introduced neoliberalism to the UK. The baroness declared “TINA”—“there is no alternative”—to neoliberal capitalism. So it was neoliberalism or bust, but here was the problem for since 1973 it has been a busy time: bust (1973–1974), bust (1981–1982), bust (early 1990s), bust (2001–2002), biggest bust (2007–2012). Maybe there *was* “no alternative,” but the alternative that existed was, as the Davos economic elites recognized, “broken.” Consequently, since the 1970s the New American Empire has experienced cyclical economic contradictions that reached a peak in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Next the subject turns to systemic contradictions.

### *Systemic Contradictions*

The systematic contradictions between 1990 and 2014 have been, if anything, even more menacing than the cyclical ones. Consider, first, global warming.

*Global Warming:* The previous chapter established that the CO<sub>2</sub> level in the atmosphere was at 354 ppm in 1989 and that no fix had succeeded in slowing its increase. It had been calculated that 350 ppm was the upper safe level of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. Currently, the level is rapidly increasing: it was 389.85 ppm in 2010; 391.63 ppm in 2011; 393.63 ppm in 2012; and 399.85 ppm in 2014 (CO2Now.org 2013, 2015). Recall that methane is a more potent agent of global warming than CO<sub>2</sub>. In 2011 “vast” plumes of methane were observed released as a result of retreating Arctic Ocean sea ice (Conner 2011). Large craters that began to appear in Siberia in 2014 are thought to be the result of methane escaping from the defrosting tundra (T. McCoy 2015).

Globally there are unusual and terrible hurricanes and typhoons, unusual and terrible droughts, unusual and terrible floods—and all the while the temperature extremes continue. The simple fact, according to NASA’s James Hansen (2012), is that “global warming isn’t a prediction. It is happening.” Given this reality, the respected climate journalist Gwyne Dyer (2008: xii) announced, “When you talk to people at the sharp end of the climate business, scientists and policy makers, there is an air of suppressed panic. . . . We are not going to get through this without taking a lot of casualties, if we get through it at all.”

Some might dismiss Dyer as a Jeremiah. But her jeremiads are reality-based. There is an accelerating rate of CO<sub>2</sub> accumulation in the atmosphere; “vast” plumes of methane *are* appearing in the Arctic Ocean; and there already *are* an estimated 300,000 plus global warming–related deaths

a year (Vidal 2009). All this points to an intensifying capital/land systemic contradiction. Next, look at peak oil.

*Peak Oil:* A crucial indicator of peak oil's arrival is that demand for oil exceeds supply, but supply cannot increase to meet demand. The US Energy Information Administration reported that global demand for oil rose from 63,849.7 thousand barrels per day in 1990 to 86,952.5 thousand barrels in 2010 (Index Mundi 2015). Oil production meanwhile rose from 60,399.4 thousand barrels per day in 1990 to 72,631.4 thousand barrels per day in 2010 (ibid.). Importantly, between 2005 and 2011 oil production appeared to level off to roughly 71.50 to 72.80 million barrels per day. Such data prompted certain scholars to conclude that peak oil had arrived. Kunstler (2006: 47), citing data from a number of sources, dated the arrival of the peak between 2000 and 2010. Hubbert (1956) had predicted the global peak oil would arrive between 1995 and 2000. His prediction, like that of the timing of the decline of US oil production, appeared pretty accurate.

However, given the recent escalation in oil prices, oil companies have sought to increase supply by utilizing costly technologies to extract oil and gas from inaccessible environments where removal previously had been too expensive. These environments include tar sands, offshore deep-sea locations, and shale rock formations that trap both oil and gas. Klare (2012) calls such oil production "extreme" while others call it "tight" (Miller and Sorrell 2014), because the oil comes from habitats that are tremendously difficult to work in, presenting a likelihood of environmental damage. Remember that oil production from 2005 through 2011 appeared to have peaked around 71–72 million barrels per day (Index Mundi 2015). However, in 2012 it rose to 75.72 million barrels per day ("Global Oil Production Up" 2012). These figures suggest that oil production had surged above its peak, with the increase due to bringing tight oil into production.

Some commentators reckoned that tight oil production rendered peak oil a "myth" (Orszag 2012). This view is contested in a series of articles in an issue of the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society A* (Miller and Sorrell 2014). One argument is that oil and gas output from shale rock formations declines very rapidly after the sites are put into production, and an overall decline from these sources is estimated to hit as early as 2016 or 2017 (Koch 2013). Additionally, James Hamilton (2013) notes,

If you leave out the growth in shale oil production from the U.S. and oil sands production from Canada, total field production of crude oil from the rest of the world actually decreased between 2005 and 2012. Given the increase from the U.S. and Canada global production managed to increase by 2 million barrels a day over the period, but that is less than the growth in consumption from the emerging economies and oil-producing countries over the same years.

Unsurprisingly, there is considerable concurrence with the distinguished environmental lawyer Nicolas Arguimbau's judgment that "the supply of the world's essential energy source is going off a cliff" (Arguimbau 2010: 1). The debate is over just how far away the cliff edge is. Moreover, just as in the case of global warming, the situation with peak oil indicates continued intensification of the capital/land contradiction between 1990 and 2012. Let us draw the threads of this section together.

The economic system that was supposed to accumulate value for the New American Empire sputtered starting in the 1970s. Arguably this was, at least in some measure, due to overaccumulation and intensification of cyclical contradictions that coalesced with intensification of capital/land systemic contradictions leading to global warming and peak oil. Adam Smith ([1776] 2003) had promised that if his economic vision were implemented, an "invisible hand" would guide humanity to higher and higher levels of capital accumulation. A century later Marx ([1867] 1909) warned that the contradictions involved in capital accumulation would destroy capitalism. Classical liberal, Keynesian, and neoliberal policies might be imagined as forms of experimental fixation to assist the invisible hand in doing its job. For roughly a century after Marx, capital accumulated and the "invisible hand," with help from its policy fixes, muddled through. Then, starting in the 1970s, something new began in the world of contradiction, something utterly novel. Cyclical and systemic contradictions *both* intensified and coalesced—and the "invisible hand" went "leadens." Further intensification of these contradictions coalescing with the cyclical ones could reach a point where they destroy human being, suggesting that Wallerstein might just have a point: we "can't have ... a capitalist system." It is time to contemplate economic elites' responses to these contradictory realities.

### A "Zone of Ignorance" and Malinowski

Religious faith ... fixes ... all valuable mental attitudes, such as ... courage and confidence in the struggle with difficulties. (Malinowski [1948] 1954: 89)

Starting in the late 1970s economic elites became involved in hermeneutic politics that relied on neoliberalism to fix the vulnerabilities provoked by the contradictions. The politics failed. Offshoring and financial fixes did not fix cyclical problems, and the specter of global warming caused "panic" while peak oil went "off a cliff." Here, then, were fixless fixes to hermeneutic puzzles whose solution concerned humanity's fate. The words of Malinowski will become relevant following consideration of important economic elites' perceptual understanding of this situation.

A good place to begin is with Ben Bernanke, head of the Federal Reserve during the Great Recession. Bernanke came from a rural, southern background in Dillon, South Carolina. His father owned a drugstore. Young Ben was a “brain” (he taught himself calculus) and went to Harvard and then MIT for his doctorate, about which certain wags chant: “MIT, PhD, M-O-N-E-Y.” Bernanke’s (1979) doctoral dissertation, titled “Long-Term Commitments, Dynamic Optimization, and the Business Cycle”, dealt with business executives and the “business cycle” (conventional economists’ way of conceptualizing cyclical contradictions). Bernanke (1979: 2) analyzed “the problem of making irreversible investment decisions when there is uncertainty about the true parameters of the stochastic economy.” A stochastic process is one where the outcome is unpredictable. A stochastic economy is one where the different production, distribution, and consumption results are uncertain. Bernanke told the world in his dissertation that when things are uncertain, economic elites “wait for new information” (ibid.). Brilliant! Ben was in the M-O-N-E-Y, ascending the ranks of government economic positions, until in 2002 he was appointed to the Federal Reserve’s Board of Governors, becoming its president in 2005.

In a 2004 speech entitled “The Great Moderation,” Bernanke was pretty certain of one thing: that, due to the effectiveness of contemporary macro-economic policy, the volatility of the business cycle had decreased to the point that it should no longer be a major topic in economics (in Krugman 2009: 10). This judgment was rendered after the recessions of the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and 2000, and just three years before the Great Recession. Three years later in 2007, during the eruption of grave volatility that was to be the Great Recession, Bernanke reached back to doctoral stochastic memories and asserted that a prime attribute of the current economy was “uncertainty” (2007). Of course, it would have been in times of uncertainty that Sir Mervyn King, then governor of the Bank of England, confided to a *Telegraph* reporter, “Who knows what’s going to happen tomorrow” (Aldrick and Kirkup 2011).

Other respected economic elites were of like mind. In an analysis of the US economy, Michael Spence, a Nobel Prize winner in economics, and his colleague Sandile Hlatshwayo concluded that employment problems had emerged. In their judgment about what will happen with this “employment situation” being “unknown,” “answers” as to what to do “appear to be missing,” so “experimenting is the only way to solutions” (Spence and Hlatshwayo 2011: 38). Robert Solow (2009), another Nobel Prize winner in economics, argued that a new regulatory system is needed to solve the problems of the Great Recession, though he also believed “there is no way yet to know what form the new system will take.”

Media hermeneuts surveying elite economic opinion arrived at conclusions similar to those of Bernanke and company. Robert Samuelson (2012), the *Washington Post's* business and economics journalist, told readers in 2012, "It must be obvious that, economically speaking, we're in another country. Things we took for granted no longer apply. . . . We've entered a zone of ignorance." Two years later he was equally gloomy, writing, "These are hard times for economists. Their reputations are tarnished; their favorite doctrines are damaged. Among their most prominent thinkers, there is no consensus as to how—or whether—governments in advanced countries can improve lackluster recoveries" (Samuelson 2014). Regarding resolution of the financial crisis, the *Business Week* editor Paul Barrett (2009) advised, "Let's enact some thoughtful regulation, and hope for the best." In covering the 2012 Davos World Economic Forum, where elites met to discourse on the state of the globe, Jim Frederick of *Time* magazine asked participants, "what practically speaking will a global capitalism retooled for the 21st century look like?" He discovered that, "Well, no one has quite figured that one out yet. But a surprising number of attendees (and these are the world's most direct beneficiaries of the current system) seems to agree that something is wrong" (Frederick 2012). Three years later, again at Davos, Unilever's chief executive, Paul Polman, worried that what might be "wrong" was the "capitalist threat to capitalism" (in Milne 2015). At the same Davos meeting Christine Lagarde, the IMF's managing director, agreed, worrying that Marx may have been right all along and that capitalism might harbor the "seeds of its own destruction" (ibid.). After all, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Europe's most important institution for predicting economic futures, had warned world leaders to prepare for "systemic shock" that would shake the global system (OECD 2011). Robert Johnson, a former hedge fund manager, declared, "I know hedge fund managers all over the world who are buying airstrips and farms in places like New Zealand, they think they need a getaway" (in Hogg 2015).

Finally, let us explore the experience of a gentleman at the very height of the US financial elite as the stochastic economy darkened, as this will lead us to grasp the significance of Malinowski quoted at the beginning of this section. This was Hank "the Hammer" Paulson. A "jock" (athlete) while at Dartmouth, Hank went to Harvard Business School and on to a career that led to his becoming CEO of Goldman Sachs, one of Wall Street's and the world's largest investment banks. He was appointed Bush II's treasury secretary (28 June 2006) when it became clear that there could be a severe financial upheaval.

Dubya brought Hank to the Treasury because, he said, Paulson had "intimate knowledge of financial markets" (in Isidore 2006). After nine

months on the job, Hank drew upon this “intimate knowledge” to lecture a Chinese audience that “an open, competitive, and liberalized financial market can effectively allocate resources ... far better than governmental intervention” (Yidi and Hamlin 2008). As US subprime mortgage problems mounted in August 2007, he assured Americans they need not worry because the global economy was very strong (Lawder 2007). Eleven months later, following failure of the Indymac Bank, he reassured the public that the US had a “safe and sound banking system” (Garofalo 2008). On 15 September 2008, the day Lehman Brothers Bank went into bankruptcy, Hank reassured the “American people” that they “can remain confident in the soundness and resilience of our financial system” (Gross 2008).

Perhaps the invisible hand had been out to lunch. It certainly hadn't guided the economy. Financial elites, knowledgeable about the situation, did not “remain confident.” Rather, Wall Street flew into a “panic” (Reich 2010: 103), and shortly thereafter the Dow experienced the largest one-day loss in its history. Money markets globally went into free fall. Wall Street was effectively bankrupt, obliging the US Congress to authorize the “Paulson Plan” (3 October 2008) and create the US Emergency Stabilization Fund, that included the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP). TARP had \$700 billion to buy distressed bank assets, especially mortgage-backed securities. Two years after Paulson's lecturing Chinese people on the superiority of liberal financial management, that system had failed. Now Hank was busily engineering government regulation using public money, overseeing the largest government intervention in financial history to save the economic lives of the elites who owned most of the financial system's assets.

Understandably for Hank, the worst experiences of his stint as treasury secretary were during the Lehman Brothers collapse. The *Washington Post* recounted at this time:

In the tense moments as Lehman Brothers slid toward bankruptcy, he [Hank] stepped out of his office and called her [his wife Wendy]. She had just been to church. “Everybody is looking to me and I don't have the answer,” he told her. “You needn't be afraid,” she replied. “Your job is to reflect God, Infinite Mind, and you can rely on Him.” (Goldfarb 2010)

So, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, as the contradictory storm hit, the economic elites faced grave reproductive vulnerability following failure of the neoliberal fix. One of the two US gentlemen with the most authority to fix the economy babbled on about “uncertainty.” The other admitted he didn't “have the answer,” but was told by his wife to “reflect God.” Nietzsche sneaks back into the narrative to be corrected by Malinowski.

Nietzsche had shouted “Gott ist tot” (“God is dead”). Not so! God, like capitalism, is a tough nut to crack. Wendy told her very elite hubby not to “be afraid”; he could rely on “Him.” Malinowski classically argued in the quotation that began this section that religion “fixes ... courage and confidence” in the face of “difficulties.” In effect, Malinowski was observing that there were religious reproductive fixes as well as economic and violent ones. Economic elites did not know what to do as they faced “difficulties” produced by rising economic contradictions. Some, like the very elite Hank, turned to “religious faith” because it “fixes ... courage and confidence.” Of course, other economic elites, like the fund managers mentioned by Robert Johnson, were not into “courage” but just planned to make their “getaway,” splitting to remote places.

### *“Turbulent Waters”*

Mervyn King’s 2012 warning—“We are navigating through turbulent waters” (2012)—was apt. The neoliberal fix of cyclical contradictions failed. Fixes of systemic contradictions failed. The contradictory turbulence seemed to be driving the US Leviathan toward its limits. Of course, a Malinowskian God might fix “courage.” But a Nietzschean God seemed to be more in evidence, and this God was either out to lunch with the Invisible Hand or dead. Our gaze now turns to an intensifying political contradiction.

## **“The Rarest Opportunity”: The Dominator/Dominated Contradiction**

By the 1990s the condition of the political contradictions was complicated, being at the same time both relaxed and intensifying—relaxed because the Soviets were gone, taking with them the inter-imperial contradiction that had churned Cold War politics; intensifying because, as documented in the last chapter, the dominator/dominated contradiction intensified in the years 1975–1989, taking the form of increasing resistance terrorism. This strengthening continued throughout the 1990s. Out of this situation came what Brent Scowcroft called “the rarest opportunity.”

Bush I was president in 1990. The key security elites in his administration—himself, NSA Brent Scowcroft, Secretaries of State James Baker and Lawrence Eagleburger, CIA Director Robert Gates, and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney—were hardly pacifists. However, their main chore was helping choreograph the Soviet Union’s collapse. Gorbachev and Bush I met at their first summit meeting at the end of 1989 in Malta, at which time



Gorbachev reflected, “We stated, both of us, that the world leaves one epoch of cold war and enters another epoch” (Bush and Gorbachev 1989: 3). However, it was a delicate time. Something could go wrong: it was the domino theory in reverse as territory after territory hived off the former Soviet Empire. Gorbachev would soon be struggling for his own survival. There was also the matter of German reunification; sparks could fly.

Accordingly, Bush’s I security elites entered conflict-avoidance mode as much as possible. The one time they warred—in Iraq—was the result of blatant aggression on Baghdad’s part (discussed in the next chapter). Bush I’s response, Operation Desert Storm (August 1990–February 1991), was a swiftly successful invasion. However, the US evacuated Iraq as quickly as possible, leaving Saddam Hussein chastened but still in power. Hence, the end of the Cold War was initially a time of trying to hold the peace; with security elites restraining violent dispositions, whatever their personal proclivities. When it was all over—the USSR gone, Gorbachev history—the New American Empire stood alone as the world’s sole superpower.

Brent Scowcroft, Bush I’s trusted friend and NSA, interpreted the circumstance as one where, “The final collapse of Soviet power ... brought to a close the greatest transformation since World War I. ... We were suddenly in a unique position ... standing alone at the height of power. It was an unparalleled position in history, one that presents us with the rarest opportunity to shape the world” (Bush and Scowcroft 1998: 565). Dean Acheson, remembering the old boys’ creation of the post–World War II world, might well have disputed the claim that the dissolution of the Soviets was “unparalleled,” but he would have probably agreed that it was another opportunity “to shape the world.” The only problem was that the New American Empire was not the only social being out to “shape” global structures.

The groups that had been labeled “terrorists” by the US government competed to be present at the creation of the post-Soviet world. It was a ludicrous competition—mere hundreds on the side of the “terrorists” versus the full military might of the New American Empire. But resistance to the New American Empire increased in the 1990s, perhaps because, with the Soviet monster-alterity slain, Washington dropped some of its imperial cloaking, revealing more plainly its domination. After all, the US Leviathan was the “sole ... superpower.” Robert Gates (2014: 149–150) wrote that during this time, “other nations increasingly resented our singular dominance and growing penchant for telling others how to behave,” adding that “the arrogance with which we conducted ourselves in the 1990s and beyond ... caused widespread resentment.”

Some “resentment” produced resistance, and some resistance augmented terrorism; especially when al-Qaeda, led by Osama bin Laden, was

formed in 1988 from elements of the Afghanistan I's anti-Soviet mujahideen movement.<sup>5</sup> Al-Qaeda was distinguished from other guerilla organizations at the time in that it increasingly came to target the US and was relatively comfortably funded due to Osama's connections and wealth. In 1992 it conducted its first bombing of US troops in Yemen. Terror was brought home to Americans in February 1993 when al-Qaeda bombed the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan for the first time, with six fatalities and a thousand wounded. That October, the Battle of Mogadishu was waged. Elite US Special Ops—Delta Force, Rangers, and Seals—were sent in Black Hawk helicopters to attack a Somali warlord, Mohamed Farrah Aidid. Aidid's troops turned the tables, shot down the helicopters, and annihilated the Special Ops. Mark Bowden published *Black Hawk Down* (1999), and Ridley Scott directed a 2001 movie by the same title. In effect, Bowden and Scott were hermeneuts interpreting for Americans the dangers of terrorism. Both evoked images of dead US troopers' bodies dragged through Mogadishu's streets. Al-Qaeda claimed to have trained the soldiers that killed the Americans.

The following year, 1994, brought no significant terrorist attacks upon the US, but in 1995 al-Qaeda plotted to assassinate President Clinton during a visit to the Philippines. More disturbing was the Oklahoma City bombing (April 1995). In this "home-grown" act of terrorism Timothy McVeigh, who viewed the US government as "the ultimate bully" (Aitken 2001), blew up the Alfred Murrah Federal Building, killing 168 people and wounding 680.

The bombing of the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia a year later (June 1996) killed 19 US Air Force soldiers and 372 others. The identity of the attack's perpetrator is debated: the US at one point attributed it to Iran; then the FBI blamed it on Hezbollah; meanwhile Abdel Bari Atwan (2006) argued al-Qaeda was responsible. Regardless of who was responsible, the Khobar Towers were near the headquarters of Saudi Arabia's oil company Aramco and a place where US soldiers were stationed. The bombing was a symbolic strike, and not an especially subtle one, at the US-Saudi alliance and its control over vast amounts of oil.

Two months later (August 1996), al-Qaeda formally targeted the US, declaring jihad against America in a *fatwa*—literally, a "judgment"—in the Palestinian newspaper *Al Quds Al Arabi*. The fatwa made it an "obligation incumbent upon every Muslim" to "kill the Americans and their allies—civilians and military" (Bin-Ladin et al. 1998). It should be understood as an al-Qaeda public *délire* binding its members to violence against the US. Al-Qaeda went to work to implement the fatwa. The Clinton administration got the message. In his memoir, *My Life*, Clinton reported that by August 1996 he had recognized "the threat of terrorism is on the rise" (2005: 737).

However, before al-Qaeda could strike, terrorism returned to New York from another source in February 1997, when Ali Abu Kamal, a Palestinian teacher, shot and killed tourists and himself on the observation deck of the Empire State Building. A note found on his body said his act was an attack upon the enemies of Palestine. Thereafter al-Qaeda, implementing its fatwa, conducted a double bombing (August 1997) against US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The Kenyan bomb killed 291 persons and wounded about 5,000. Ten were killed and 77 wounded in the Tanzanian blast. Roughly two weeks later, Clinton responded to the embassy attacks by striking Afghanistan and the Sudan with cruise missiles. Unimpressed, al-Qaeda responded by blasting a gaping hole in the *USS Cole* (October 2000); a destroyer in port at Aden, Yemen's major harbor.

Then came 9/11. From the perspective of most Americans, 9/11 was an atrocious horror: the homeland attacked and 2,977 people killed utterly unexpectedly—and on television, for everybody to watch it over and over again. From al-Qaeda's perspective, as well as that of others in opposition to the New American Empire, 9/11 had a different significance. How is one to understand these differing meanings?

Elite US officials tried to interpret it as follows. They observed that terrorist operations, al-Qaeda or otherwise, were largely directed against the US. A Congressional Research Service report declared that "U.S. policies, citizens, and interests are prime targets for international and foreign terrorism—in 2001, approximately 63 percent of all terrorist incidents worldwide were committed against U.S. citizens or property" (Perl 2003: 2). Immediately following the 9/11 attacks, Congress organized an investigation to understand their causes and what to do about them. The investigators' final document, *The 9/11 Commission Report*, was clear. The assaults were the result of "Islamic terrorism," whose agents were "Islamist extremists," a "minority strain" and "perversion of Islam" (Kean and Hamilton 2004). So from the vantage of the official US, 9/11 was the work of monstrous Middle Eastern, religious perverts. It was Huntington redux.

Al-Qaeda did not share this interpretation. Its 1998 fatwa declaring war on America had stressed, "It should not be hidden from you that the people of Islam had suffered from aggression, iniquity and injustice imposed on them by the Zionist-Crusaders alliance and their collaborators; to the extent that the Muslims blood became the cheapest and their wealth as loot in the hands of the enemies" (Bin-Ladin et al. 1998). "Zionist-Crusaders" was al-Qaeda's term for the New American Empire and its allies, including Zionist Israel. The US Leviathan had committed "aggression" against people in the Middle East. Their wealth had been seized as "booty" by their "enemies." They had become "dispossessed people" (ibid.). The

1998 fatwa was a response to the “arrogance” of which Gates had said the US was guilty.

Following Nixon’s 1970s recognition of the importance of Persian Gulf oil, the US had sought to dominate the region; especially by supporting its ally Israel, which violently expropriated Palestinian land and wealth. Additionally, the US government created client states throughout the Middle East. Saudi Arabia and Iran were the twin towers in the 1970s. Iraq became one for a while in the 1980s, as did Egypt and other Gulf States. Many leaders in these client states, schooled in American or European educational institutions, were hybrid elites. They collaborated with US economic and security elites, especially, among other matters, helping them earn profits for US companies. At the same time, these hybrid elites richly compensated themselves at the expense of ordinary people in their countries, all the while repressing them. Here was a situation of double domination, with two sets of dominators; US and client state elites, accumulating at the expense of ordinary repressed people.

In this optic, the increased Middle Eastern resistance terrorism in the 1990s further intensified the dominator/dominated contradiction. At first, in the 1980s that resistance had been supported by Gaddafi. Then, in the 1990s al-Qaeda, who as allies of the Americans during the first Afghanistan War had learned how to war against them, applied this knowledge to resisting the Zionist-Crusaders. The 1998 fatwa declaring war upon the Americans was a public *délire* ratcheting up the dominator/dominated contradiction. Annihilation of the people in the World Trade Center—iconic seat of capitalist accumulation—was an exercise of violent force implementing this public *délire*.

In the 1980s, as documented in the last chapter, US security elites had been unable to fix the problem of terrorism. Throughout the 1990s, the Bush I and Clinton administrations instituted agencies and policies to counter terrorism. The evolution of these was described by Richard Clarke, the National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection, and Counter-terrorism in the Clinton administration (2004). The *9/11 Commission Report* judged US counterterrorism to have been inadequate (2004: 71–107). The attack itself, with its nearly three thousand deaths, was brutal demonstration of the accuracy of the commission’s judgment. Prior to 9/11, Washington’s counterterrorism measures were fixless fixes to the dominator/dominated contradiction. It had become, as the title of one book put it, *The Age of Terror* (Talbot and Chanda 2001).

Scowcroft said that the fall of the Soviets led to “the rarest opportunity to shape the world.” Perhaps, but what world was to be shaped? By the turn of the new millennium the cyclical contradiction had intensified and coalesced with the systemic contradiction, which had intensified and co-

alesced with the dominator/dominated contradiction, which itself had intensified. Fixes to the contradictions had been tried and failed. Whatever shaping the Security Elites 3.0 would do was in a tempest of contradiction and fixless fixes.

## **Vulcans and Liberal Hawks**

Two sorts of Security Elites 3.0 with varying ideologies emerged to “shape” the world of contradiction and fixless fixes. These were the Vulcans and the liberal hawks. Consider first the Vulcans.

### *Vulcans*

The Vulcans were Republicans, Bush II’s leading Security Elites 3.0: Cheney; Rumsfeld; Powell; Condoleezza Rice; and slightly below the top Wolfowitz and Richard Perle; along with a number of others.<sup>6</sup> They originated as Bush II’s foreign policy advisory team during his first presidential campaign. The group met at times in Birmingham Alabama, Rice’s hometown, which boasts the world’s largest cast iron statute of the Roman god Vulcan, the divine forger of weapons out of fire. The iron and steel industry had been important in Birmingham’s history, and the statue symbolized this past. Rice called this gaggle of foreign policy advisors Vulcans, after the statue. Their “vision” reflected the understanding that US was the world’s only superpower, “whose military power was so awesome that it no longer needed to make compromises or accommodations” (Mann 2004: xii). They were iron-hard forgers of American security.

Dov Zakheim, a lesser Vulcan, has emphasized that there were differences among the major Vulcans. These certainly existed. However, all shared a long-running elective affinity with neoconservatism. Cheney and Rumsfeld came by their neoconservatism, in some measure, out of the hurley-burley of hermeneutic politics and their struggle to forge a hard line against the Soviets during the Ford administration. Wolfowitz and Perle, purported intellectuals, came by their neoconservatism from the teachings of Leo Strauss and Albert Wohlstetter; both from the University of Chicago’s economics and politics faculty, which had been deeply conservative in in the last half of the twentieth century.<sup>7</sup>

So, among the differences were key similarities: Dick Cheney expressed the shared Vulcan Ur-principle when he declared (2003) that security elites have “the duty to use force in order to create a world in the image of the US.” The emphasis in this quotation is on the word “duty.” Why was violent force a duty? Rumsfeld (in Thomas 2002), a wise-guy joker, bor-

rowed a line from the gangster Al Capone, insisting, “You get more with a nice word and a gun, than you get with a nice word”—funny man.

“Big Bad,” as Bush II nicknamed Wolfowitz, expressed more seriously why the exercise of violence was a “duty.” He recognized, as had John Quincy Adams, that there were monsters in the world. However, unlike John Quincy Adams, in the words of Richard Immerman, Wolfowitz believed “monsters cannot be contained”; so again in the words of Immerman (2010: 21), “Destroying monsters was the prerequisite for establishing an American empire, and American empire was a prerequisite for an Empire of Liberty.” Who were the monsters (or monster-alterities as I term them)? They were America’s enemies, opponents of democracy and liberty, who would deny the Vulcans the possibility of creating “a world in the image of the US.” Vulcans knew the monsters were so evil they could not “be contained.”

Dean Acheson and the old boys 1.0 were pretty tough. They had fought World War II, seen its terror, and set the US on the path of global empire by developing enormous violent force resources. But for the most part they aimed to use those forces as part of a policy of containment or rollback. Nobody dreamed of a preemptive strike against Russia. Daalder and Lindsey (2003: 2) propose that Bush II unleashed a “revolution” in US foreign policy because at the urging of his Vulcans, he “turned John Quincy Adams on his head and argued that the United States should aggressively go abroad searching for monsters to destroy” (ibid.: 13). Consider next the Democratic Security Elites 3.0 who championed a liberal hawk ideology based upon concern for the defense of human rights.

### *Liberal Hawks*

Security elites variously called “humanitarian interventionists” or “humanitarian imperialists” rose to prominence in the Clinton administration. They helped Dubya in Iraq and flourished during the Obama years.<sup>8</sup> Because these elites continue the Democrats’ Vietnam War hawk faction, they are usefully termed “liberal hawks.” They include journalist and intellectual hermeneuts such as Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times*, Fareed Zakaria of *Newsweek*, Fred Kaplan of the *Atlantic*, and Paul Berman of the *New Republic*. Other prominent liberal hawks found within the Clinton and Obama administrations included both presidents as well as Anthony Lake, Madeleine Albright, Susan Rice, Samantha Powers, and Dr. Slaughter.<sup>9</sup>

Bill Keller of the *New York Times* asserted that peace-loving liberals had had an “epiphany” (2003) that metamorphosed them from doves into hawks. Actually, the epiphany was a long time coming. Its origins lay in Jimmy Carter’s decision to make the support of human rights a guiding

principle of US foreign policy, though Carter's own human rights policy was more a diplomatic tool than a war-justifying stratagem. Anthony Lake, director of policy planning in the State Department, was an important proponent of Carter's initiative in opposition to Brzezinski (Glad 2009). Lake became Clinton's NSA.

President Clinton, and a number of important players in his administration, had opposed the Vietnam War—so much so that he had trouble properly saluting his military, a failing that ex-president Reagan kindly helped him to overcome (Gibbs and Duffy 2012). However, there was a bigger difficulty that might be called a “Kennan Problem.” “From the early days” of the Clinton administration, with the Soviets gone, there was concern to formulate “a new, integrating foreign policy doctrine to replace George Kennan's containment” (Dumbrell 2009: 41).

The slow liberal hawk epiphany, nudged by the Kennan problem, began to emerge during the grim Rwandan and Yugoslavian civil conflicts. Liberal security elites, through the windows of their authority, perceived the perpetrators of human rights violations engineering massacres, rapes, holocaust, and genocides. Rwanda in 1994, where the US refused to intervene and some 800,000 people were massacred, was central in stimulating humanitarian interventionism. Susan Rice, who observed the US's refusal to intervene from her position in the State Department, has said, “I swore to myself that if I ever faced such a crisis again, I would come down on the side of dramatic action, going down in flames if that was required” (in Power 2001: 10). Anthony Lake also witnessed Rwanda and years later reflected in a television interview that “it [Rwanda] sits as the saddest moment, in retrospect, of my time in the Clinton administration” (2004). Why was it his “saddest moment”? He did not directly explain, but perhaps it was because “we” (the US) never contemplated “an American intervention itself.” Later in the interview, he announced, “I believe in humanitarian intervention” (ibid.). President Clinton himself, after leaving the White House, said, “I'll always regret that Rwanda thing” (in Pearlman 2008: 1). Guilt over the hundreds of thousands butchered, partly due to American inaction, was the reason that Rwanda was so important in raising the security elites' consciousness about human rights.

It was during Yugoslavia's dismemberment that members of the Clinton administration actually began to act as humanitarian interventionists, no one more so than Madeleine Albright. She, according to David Halberstam, was “a champion of the use of force” and the “leading hawk” in Clinton's administration (2001: 197, 376), due in part to her particular background. Her parents had been Czech elites prior to World War II. Her father had been the Czech ambassador to Yugoslavia, witnessed Nazi terror in Eastern Europe followed by the Soviet takeover, and become a “hard-

liner” in the struggle against Moscow (*ibid.*: 382). Albright said her parents were “great humanists who worried about what happens if evil succeeds” (in M. J. Lee 2012: 3). In 1994 she had contemplated the Rwandan “evil” from her position as UN ambassador (1993–1997). Thereafter, promoted to secretary of state (1997–2001), she watched “evil” as Milosevic’s Serbs brutalized Bosnians, Croatians, and Kosovars and as these latter returned “evil” with “evil.” Such experiences made her a fierce promoter of US military intervention—so great an advocate that when the US finally did begin bombing Serbia (1999) over its Kosovo invasion, the ensuing conflict would be called “Madeleine’s War” (Buckwalter 2002).

Paralleling and aiding Albright’s rise was Hillary Clinton’s emergence as a liberal hawk. She had favored intervention in Haiti (1994) and Bosnia (1995), and then, in the hermeneutic politics over whether to bomb Serbia to punish its military campaign in Kosovo, she sided with Albright. Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, two influential interpreters of the Kosovo situation, were hesitant about the use of violent force. Hillary was not. She recalled telephoning her husband: “I urged him to bomb” (in S. Chapman 2007: 23). According to her biographer, Gail Sheehy (1999: 345), Bill and Hillary disputed over the matter for a number of days, and finally she moralized, “You cannot let this go on to the end of a century that has seen the major holocaust of our time. What do we have NATO for if not to defend our way of life”? What she understood by “way of life” apparently was, bombs away!

To be clear, certain liberals justified violent intervention in terms of “evil.” Obama had underscored this in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech when he said: “evil does exist.” However, their understanding of evil came from a particular hermeneutic based upon a particular perceptual understanding of wickedness. Terrorist violation of human rights was evil. The procedure for addressing malevolence was intervention against it, with violent intervention being entirely acceptable. Epiphany had been a long time coming. Ten years to be exact, but doves metamorphosed into hawks, supported by a humanitarian interventionist ideology.

During an Indonesian campaign of terror in East Timor in the late 1990s, Sandy Berger, who replaced Anthony Lake as NSA (1997–2001), responded to criticism that the Clinton administration had not intervened in East Timor with the statement, “I don’t think anybody ever articulated a doctrine which said that we ought to intervene whenever there’s a humanitarian problem” (in Dumbrell 2009: 45). This might be called the “Berger Caveat” to the humanitarian interventionist hermeneutic, that is, the US government will intervene in humanitarian crises when and where it wants. Because of this qualification, some have detected hypocrisy concerning the liberal hawks’ defense of human rights.<sup>10</sup>



But the Clinton administration had done it. They had solved the Kennan problem. They had their grand strategy. It was a liberal hawk iteration of the “violence makes peace” hermeneutic of the Security Elites 1.0. Human rights were universal. Evil violated those rights. Terrorists despoiled them, so terrorists were evil. Procedurally, if the US perceived human rights had been violated anywhere in the world, then they could proceed to intervene. If the violations had been violent, then the US reserved the right to fight evil violence with good violence.

This argument reprises that of nineteenth-century imperialists. Then, it was legitimate to violently intervene globally because the opponents were bad savages. Now it was legitimate to do the same because the terrorists were still bad savages. In both cases it was a moral good, as Kurtz had put it in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, to “exterminate all the brutes.”

It is time to summarize how the Republican and Democratic security elites had responded to the worsening contradictions that they faced at the end of the old and the beginning of the new millennium. Their responses differed from those of their economic elite counterparts, who were frozen into impotence due to the uncertainty of their fixless fixes. The masters and commanders 3.0 intended to “shape” their imperial world. Andrew Bacevich (2005), a perceptive scholar of contemporary imperial warring, has argued that they would do so, due in good measure to a “new militarism.” In our terms, this neo-militarism was the Vulcan and Hawk iterations of the “violence makes peace” hermeneutic. However, the fact that US security elites were disposed to make peace violently does not explain *what* they would be violent about and *how* they would go about implementing the wars they waged from the 1990s through 2014. The first of these two questions is answered by considering the fixation affecting the Vulcans and Hawks.

### Situational Fixation: Oil and Terror

Reflection upon reoccurring events was said in Chapter 2 to be situational fixation. If the situation is such that an event happens once and never again, it is a one-off; people do not think much about it. If the situation is such that it reoccurs, and what is reoccurring is important, they reflect, that is, fixate, upon it. If you get a toothache that lasts for ten minutes and then goes away, it is no big deal and you forget about it. However, if that toothache continues for several days, it becomes something you fixate upon. People desire to fix what they are situationally fixated upon; that is, they are experimentally fixated. Be very clear, experimental fixation is desire—a union of reason and emotion—to *act*, and thus motivates people

with a laser-like focus to act on their fixations. In the 1990s Vulcans and Hawks situationally fixated upon two sorts of circumstances: those involving oil, and those involving terror.

### *Oil: The “Foundation” of “the Global Economy”*

First, the situation regarding oil looked bad—at least for the US Leviathan. As earlier documented, since the 1970s the US oil industry “had fallen on tough times” (LeVine 2007: xiii) with the extensive oil nationalizations and the rise of OPEC. Starting in the 1980s, the addition of new players in oil commodity chains that competed with the majors for oil supplies exacerbated the “tough times.” These companies—Russian and Chinese—might be called the new majors. The three largest Russian petroleum companies are Gazprom, Lukoil, and Rosneft. Three Chinese companies—the Chinese National Offshore Corporation, the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation, and PetroChina—had been “increasingly aggressive” in a “global investment blitz” (“Chinese Oil Giants” 2003).

Then, for a while in the 1980s, the situation regarding oil looked better because of the state of affairs in the USSR’s former Caspian and Central Asian region, where the Russians had been developing oil and gas for over a century (LeVine 2007). With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, this industry was up for grabs. The Clinton security elites could hardly believe their calculations. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott announced there might be 200 billion barrels of crude oil around the Caspian, together with additionally enormous amounts of gas (Cheterian 1997). Media heremeneuts hyped the region as the “new” oil “El Dorado” (Guma 2006).<sup>11</sup> Consequently, the Clinton administration’s energy policy sought “to establish an American preserve” in the Caspian (LeVine 2007: xiv). So the oil situation changed: in the 1990s, oil elites went from a fixation upon “tough times” to preparing for a new “El Dorado.”

Clinton’s liberal hawks fixated on the oil situation because they recognized, as Bill Richardson, Clinton’s energy secretary (1998–2001), put it, that “oil has literally made foreign and security policy for decades” (in Kaldor, Karl, and Said 2007: 1). Why had oil “made ... security policy”? This question was easily answered by Kenneth Pollack, who bluntly stated, “It’s the Oil, Stupid—... the global economy built over the last 50 years rests on a foundation of inexpensive, plentiful oil, and if that foundation were removed, the global economy would collapse” (in Everest 2004: 251). You were “stupid” if you did not know the world “runs” on petroleum energy. Liberal hawks were not “stupid.” What about the Vulcans?

They were not stupid either, and some of them, as earlier noted, had close ties with the energy business. However, they fixated upon a seemly

self-contradictory realization: on one hand, the US Leviathan, even though it had economic problems, was in a good situation; on the other, the petroleum situation was bad; but not to worry—this could redound to the New American Empire's benefit. Two reports documented their fixation.

The first came from the Project for the New American Century (PNAC), founded in 1996 as a neoconservative think tank; Wolfowitz, Perle, Rumsfeld, and Cheney were active members. At the end of the 1990s the PNAC published *Rebuilding America's Defenses* (RAD; Donnelly 2000), which largely addressed military policy but had implications for oil.<sup>12</sup> The document concentrated on political circumstances and was triumphalist, declaring the times to be a “unipolar” moment in world history (Donnelly 2000: 2) at which the US was “the world's only superpower” enjoying “pre-eminent military power” (ibid.: i). In effect, the Vulcans were bragging. With the Soviets eliminated, the New American Empire had achieved what no other empire had ever achieved: world empire. Eat your hearts out, Alexander, Ghengis Khan, Napoleon.

Nevertheless, the PNAC report recognized that the US faced economic problems, which they spoke of in terms of “a shrinking industrial base poorly structured to be the ‘arsenal of democracy’ for the 21st century” (ibid.: 1). In terms earlier discussed in the chapter, the “shrinking industrial base” was a consequence of neoliberal outsourcing and the cyclical contradiction. To address this vulnerability, the report recommended that security elites proceed “from the belief that America should seek to preserve and extend its position of global leadership by maintaining the pre-eminence of U.S. military forces” (ibid.: 4). Implicit in this “belief” was an understanding that military “preeminence” could “preserve and extend” US empire. Preserving and extending empire was reproducing it, so RAD did not base the New American Empire's reproduction on an economic system beset with fixless fixes. Rather, imperial reproduction was to be entrusted to the military.

RAD reiterated that the Persian Gulf was, “an essential element in U.S. security strategy given the long-standing American interests in the region” (ibid.: 17). Of course, those “interests” were in oil. The second report was more explicit about oil. In April 2001, two months after Bush II's inauguration, the US Council on Foreign Relations and the Baker Institute of Public Policy issued an energy task force report concerning US energy strategy entitled *Strategic Energy Policy Challenges for the 21st Century* (SEPC 2001). The report had been commissioned by the new vice president, Dick Cheney. Task force members were technical specialists from “every segment of the world of energy” (ibid.: 3). Their expert finding was brutal: “the energy sector” was “in critical condition” (ibid.: 7). Cheney's task force singled out “spare capacity”—the amount of oil available at any

time above that needed for immediate consumption—as a key concern. The report noted that OPEC spare capacity stood at 25 percent of global demand in 1988 and at 8 percent of demand in 1990. It was projected at only 2 percent in 2001. The report interpreted this rapid decline as follows:

The world is currently precariously close to utilizing all of its available global oil production capacity, raising the chances of an oil supply crisis with more substantial consequences than seen in three decades. (SEPC 2001: 4)

The SEPC report obliterated any notion that the New American Empire was headed for any petroleum El Dorado. The energy sector was in a “critical condition.” So the situation the Vulcans fixated on in the 2000s was that that the US had become a world empire reproducible by “military preeminence,” but that the empire was threatened by an “oil supply crisis.” How should the US Leviathan respond?

The Vulcans answered this question in the “capstone” public statement of US military policy, the National Defense Security Strategy (NDS-2008 2008). Released in 2008, it reflected earlier Vulcan understandings that had been around since the 1990s. It decreed that “as the relative balance of economic and military power between states shifts ... new fears and insecurities will arise, presenting new risks.... These risks will require managing the divergent needs of massively increasing energy demand to maintain economic development” (ibid.: 5). It explicitly recognized that the US military must involve itself in “managing ... massively increasing energy demands.” Later the same document further announced, “The well-being of the global economy is contingent on ready access to energy resources;” and “The United States will continue to foster access to and flow of energy resources vital to the world economy” (ibid.: 16). As Bush II began his presidency, the Vulcans’ fixation upon the situation of their empire and the world’s oil focused upon the military’s “managing” oil in the sense of providing “access to” it.

They might have been said to be experimentally fixated upon global warring as a force resource to control petroleum energy, thereby enhancing the New American Empire’s “managing” the “well-being” of its global economy.

In sum, US security elite fixation on the situation of oil might be understood as beginning with the Nixon Administration’s recognition of an oil “crisis,” continuing with the Carter’s administration’s Carter Doctrine, and strengthening with the liberal hawks’ and Vulcans’ common belief that if the US Leviathan employed its military to control the oil, then it could control the global economy and thereby relax the economic contradictions to its imperial being. Consider now the fixation on terror.

### *Terrorism: A Happening Thing*

The situation with terrorism was simpler than that of oil. As it had been in the 1980s, so it was in the 1990s. Terrorism happened, re-happened, and re-happened again and again. It could not be stopped. It was, like the sound of police, fire truck, and ambulance sirens in a city, “a happening thing”—and, in bad news for US elites, was often aimed at them. Then, it *really* happened. 9/11! Out of the clear blue sky, the hijacked planes flew in for a second attack on the World Trade Center and a first on the Pentagon. The twin towers—the New York ones, not the Middle Eastern ones—afire, collapsed. My youngest son sat at the Brooklyn waterfront that day and watched little black specks falling from the burning towers. He puzzled over what they might be before recognition struck: Desperate people flinging themselves off the towers to avoid the inferno.

On the following weekend, Bush II and his top Vulcans met at Camp David to decide on a response. Following this meeting Dubya announced his war on terrorism, saying, “This crusade—this war on terrorism—is going to take awhile” (in Bazinet 2001). A week later, in a nationally televised address to a joint session of Congress, he reiterated the message, saying, “Our ‘war on terror’ begins with Al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated” (“Transcript of President Bush’s Address” 2001).

The oil situation had been like a roller coaster melody, from high notes to low notes, all the time getting higher. That of terrorism was like a sharp dental pain that suddenly became excruciating. Terrorists had been unstoppable. When they took down the towers, the hurt became unbearable. Dubya cried out that he would mount a “crusade,” and US security elites 3.0 experimentally fixated upon a “war on terrorism.”

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has narrated a tale of two economic and security elites in the face of a perfect storm of intensifying and coalescing contradictions that provoked ominous reproductive vulnerabilities. The economic elites tried, and failed, to fix the vulnerabilities. The security elites responded to the storm of contradictions by developing liberal hawk and Vulcan factions. Neither faction understood the storm in terms of contradiction. Rather, they fixated on it in terms of the perceptual cultural messages already stored in the neuronal memory evoked by the actualities the contradictions created. In the actuality created by the intensification of economic contradictions, the control of oil became central to the US Leviathan’s

“well-being.” Meanwhile, intensification of the dominator/dominated contradiction created an actuality where terror stalked US elites.

So the Hawks and Vulcans first became situationally fixated on oil and terror during the 1990s. Having reflected on them, they came away with the understanding that they would be violent about issues of oil and terror, believing that such violence could fix the US Leviathan’s reproductive vulnerabilities. That is, this situational fixation produced an experimental one in which Hawks and Vulcans experimentally fixated on the exercise of violent force to control oil and eliminate terrorism. The next two chapters are about how they did it—how they used the oil-control and anti-terrorist iterations of the global domination public *délire*, already instituted back in the 1980s, to choreograph world warring.

## Notes

1. Bush II was controversial. A word is in order about his competencies. Rumsfeld (2011: 319) insists Bush “was a far more formidable president than his popular image.” As Condoleezza Rice explained, “He’s really smart—and he’s also self-disciplined” (in Felix 2005: 8). Scott McClellan (2009: xiii) described him as “self-confident, quick-witted, down-to-earth and stubborn.” Rumsfeld, Rice, and McClellan were Dubya’s employees. Bush (2010: 61) himself announced he became convinced he should run for president after listening to a sermon about Moses leading the Israelites out of Egypt. Kristof (2000) reported on the occasion he walked up to a matron at a smart cocktail party and asked, “So, what’s sex like after 50, anyway?” Bush II denigrated his policy people as “propeller heads” and insisted, “I don’t do nuance” (Draper 2007: 165). Furthermore, prior to assuming the presidency, he acknowledged in a moment of candor (or perhaps foolhardiness), “I don’t have the foggiest idea what I think about international, foreign policy” (in B. Woodward 2006: 3). Nevertheless, he believed himself to be effective, confiding, “I don’t spend a lot of time theorizing or agonizing, I get things done” (Daalder and Lindsay 2003: 199). The evidence of his cocaine use is largely hearsay, but it is considerable (Hatfield 1999).

2. Condoleezza Rice’s family preserves the memory of their great-grandmother Julia Head Rice, who was a house slave on an Alabama plantation during the Civil War (Felix 2005: 24; Rice 2010: 13). It is remembered that toward the end of the war, when Union soldiers threatened the plantation, Julia helped hide its horses from them. How is one to interpret Rice’s family remembrance? Does it support the contention that her family looked favorably on working for oppressors? It will be recalled that in the Civil War, hundreds of thousands of slaves fought for the North, against those oppressors.

3. The US had been involved in Congolese conflicts well before Susan Rice. However, the Rwandan invasion of Congo (the First Congo War, 1996–1997) that Rice argued for led directly to the Second Congo War (1998–2003), the deadliest conflict in contemporary African history, in which an estimated 3.9 million people were killed (Coghlan et al. 2006: 44). Capitalist interests, including US ones, plundered Congolese resources during these wars (Renton, Seddon, and Zeilig 2007).

4. Information about declining profit rates is presented by Magdoff and Sweezy (1988). Makoto Itoh (1990) provides evidence for the 1970s and 1980s; Foster and McChesney (2009) for the 2007–2009 Great Recession. In an entire issue of the *New Left Review*, Robert Brenner (1998) marshaled evidence bearing on profit rates that supported an overaccumula-

tion explanation for the period between 1950 and 1993. Callinicos (2010: 51–68) summarizes evidence of the entire period.

5. Steven Wright (2007) and Hellmich (2011) provide useful accounts of al-Qaeda. Ibrahim (2007) has published certain of al-Qaeda's texts, allowing readers to grasp al-Qaeda from their own perspective.

6. I am using the term Vulcan broadly to refer to Bush II's leading security advisors, as does James Mann (2004). Daalder and Lindsey (2003: 17–35) discuss the Vulcans from a Democratic perspective. Zakheim (2011a) provides an insider's view.

7. Strauss was a political philosopher whose thought has been judged by some to be elitist and anti-democratic (Drury 1999; for an opposing view consult S. Smith 2006). Wohlstetter was a controversial Cold War nuclear strategist credited with steering his students along a neoconservative path (Unger 2008), and the supposed model for the mad Dr. Strangelove in Stanley Kubrik's dark 1964 comedy of the same title.

8. Humanitarian interventionism is an old liberal doctrine found in John Stuart Mill (1859). Chomsky (1999) criticizes it. Brimont (2006) explains how it legitimates imperial violence.

9. Perhaps most directly influential, at least concerning Dubya's Iraq II War, was Kenneth Pollack, a longtime CIA specialist on Iranian and Iraqi military issues who became the director of Persian Gulf affairs for the NSC during the Clinton administration. Leaving government, he took up residence at the Brookings Institution, a centrist think tank dedicated to propagating interpretations relevant to US government policy. Especially important in this regard was his *The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq* (2002). Bill Keller, then the *New York Times* managing editor, when revealing his own support for Iraq II, announced "Kenneth Pollack" wrote "surely the most influential book of this season" because it "provided intellectual cover for every liberal who finds himself inclining toward war but uneasy about Mr. Bush" (2002).

10. Herman and Peterson (2010) document US human rights hypocrisy, especially as it pertains to genocide.

11. A "downsizing" has reduced proven Central Asian crude oil reserves (Ebel and Menon 2000: 4), perhaps down to 40 million barrels.

12. RAD's project participants were a neoconservative who's who in which the father-son team of the Kagans—Donald (father), Fred, and Robert (sons)—was particularly important. RAD's principal author was Thomas Donnelly.

## WORLD WARRING 1990–2014

### *The Middle Eastern Theater*

I believe that [the revolt of the passengers on the hijacked Flight 93 on September 11, 2001] was the first counterattack in World War III. (President George W. Bush, 2006, in Chossudovsky 2007)

We're in the early stages of what I would describe as the Third World War and, frankly, our bureaucracies are not responding fast enough and we don't have the right attitude. (Speaker of the House of Representatives Newt Gingrich, 2006, in Chossudovsky 2007)

By 2014 American global warring had raged in five theaters: the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific. So it could be said that no matter where you lived on the earth, war was coming to a theater near you—except in the US (where they watched it on their TVs), thanks to the assistance of US Security Elites 3.0. Some, like Bush II and former Congressman Newt Gingrich, quoted above, thought global warring had escalated to become an actual World War III. This, as will be shown, is plausible; but it was a world war distinct from any other.<sup>1</sup>

The last chapter argued that Security Elites 3.0 fixated upon global warring to control oil and to eliminate terror. The work of this chapter and the next is to investigate how the security elites actually went about doing this. It does so using evidence from the sixteen global wars between 1991 and 2014 to discover whether the New American Empire exercised violent force through application of the oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délîres*. Inquiry proceeds by first examining the particularities of each theater. Then it documents the specific global wars in a theater and establishes the relevance of the oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délîres* to each conflict. The powers created by the wars are considered, especially to learn whether the Security Elites 3.0 got what they *délîred* when they warred.



Did they fix the vulnerabilities provoked by the storm of contradictions? This chapter investigates global warring in the Middle Eastern theater. The next chapter considers it in the other theaters. The final discussion in the next chapter concerns whether the evidence of chapters 8, 9, and 10 is consistent with the global warring theory.

## The Middle Eastern Theater

[There] is a memo [at the Pentagon] that describes how we're going to take out seven countries in five years, starting with Iraq, and then Syria, Lebanon, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and, finishing off, Iran. (NATO Supreme Allied Commander General Wesley Clark 2007)

She weeps while telling the story. The abaya (tunic) she wears cannot hide the shaking of her body as waves of grief roll through her. "I cannot get the image out of my mind of her foetus being blown out of her body." (A memory of Muna Salim, in Jamail 2004)

Muna Salim's sister, Artica, was seven months pregnant when two rockets from US warplanes struck her austere home in Falluja. Boom! Splat! The New American Empire was in the business of blasting unborn children out of their mother's bodies. On 2 March 2007 General Wesley Clark, speaking at the civic-minded Commonwealth Club of California, let the cat out of the memorandum bag. Actually, he let out the *cats*—seven Middle Eastern countries that the Pentagon planned to "take over." Of course, nobody takes over a region without a fight. The years since the 1990s have witnessed a veritable War for the Middle East, with imperial storm troopers fighting over six of the seven countries Clark mentioned as targets. And the thing of it is, knowledgeable folk knew the Middle East to be a "dangerous neighborhood."

First, there was the problem of the military satrapies that were supposed to defend US Middle Eastern interests—the twin towers of Iran and Saudi Arabia. Since the fall of the shah, Iran has viewed the US as the "Great Satan," an interpretation only strengthened by the US's tilt toward Iraq in the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s and especially by its use of "Robocruiser" to shoot down a civilian Iranian airliner. After 1979, Iran was an enemy of the US.

Saudi Arabia was still an ally, but one with an "uncertain future" (T. Lippman 2012). The country was governed as an absolute monarchy by the Saud royal family. Their governance exhibited a political bipolarity: on the one hand, provision of generous benefits to citizens deemed loyal; on the other, repression of opponents (Alrabaa 2010). Absolute monarchy invites rebellion. King Faisal was assassinated in 1975 by a nephew. In 1979

rebels seized the Holy Sanctuary in Mecca, citing the corruption of the House of Saud. In 1992 a group of 107 Wahhabi clerics sent King Fahd a “Memorandum of Understanding” criticizing his government for corruption and human rights abuses, as well as for allowing infidel soldiers (those of the US military) into the kingdom. Since the early nineteenth century the House of Saud had allied with the Wahhabis, a fundamentalist Sunni Islamic sect.<sup>2</sup> Criticism by revered religious figures was a blow to regime legitimacy.

Additionally, there had been problems in the country’s East for a considerable period (Zambelis 2012). The area produces about 90 percent of Saudi oil, little of whose value returns to the region, and its inhabitants are Shiite Muslims. Wahhabis condemn Shiites as infidels. So the House of Saud had oppressed people in the East for both their religious beliefs and their grumbling about not receiving a fair share of the oil revenues. In response, Easterners had organized different nonviolent and violent resistances to their oppressors. Given such developments, knowledgeable US security elites worried about the House of Saud’s durability. Thus, one twin tower had collapsed by the 1990s and the other was “uncertain.”

As described earlier, the Reagan administration had sought to replace Iran with Iraq as a new tower of support for US imperial projects, knowing full well that Saddam Hussein was something of a “monster.” Iraq had come out of the Iran-Iraq war in financial distress. Wars are expensive. Iraq had borrowed a lot, and owed roughly \$60 billion, a debt it found difficult to service because oil prices had declined during the 1980s. Iraq, then, was a monster-satrapy, frustrated by financial exigencies.

Then there was the Israel-Palestine conflict, which began in the late 1940s with Israelis violently cleansing Palestinians from their homes, making them stateless in their own land.<sup>3</sup> US elites had long championed Israel. By 1990 Israel had used US support to create the most powerful military in the Middle East, which it exercised to defend its occupation of Palestinian lands and its external security concerns, as well as those of the US. Palestinians were dismayed that Israeli security forces routinely used American arms to crush their resistance.

Israeli repression of Palestinians made the Holy Land a birthing ground for resistance terror organizations opposing both Israel and its American friend. The grandparent of these was the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), founded in 1964. Associated with the PLO are Fatah, its military arm; the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP); Al Saiqa; and Tanzim. Independent of the PLO but still anti-Israeli are Islamic Jihad, the Palestine Liberation Front, Abu Nidal, Hamas, and Hezbollah. Israeli oppression motivated Osama bin Laden—the iconic terror entrepreneur and Arsenal football club supporter—to create al-Qaeda in the late 1980s

(Scheuer 2007). These organizations, as we have seen, swarmed to attack US imperial targets.

In support of its Middle Eastern vital interests, the US Leviathan forged an alliance with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), an association of six petroleum-wealthy Persian Gulf monarchies (Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates) that was founded in 1981. These were authoritarian monarchies threatened by a series of popular demonstrations that began in 2010 in North Africa—first in Tunisia, next in Egypt—and seemed to target authoritarian governments such as those in the GCC. The demonstrations began peacefully, tended to quickly turn violent, and were termed the “Arab Spring.” Springtime in the Middle East seemed in part to be a response to neoliberal policies that had impoverished the working and middle classes; in part a claim by Islamists for more Islamic forms of authority; and in part a demand by secularists for liberal democratic governance.<sup>4</sup> By 2014, the Middle Eastern springtime had been followed by a reactionary winter, especially in Egypt, where a repressive military dictatorship threatened. The implications for the New American Empire were ambiguous—hostility to neoliberalism was worrisome, as was the possibility of Islamic states. So by the end of the first decade of the new millennium, the Middle East seethed with violent movements to make and remake the region’s forms of governance.

Without question, by 1990 Vulcans and Hawks fixated, as the title of Daniel Yergin’s book put it, on “The Prize” (1993, Middle Eastern oil. But they equally saw enemies in Iran and its allies as well as in terrorists; plus a dubious client in Saddam Hussein’s Iraq and a wobbly one in Saudi Arabia. By 2010 different countries were bothered by the Arab Spring’s attempts to remake the political map of the whole region, with ambiguous implications for the American imperial project. Hence, the Middle East in the last decade of the twentieth century and the first of the twenty-first century was a rough neighborhood, getting rougher.

Nonetheless, it was a neighborhood where the Security Elites 3.0 had made preparations by building up CENTCOM during the Iran-Iraq War. Since 1990, eyes on the prize in this rough neighborhood, they have waged six global wars in Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Israel. These are considered next, taking first the case of Iraq, where the phrase “cut and run” will assume especial significance.

### **The Iraq War, 1991–2011: Cutting and Running “Responsibly”**

This is an assault on humanity. (Khalid Salman, lawyer for the victims of the Haditha Massacre, in AFP 2012)

In English slang the phrase “cut and run” means to run away from something. It has been suggested that it has a nautical derivation, referring to ships making a fast departure by cutting the anchor rope and running before the wind. In contemporary usage it often has a scornful connotation. To cut and run is to lose one’s nerve and stop something too quickly. In order to appreciate the significance of this phrase for American global warring in Iraq, attention turns to Anbar Province, a huge desert region to the west of Baghdad.

Haditha is a small city about 150 kilometers northwest of Falluja, where Artica died. After the US invasion in 2003 it became a center of resistance to US occupation. On 19 November 2005 a detachment of patrolling US marines—“frontline bullet chewers” (Bellavia 2007: 3)—massacred twenty-four of Haditha’s citizens. The soldiers involved in the incident were investigated by US authorities. Only one was ever charged. He received a slap on the hand. On hearing of the result of these legal proceedings, the lawyer for the victims judged it “an assault on humanity.” Indeed, many throughout the world go further and assess the New American Empire’s twenty years of warring against Iraq from 1991 to 2011 as a crime against humanity. The narrative that follows first discusses the actual warring against Iraq, showing how the US ended its “assault on humanity” by cutting and running. Then, it argues that the hostilities followed from the interpretations the Security Elites 3.0 made of events in light of the oil-control and the anti-terrorism public *délires*.

Before we proceed, one point needs to be clear. Iraq has oil, perhaps more of it than all but one other country in the world (Saudi Arabia). Conservatively, it has 112 billion proven barrels of reserves, 10.7 percent of the world’s total (Klare 2004: 19). The exact size of Iraq’s oil reserves is unclear. Some estimates suggest there may be more than 300 billion barrels (Luft 2003), which would mean Iraq has even more oil than Saudi Arabia. Additionally, this oil is relatively close to the surface and hence easy and less costly to extract.

### *US Global Warring against Iraq prior to 1991*

In Arabic the name Saddam means means “one who confronts.” The man is a metonym for the country, because since the 1970s the history of independent Iraq has been one of confrontation—often violent—with US imperialism. Between 1972 and 1991 there were three—secret, but nevertheless real—bouts of global warring against Iraq. Saddam had begun his political rise in the 1960s with conflicting commitments to Iraqi nationalism, socialism, and pan-Arabism on the one hand, and to the US and the CIA on the other (Coughlin 2005). At the age of twenty he joined the Baath

Party. In the early 1960s Iraq was governed by a left-leaning regime headed by Abdel Karim Qasim. At this time the Iraqi Petroleum Company (IPC), a consortium of British and American oil companies, controlled Iraq's oil. Under Qasim's guidance, a policy of oil nationalization began. Public Law #80 was passed, stripping the IPC of 99.5 percent of its ownership rights.

This was unacceptable to President John F. Kennedy, who in 1963 authorized CIA support for a successful Baathist coup against Qasim. JFK's authorization of CIA participation in the coup was essentially a reiteration of Eisenhower's earlier coup against Mossadeq in Iran, both coups being over control of oil. Saddam probably had his first encounters with the CIA at this time. The coup succeeded and the Baathists came to power, using lists supplied by the CIA to eliminate leftist professionals and intellectuals. The young Saddam was said to have had a hand in supervising the killing. The CIA's importance to the coup is not clear, but Andrew and Patrick Cockburn (2000) report that James Critchfield, then head of the CIA in the Middle East, insisted that "we regarded it as a great victory," while Ali Saleh Sa'adi, then the Baath Party secretary general, believed "we came to power on a CIA train." This was the first covert, indirect war between the US against Iraq.

By 1969 Saddam was the *de facto* leader of the country; in 1979 he became its president. There was initially some US sentiment that he might make a fine client to counterbalance more radical Arab states, especially Egypt under Nasser. However, in 1972 Saddam continued Qasim's work and fully nationalized the IPC. Worse, he signed the Iraq–Soviet Union Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation (also in 1972), making it clear that he would confront US imperial *délires*.

Unsurprisingly, President Nixon and his powerful henchman Henry Kissinger turned against Saddam, hoping to acquire greater US access to Iraqi oil. In 1973 they made a secret agreement with the shah to commence covert action against the Iraqi regime. This was to be done by arming Iraqi Kurds in their rebellion against Baghdad. Israel joined in this campaign, and for a period in 1973–1974, Iranian, Israeli, and CIA agents all operated in Iraqi Kurdistan. In 1975 Saddam negotiated a cessation of support for the Kurd rebellion by agreeing to Iranian demands concerning the Shatt al-Arab, as we saw earlier among other matters. This fighting was a second covert, indirect form of global warring between Iraq and the US. Like the first global warring, it partly concerned control over oil.

In a third bout of global warring from 1985 through 1986 (discussed in chapter 7), the Reagan administration secretly armed the Iranians in their 1980–1988 war against Iraq. The Iranians were supposed to serve as proxies for the Americans to stop the Iraqis from becoming too powerful by winning the conflict. Arming the Iranians was illegal, so it was supposed

to be covert. When the Reagan administration's actions were made public, they became known as the Iran-Contra scandal.

What made the arming of the Iranians so scandalous was how it was done: the administration had the Israelis sell US arms to the Iranians and then used the proceeds of these sales to support ultra-right militias (the Contras) in their fight against the progressive Sandinistas in Nicaragua. In principle, the weapons were sold to Iran to win the release of US hostages taken after the fall of the shah in 1979. In practice, US security elites knew these weapons would be used against Saddam and were not averse to seeing Saddam humbled. The Iran-Iraq War, as detailed earlier, ended in a stalemate. Saddam was chastened by it, though he was resurrected as a US client—though one thought to be something of a monster-alterity—with his country's finances in terrible shape.

Three times prior to 1991 the US had intervened in Iraq with covert, indirect global warring. Two of the three interventions had confronted Saddam. Two of the three interventions had been over control of Iraq's oil. As Mohammed Aboush, an Iraqi Oil Ministry official, lamented, "Oil has not been a blessing. Without oil, we would not have had these wars" (in Maass 2009: 152). In 1991, a fourth US global war against Iraq began. It would be long and grim, and it ultimately, as will become clear, involved oil.

### *The Twenty-Year War: US versus Iraq 1991–2011*

The years between 1991 and 2011 are often depicted as a time of two wars between Iraq and the US divided from each other by a decade of peace. The wars are said to be Bush I's Persian Gulf War I (1990–1991) followed by Bush II's Persian Gulf War II (2003–2011), with the Clinton administration (1993–2009) providing an interregnum between hostilities. However, just as historians talk of the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453) between England and France, so it is appropriate to speak of a protracted Twenty-Year War between Saddam and the New American Empire. In the Hundred Years' War the debate was over whether territory in continental France would be part of the English Empire. In the Twenty Year War the debate has been over Iraq's position in the New American Empire. Further, note that the soi-disant tranquility between the two opponents during Clinton's presidency was actually a time of air and naval blockade, and that blockades *are* acts of war. Consider the first period of the war.

*Gulf War I, An American Anabasis:* An *anabasis* in ancient Greece was any march from a coast into the interior. The *Anabasis* is Xenophon's (2004) account of an extraordinary fifth-century BC march by a Greek mercenary army from the Mediterranean through the hostile Persian Empire. Gulf

War I started at the coast in Kuwait and marched into the interior of Iraq. It was the US's anabasis. Its immediate *casus belli* was Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, which suggests that inquiry into Iraq's relations with Kuwait is pertinent.

Kuwait had been an Ottoman province of Iraq since the 1500s (Crystal 1995). Following World War I, the victorious allies at the League of Nations conference in 1920 dismembered the Ottoman Empire as punishment for its siding with the Germans, which was how they justified awarding each other its parts. The UK received, among other areas, Iraq. By 1920 it was clear that Iraq had significant amounts of oil, and the IPC was formed. A year later Kuwait was severed from Iraq and made an independent monarchy governed by the Al-Sabah lineage under the tutelage of the UK. One goal of this act was to block Iraq's access to the Persian Gulf, weakening its nationalist aspirations. In 1932 Britain granted independence to Iraq, which became a monarchy headed by the Hashim dynasty. London's military support of the Hashims meant that independence was limited. Iraqis put up lively resistance to the British disposition of Kuwait throughout the 1930s. A popular Kuwaiti uprising in 1939 demanded that Kuwait return to Iraq. The UK crushed it. In 1958, when the Iraqi prime minister publicly asked for the return of Kuwait, the British government replied, regarding this request, that it "approved in principle." That same year, Qassim overthrew the monarchy and London abrogated the agreement to return Kuwait to Iraq.

Should a powerful imperial thug sever Texas from the US, it would be Americans' patriotic duty to recover it. Saddam's bid to reconnect Kuwait to Iraq might be imagined as the fulfillment of a similar patriotic obligation. He was joining together what had been cut asunder by an imperial intimidator.<sup>5</sup> Further, it made splendid sense economically. Kuwait had 96.5 billion barrels of proven oil reserves or 9.2 percent of the world's total reserves (Klare 2004: 19). Gaining of control over these would solve Iraq's financial problems and so much more.

On 2 August 1990 the monster-alterity behaved like a monster-alterity (from the vantage of the US and Kuwaiti governments) and invaded Kuwait. Whatever the logic behind Saddam's annexation, Bush I was irritated. Five days later he began Operation Desert Storm, a campaign to eject the Iraqis from Kuwait. First, the elder Bush put together a coalition of thirty-nine states to assist CENTCOM, states that were for the most part imperial clients. Japan and Germany did not join the coalition but did contribute significant financial support. General Colin Powell, then chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had overall responsibility for the order of battle. CENTCOM's commander, General Norman Schwarzkopf ("Stormin' Norman"), commanded the coalition troops that did the actual fighting;

these eventually numbered around a million. Most of the coalition's soldiers came from CENTCOM.

Combat operations began on 17 January 1991 with heavy aerial bombardment of Iraqi targets. Invasion began on two fronts—one in Kuwait, the other in Iraq—on 24 February. Just as the Germans had experimented with their newest military machines during the Spanish Civil War; so the Americans tried out their new technologies during Gulf War I—especially stealth bombers, smart bombs, and armor-piercing depleted uranium ordnance. Iraqi forces, outgunned, were devastated. On 27 February Saddam ordered evacuation of Kuwait. Long convoys of retreating Iraqis slowly straggling along the Kuwait-Iraq highway were attacked from the air, causing the road to be named the “Highway of Death.” Stormin’ Norman had stormed through Gulf War I in a hundred hours. Bush I declared Kuwait liberated on 28 February. They marched in, they marched out: all in all, America’s anabasis had gone well.

No attempt was made to take Baghdad or remove Saddam from his presidency, partly due to the urging of Colin Powell, and partly because the president and his NSA, Brent Scowcroft, believed it would be “destabilizing” (Bush and Scowcroft 1998: 489). Regarding this restraint, as Gordon Libby has reminisced, “neither” he nor Wolfowitz “liked it much” (Isikoff and Corn 2006: 237). For that matter, neither did Cheney. There would be a next time, but it only came after a war of blockades.

*War of Blockades and Other Assorted Violence:* It was believed that blockading Saddam’s regime would provoke internal resistance to it, so that Iraqis would themselves do the nasty work of removing the Saddamite outrage. Blockading began immediately after the Kuwait invasion. The Security Council passed United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 661, which imposed a near total financial and trade embargo on Iraq that covered everything from pencils to bras to medicines to food. A few weeks later, UNSC Resolution 665 authorized the force to enforce the embargo. The blockade was on. UNSC Resolution 687 made the cease-fire contingent upon permanent disarmament, reparations to Kuwait, and continued embargo. In April 1991, the US and the UK unilaterally established no-fly zones in northern Iraq. The Kurds, who fiercely opposed Saddam, are located in northern Iraq, and establishment of a no-fly zone there meant that the Iraqi air force could not be used against them. Equally, by mid March 1991, a Shiite rebellion against Saddam had developed in southern Iraq at Basra, Karbala, and Najaf. In August 1992 the no-fly zone was extended to southern Iraq.

President Clinton took office in 1993. Prior to his doing so, the Bush I administration had poured money, largely through the CIA, into the Iraqi



National Congress (INC), an opposition group led by Ahmed Chalabi that sought to depose Saddam. In March 1995 the INC staged an “uprising” that quickly collapsed. A year later in June 1996, the INC plotted another coup, once more with CIA assistance (Everest 2004: 337). It came to nothing.

By 1996, it was recognized that the UN embargo had led to great suffering among ordinary Iraqis. The head of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) estimated that the sanctions had led to 500,000 civilian deaths, especially among children as a result of malnutrition.<sup>6</sup> It was at this time that Madeleine Albright acknowledged in a television interview that US officials knew the human costs of their choice to blockade, telling her interviewer “I think this is a very hard choice, but the price—we think the price is worth it” (in Everest 2004: 185). To further make her point about being “hard,” she announced in 1997 that the blockade would continue until Saddam was eliminated.

Thereafter, US Security Elites 3.0 were more open and determined in their attempts to destroy Saddam. The Project for a New American Century sent a public letter to Clinton demanding “regime change” in Iraq in January 1998. Congress passed the “Iraq Liberation Act” that October. Clinton signed it into law. In Operation Desert Fox Clinton sought to assassinate Saddam and other high military officials, bombing one of Saddam’s presidential palaces as well as barracks and the command headquarters of the elite Republican Guard. Nothing worked—not sanctions, not coups, not aerial bombardments. The War of Blockades and other assorted violence failed.

In 1998 the White House became fixated upon the Monica Lewinsky affair—President Clinton’s lying about his sexual dalliance with a youthful White House intern. Many titillating details were released to the prurient pleasure of an enthusiastic public. It has been argued that distaste over these hurt the 2000 Democratic presidential campaign. Perhaps, but Al Gore, the Democratic candidate, won the popular vote. Nevertheless, he lost in the Electoral College due to an adverse decision in the Republican-controlled Supreme Court. Clinton left office in 2001, judged a sexual predator by some. Meanwhile, the Saddamite remained in Baghdad. Finishing him off fell to Dubya.

*Anabasis II: Going Massive, Gulf War II:* Bush II was inaugurated on 20 January 2001 against a backdrop of 10,000 protesters challenging the legitimacy of his election. During the following seven months he organized his administration, concentrating on domestic matters such as federally funding faith-based organizations for the poor and tax cuts for the wealthy. Then 9/11 happened. In the hours immediately after American Airlines

Flight 77 smashed into the Pentagon, according to notes taken by an aide, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, immediately began instructing his military to work on counterstrikes; urging them to “Go massive. Sweep it all up. Things related and not” (Borger 2006). At 2:40 p.m. on 9/11, according to the notes taken by one deputy, Rumsfeld, despite evidence indicating that the attack had been the work of Osama bin Laden, directed defense officials to secure “best info fast. Judge whether good enough hit S.H.” (S.H. being Saddam Hussein) (ibid.).

“Operation Iraqi Freedom” opened Gulf War II on 19 March 2003. It was based on a far smaller coalition than Gulf War I, basically US and UK-troops. A number of important US client states opposed the war, France and Germany prominent among them. The conflict might be thought of as an American anabasis II.

This time, combat operations involved implementation of a “shock and awe” military doctrine, close to Rumsfeld’s heart, which might be grasped as *blitzkrieg* by alternative means. It meant an offensive war of movement with aerial bombardment replacing that of tanks. Developed by Harlan Ullman and James Wade, this strategy’s goal was to achieve “rapid domination” by applying overwhelming and spectacular air power as fast as possible (Ullman et al. 1996: x). As Ullman put it to CBS News in 2003, “You’re sitting in Baghdad and all of a sudden you’re a general and 30 of your division headquarters have been wiped out. You also take the city down. By that I mean you get rid of their power, water. In 2, 3, 4, 5 days they are physically, emotionally exhausted” (in Correll 2003).<sup>7</sup>

On 19 March, intense bombing commenced against Saddam’s Presidential Palace in Baghdad as well as other targets throughout the country. A ground invasion of heavily armored units coming from the south in Kuwait drove in a pincer movement directly at Baghdad. The capital fell on 9 April, and a US psychological operations unit toppled an enormous statue of Saddam, effectively ending his reign.

Coalition troops spread throughout the country and had largely occupied it by 30 April, the end of the invasion phase of the war. Iraqi forces had been devastated. Coalition combat operations had been gratifyingly “massive,” with just the right touch of “shock and awe.” On May Day, Bush II, a character in a comic opera, descended by helicopter onto the deck of an aircraft carrier. Dressed in a flight suit to look properly military, he delivered a rousing speech before a huge sign bearing the American flag and the phrase “Mission Accomplished.” Wrong. Shock and awe, and going massive, had failed.<sup>8</sup> Gulf War II was about to begin. Three years later US casualties would reach 20,000 (P. Cockburn 2006: 1). By the end of the conflict in 2011, US casualties numbered around 37,000 (Statistic Brain 2015).

Let us return to the hostilities' beginning. Throughout the remainder of 2003, coalition officials instituted Iraq's occupation. They inaugurated an interim government led by retired US General Jay Garner, which soon became the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) headed by L. Paul Bremer. For Iraqis it was a grim time—little food, water, or electricity; lots and lots of killings; enormous amounts of looting. The CPA's first acts were to outlaw the Baath Party, disband the Iraqi army, and begin neoliberal economic policies.

Insurgency quickly developed, prompting Bush to taunt, "Bring 'em on" (2010: 260).<sup>9</sup> They came. First were Baathists and the former military, who raided Saddam-era weapons depots and melted into the desert to fight in the manner Mao had urged. Religious groups followed the Baathists and soldiers into insurgency. These included Sunnis such as the Mujahideen Shura Council (Iraq), the Islamic Army in Iraq, al-Qaeda in Iraq, the United Jihad Factions Council, and Jaish al-Rashideen. There were also Shia insurgents, especially in the powerful Badr and the Mahdi armies. Additionally, foreign fighters came to join the insurgency; they were only a small percentage of the rebellion but were experienced combatants, motivated by Salafi/Wahhabi doctrine (sometimes generically termed "jihadists"). The most important of these groups was al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, originally led by Abu Musab al Zaqawi, which entered the fray in 2004. Saddam, a secular leader, had kept al-Qaeda with its Salafist orientation out of Iraq. It was the US Leviathan's destruction of Saddam that allowed them in.

A second, sectarian civil war emerged in the midst of the insurgency. Iraq is a largely Shiite country. Though the Baathists were formally a secular party, there was a Sunni tilt to the state under Saddam. As the insurgency against the occupation wore on, competition for control over the provisional government increasingly sharpened between Sunnis and Shiites. Gradually, the Shiites gained the upper hand in the struggle, with Nouri Al-Maliki, head of the Dawa, a Shiite party, becoming the prime minister in May 2006. US forces were caught in the middle of this civil war, which intensified the violence of the occupation.

Between 2003 and 2007, the different insurgent groups largely targeted coalition armies. There were 26,496 recorded insurgent incidents in 2004. The figure increased to 34,131 incidents in 2005 and still more in 2006, reaching a level of 960 attacks per week. Baghdad, Al Anbar, and Salah Ad Din were the provinces with the highest concentration of attacks. The US military suffered a total of 4,486 deaths in the entire war, the vast bulk of these coming between 2003 and 2007 ("Operation Iraqi Freedom" 2009; see also B. Woodward 2006: 472–475). It was equally a time of atrocity.

The US Marines have a proud motto, *semper fidelis* (always faithful). In 2004 they destroyed Fallujah using, among other ordnance, white

phosphorous munitions, an incendiary weapon prohibited by the Geneva Conventions of War, killing Artica and her unborn child in the process. Some wags remarked at the time that the Marines were “always faithful! To war crimes!” Seymour Hersh (2004), writing in the *New Yorker* magazine, broke the story of torture, rape, sodomy, and other prisoner abuses in Abu Ghraib prison. Throughout this time US occupation authorities confronted enormous corruption, of which they themselves were often the authors, involving the plundering of vast sums of money authorized for Iraqi reconstruction (Auken 2009).

Powell’s deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage, himself an accomplished naval commando during the Vietnam War, visited Iraq at the end of 2004 to learn how the war was going. On his return he briefed the president, telling him, “We’re not winning,” adding, “We’re not losing. Not winning over a long period of time works for the insurgents” (B. Woodward 2006: 373). This was his not especially subtle way of reporting to the president that the US *was* losing, which the president at that time may not have got. Armitage further communicated with the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), then US Ambassador to Iraq John Negroponte, and then Commander of Coalition Forces in Iraq General George Casey, telling them what he had told the president. They got it, and—according to Bob Woodward—the CIA, the DIA, the US ambassador, and the in-country commander of the forces “were in agreement” with his judgment (*ibid.*).

A year later in the fall of 2005, General Abizaid met with a number of former senior military colleagues at his Doha headquarters. He was from a Christian Lebanese-American family, spoke Arabic, had succeeded Tommy Franks as head of CENTCOM, and went on to serve the longest stint as its commander (2003–2007). He had also been part of the initial planning and execution of Gulf War II. If anybody knew the war’s progress, it was he. Abizaid told his senior colleagues, according to Woodward, that “he held the position that the war was now about the Iraqis. They had to win the war now. The U.S. military had done all it could” (*ibid.*: 426). Abizaid was emphatic about this point, stressing, “We’ve got to get the fuck out” (*ibid.*). His colleagues asked what his strategy for winning was. He responded, “That’s not my job,” indicating this work was for “The president and Condi Rice” (*ibid.*). Impotent to reduce surging insurgency, the US military was losing the war throughout 2003–2006 and knew it, and its commanding general wanted “to get the fuck out.”

Democratic elites, especially in the Congress, echoing General Abizaid, by this time, heartily clamored for withdrawal; everyone from Joe Murtha in the House of Representatives, to Hillary Clinton, in the Senate. By the late spring of 2006 Bush was personally told that in Iraq, “It’s hell” (Bush 2010: 364); and

by summer of that year, according to Bush himself, all of his security elites were aware of the “deteriorating conditions” in Iraq. (Ibid.: 363)

At this time, two “wise men”—former Secretary of State James Baker and Lee Hamilton of the House of Representatives—led a group of security elite elders in what was called the Iraq Study Group (ISG), whose role was to advise the president on the war’s management. The group was a reprise of the Vietnam “wise men” who had brought President Johnson the bad tidings that Vietnam was unwinnable. The ISG’s central conclusion—blazoned on the first line of the first page of their report—was that the Gulf War II situation was “grave and deteriorating” (Baker and Hamilton 2006: 6). The “wise men” had spoken by 2007. The war, as the title of Thomas Ricks’ book on the topic put it, was a “Fiasco” (2006).

The day after the ISG report was submitted, Bush II confided, “And truth of the matter is, a lot of reports in Washington are never read by anybody. To show you how important this one is, I read it” (“The ‘Misunderestimated’ President” 2009). What he read confirmed the debacle. Dubya called this time the “worst period of my presidency” (2010: 367). Perceptually, the war was interpreted as a mess, so that the procedural question of “what to do” was foremost. Here, the ISG report advised, “Our most important recommendations call for new and enhanced diplomatic and political efforts in Iraq and the region, and a change in the primary mission of U.S. forces in Iraq that will enable the United States to begin to move its combat forces out of Iraq responsibly” (Baker and Hamilton 2006: 6). The crux of what the ISG procedurally advised was to “move ... combat forces out of Iraq.” Make no mistake about it, this was cutting and running, which Baker and Hamilton advised be done “responsibly” after “enhanced diplomatic and political efforts.”<sup>10</sup>

Though they were never formally publicized and the administration would deny it, the ISG’s recommendations were essentially accepted. The following year, the US military and the Iraqi provisional government entered into negotiations, that is, “enhanced diplomatic and political” work, for a Status of Force Agreement (SOFA). A SOFA is a legal framework stipulating how the US military operates in a host country. The US-Iraq SOFA was signed in November 2008. Article 24 required US combat troops to exit Iraq’s cities by 2009 and Iraq by 2011. Iraq is desert with occasional cities. Most of the fighting and attendant casualties had been in the cities, especially Baghdad. It was publicly announced on 18 November 2008 that there would be “full withdrawal” of US troops by 2011 (Bruno 2008). Thus, by 2008 it had been announced to the Iraqis, US Security Elites 3.0, and the American public that the war was effectively over, at least the American part of it, very soon—the next year!

Bush II and his band of Vulcans in 2007 had responded to their fiasco in a different way than had President Johnson to his Vietnam disaster. Johnson, after the slow buildup of the Kennedy administration, had chosen massive escalation, been told by his “wise men” that it had failed, and chosen to leave the presidency. Bush II had gone “massive” from the very beginning, been told by his “wise men” that this had failed, and chosen to stay in the presidency but get out of Iraq. All of this would be done “responsibly,” because the very last thing Bush II and his Vulcans needed was another Vietnam.

So in order to disguise the fact of US imperial withdrawal there had to be one last campaign in Gulf War II to provide a military rationale for leaving. This would be a “surge.” At this point General David Petraeus strolled onto center stage. He was remembered in his West Point yearbook as “always going for it . . . even in his social life” (Bruno 2007). In fact, the general went “for it” so diligently that Senator John McCain—who had been a Vietnam War POW (supposed by some to have collaborated with his captors [Cockburn 2008])—labeled him a “genius,” one of “America’s greatest military heroes”; the person “responsible—after years of failure—for the success of the surge in Iraq” (Curry 2012). Why such praise? It appears that McCain awarded it because Petraeus, along with a number of like-minded military thinkers, came to believe that shock and awe was not the way to proceed—not an especially difficult understanding as shock and awe had led to fiasco. So the general proposed a turn to counterinsurgency warfare (COIN).<sup>11</sup>

*Petraeus’s COIN:* Actually COIN is old hat, militarily. There have been COINdinstas (lovers of COIN) since Americans employed it in their 1630s war against the Pequots in New England (Hauptman and Wherry 1990). An iteration of COIN was used in the Vietnam War, with dubious results (Kocher, Pepinsky, and Kalyvas 2011). So a word is in order about the Petraeus reiteration of it, which might be described as “pseudo-Maoist guerrilla warfare with a wallop” (PMGWV). On the one hand, troops using PMGWV-COIN would labor to pacify the civilian population by understanding them better and improving their lives in some way. To better understand occupied people, “anthropologists” would be sent in to tell the soldiers about the enemy’s “culture” so they could be “sensitive” to it.<sup>12</sup> These occupying soldiers would help occupied folks by making them safer, improving their water supply, helping them with health care, and paying them for different services. In doing this they would transform the Maoist doctrine of “swimming with the fish” to one of “bribing the fish.” On the other hand, PMGWV-COIN regarded insurgents who remained enemies as targets for “kinetic” operations, in which they were hunted down and eliminated.

Kinetic operations were the specialty of the covert Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), headed for much of Gulf War II by General Stanley McChrystal (2003–2008), whose operatives were often called “ninjas.”<sup>13</sup> However, the Defense Department also developed units within the Iraq police force that might be termed hyper-kinetic. Prior to receiving overall command in Iraq, Petraeus had been sent to Baghdad in 2004 as head of the Multinational Security Transition Command (MNSTC-I), where his responsibility was to oversee training of Iraqi military and police. After a few months, he assured Americans in a *Washington Post* piece that “training is on track” (2004). A question, however, poses itself: just what sort of “track” was the general laying?

Rumsfeld, for his part, had sent an ex-colonel named James Steele to Iraq as a “consultant.” Steele had been instrumental in developing paramilitary death squads in El Salvador during the Central American “dirty wars” of the 1980s. Steele worked in Iraq with another ex-colonel, James Coffman, who appears to have reported to Petraeus. Their assignment was to redo in Iraq what Steele had done in El Salvador. They succeeded, creating the Special Police Commandos (SPCs), who were commanded by General Adnan Thabit (Mahmood et al. 2013a). General Thabit has said that “the main person I used to contact was David Petraeus” (in Mahmood et al. 2013b). Together Steele, Coffman, and Thabit turned the SPC into a counterinsurgency organization whose chief kinetic tool was pain, often administered with a power drill. Mahmood et al. (2013b) write, “According to one soldier with the 69th Armoured Regiment ... ‘it was like the Nazis ... like the Gestapo basically. They (the commandos) would essentially torture anybody they had good reason to suspect.’” The track Steele and associates were laying was that of torture. It was the “wallop” in PMGWW-COIN.

Such COIN tactics are flawed. US soldiers, when they are big guys tricked out in body armor, armed to the teeth, speaking gibberish, and, regardless of any sensitivity-training, acting like jerks by urinating on their dead enemies, posing for trophy photos with their body parts, and burning Korans (Gates 2014: 219), have trouble convincing anybody that they are benevolent “fish.” Their helping of civilians is not so much swimming with the fish as suborning them. Each time one of these civilians’ relatives was walloped by the JSOC or the SPC, the fish became enemies and secret ones at that, the worst type because they smile at you and inflict vengeance through surprise, and then you have to send the SPC after them. Thereafter their mutilated bodies turn up by the side of the road, perforated with holes drilled in them by power tools. The trouble with PMGWW-COIN, and for that matter other iterations of COIN, is that eventually what it does is kill fish, a condition that creates more fish who will kill you. Rums-

feld sent Steele to Iraq and must have known what he was sent to do. Petraeus, as head of training, oversaw Steele and his colleagues' work, so Petraeus's management of the development of torturers was a feather in his "genius" cap. It is time to examine his "surge."

*The Surge*: At the beginning of the Gulf War II (2003–2004), prior to his MNSTC-I command, Petraeus served as the 101st Airborne Division's commanding officer in Mosul, Iraq's third largest city, where he had tried to implement PMGWW-COIN. The US media credited him with success, though evidence suggests otherwise.<sup>14</sup> In a television address to the American public on 10 January 2007, Bush II announced that there would be a "surge" in US troops in Iraq, consisting of 21,500 additional combat soldiers. The next month, he made Petraeus commander of Multi-National Force – Iraq (MNF–I), the position that oversaw all coalition forces occupying the country. Petraeus's task was to manage the surge using his COIN tactics to achieve some kind of accomplishment that would allow a "responsible" exit from the Iraq "fiasco."<sup>15</sup>

The surge, which operated between February 2007 and July 2008, involved addition of five brigades, focusing on Baghdad (four brigades went there) using COIN tactics. "Violence decreased" (Gabrielsen 2013) during the surge. Figures are disputed, both Iraqi and coalition casualties appear to have been reduced. As many as 2,700 to 3,800 civilians had been killed every month in the period from September 2006 to January 2007, when death squads roamed the streets of Baghdad. The US army suffered about 100 killed and 700 wounded per month during this period. Eleven months later, the monthly average of Iraqi civilian deaths had declined to about 500, while US Army fatalities had shrunk to 23 killed per month.<sup>16</sup> Was the surge responsible for the violence reduction?

Thomas Ricks (2009: 200) argues for the interpretation that prevails among many—especially US political elites—that the surge worked because the additional US soldiers, as called for in PMGWW-COIN, protected the Iraqi population. Not everyone agrees. Gian Gentile (2009), a US army officer who did two tours of duty in Iraq, condemns this position as "hubris run amuck," the "hubris" being the presumption that the addition of five brigades could somehow transform a previously intractable war in which hundreds of thousands of coalition forces armed with the most lethal of technology had floundered.

Five factors warrant skepticism about the surge's success. The first is obvious. By 2007 many Iraqis, certainly those in high positions, knew that the days of American occupation were numbered. After all, Washington elites publicly spoke in favor of pulling out. Congressman Murtha had submitted a resolution (17 November 2005) to the House of Representatives



demanding immediate US withdrawal, reasoning, “The U.S. cannot accomplish anything further in Iraq militarily. It is time to bring them home” (in Schmitt 2005). General Abizaid had insisted they “get the fuck out.” General Casey, MNF-1 commander, “supported a gradual drawdown of U.S. forces” (Knowlton 2010: 1). As Admiral William Fallon, Abizaid’s CENTCOM commander at the time, remarked, “In the days leading up to the decision to surge, many in Iraq thought we were just looking for the quickest exit, to bail out” (in D. Davis 2010: 24). So, why fight the Americans if you knew they were about to leave (Feldman 2008)?

A second reason to be skeptical of the surge’s efficacy had to do with Shiite ethnic cleansing of Sunnis in Baghdad and its environs. Baghdad was the major locus of extreme violence at this time, and the struggle between Shiite and Sunni death squads to eliminate each other from the city’s neighborhoods was one reason for this mayhem. However, eventually the ethnic cleansing had a resolution: Sunnis were cleansed. This led to a reduction in casualties, for the very grim reason that by the middle of 2008 there were simply very few Sunnis left to kill, as Patrick Cockburn (2008) observed. A third, related reason to question the surge’s success has to do with the role of the Shiite Mahdi Army, a significant player in the ethnic cleansing in Baghdad and surrounding areas. For reasons having to do with emerging Shiite politics, the leaders of the Mahdi Army opted “*for a temporary ceasing of fighting*” (Gabrielsen 2013), which became largely permanent.

A fourth factor in the reduced violence pertains to the movement variously called the “Anbar Awakening” (or “Sons of Iraq”). Anbar is the largest province in Iraq, covering predominantly desert to the west of Baghdad. It is a Sunni region where fighting had been especially heavy early in the conflict, at Falluja and Ramadi. The Anbar Awakening consisted of tribal paramilitary alliances between sheikhs in Sunni tribes to fight for these tribes’ benefit. Additionally, the sheikhs would ally with US military units occupying their territory as the Americans practiced the bribe component of Petraeusian COIN, providing their tribal allies with money, weapons, and training. Often the privileges the sheikhs were interested in had little to do with the goals of the surge. However, certain sheikhs were concerned to curb the influence of al-Qaeda in Mesopotamia, which was in the Americans’ interest. The Anbar Awakening reduced violence in three ways. First, tribes allied with US forces agreed not to attack them (Biddle, Friedman, and Shapiro 2012); second, Anbar Awakening attacks on al-Qaeda degraded al-Qaeda’s fighting capacity, reducing casualties from this source (*ibid.*); and third, Anbar Awakening paramilitaries defended Sunnis from Shiite paramilitary attacks, thus further reducing casualties (Kilcullen 2009: 145). One may question, however, whether the Anbar

Awakening had much to do with the surge, because according to Colonel Sean McFarland, who commanded troops in the province at the time, it appears “maybe 75 to 80 percent of the credit for the success of the counterinsurgency fight in Ramadi goes to the Iraqi people who stood up to al-Qaida” (in D. Davis 2010: 24). Moreover, another source insists the Anbar Awakening appeared “to have occurred not only before that strategy (the surge) was implemented, but before it was conceived” (Walls 2008).

The role of neighboring countries in the violence was also a factor in violence reduction. Gulf War II had regional implications that pertained to the Sunni/Shiite divide in the Middle East. Predominantly Sunni countries (Saudi Arabia and Jordan) supported Iraqi Sunnis, while Shiites in Iran supported their coreligionists. Kilcullen (2009: 151–152) has argued that Gulf War II needs to be situated in the context of the Sunni/Shiite divide, which suggests a fifth reason to harbor suspicions about the success of the surge. As Gabrielsen (2013) reports, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Syria reduced the number of Sunni fighters that were allowed to infiltrate Iraq from their territories, while Iran was miserly regarding the weaponry it supplied to the Shiites. Fewer combatants and fewer weapons would likely reduce casualty levels, suggesting that the actions of regional states contributed to the reduction of violence in Gulf War II.

Is it plausible to hold that the surge made General Petraeus one of “America’s greatest military heroes”? Five factors suggesting otherwise have been presented. Only in the Anbar Awakening does PMGWW-COIN play, and only probably at that, a limited role in casualty declines. Consequently, the evidence does not support the view that the US military surge significantly reduced violence. Rather, it favors the conclusion that while the surge was occurring, other factors reduced fatalities. However, considering the statistics of declining violence, and ignoring the actual factors reducing that violence, Petraeus appeared a “genius.”

Moreover, the appearance of reality, not reality itself, was all that was needed because it helped Washington hermeneuts frame and perpetuate a “popular narrative”—the surge had “succeeded” (D. Davis 2010: 22).<sup>17</sup> Dubya certainly believed the surge to have been a “success” (2010: 388). CNN news guru Wolf Blitzer declared it a “success” (Blitzer 2008). *USA Today* announced it had led to “progress” (Dilanian 2008). The *New York Times* acknowledged it had “clearly worked—at least for now” (Filkins 2008). *Time* magazine more circumspectly called it a “success,” albeit a “limited” one (Duffy 2008). The presidential campaign that year—Obama versus McCain—saw all the candidates pronounce the surge a victory. On the campaign trail, McCain said, “I can tell you that it [the Surge] is succeeding. I can look you in the eye and tell you it’s succeeding” (in Dobbs

2008). Obama, not to be outdone, called it a “success” beyond “wildest dreams” (in Chipman and Goldman 2008). His primary opponent, Hillary Clinton, gave the game away when she said, “The so-called surge was designed to give the Iraqi government the space and time to make the tough decisions that only the Iraqis can make for themselves. . . . And I think that putting forward a very clear objective of beginning to withdraw our troops is the best way to get the Iraqis to take responsibility” (“Transcript: Hillary Clinton” 2008). The hermeneuts might be said to have constructed for Americans a manly war “hero,” General Petraeus; while injecting into their understanding the stupefacent that his surge was a “success.” All of this allowed “Iraqis to take responsibility” and US Security Elites 3.0 to “withdraw,” or otherwise put, to cut and run, which they did—“responsibly,” of course. What had they done?

They wrecked Iraq. Consider deaths during the three phases of the war. Beth Daponte, a social demographer, estimated that Gulf War I resulted in 205,500 Iraqi deaths (“Totaling the Casualties of War” 2003b). The War of Blockades, it has already been reported, resulted in between 500,000 and 567,000 deaths, mostly of children. Mortality estimates for Gulf War II vary: the Iraq Family Health Survey (WHO 2008) found 151,000 war-related deaths between 2003 and 2006, whereas a study reported in the medical journal *The Lancet* estimated some 655,000 excess deaths (Brown 2006). These Iraqi fatalities were both civilian and military, mostly civilian. Many did not die on the battlefield, but rather from the consequences of the combat. Malnutrition and disease were especial killers. And of course millions upon millions of Iraqis were in some way injured but did not die. Who would want to stay in such a place? Not the inhabitants. By 2007, roughly four million were refugees (Chatty 2010).

There was enormous infrastructural damage to Iraq. Gulf War I had destroyed an estimated \$230 billion worth of infrastructure (Nordhaus 2002: 53). Enormous portions of the electrical grid; the sewage and irrigation systems; and manufacturing, health care, and educational facilities were demolished. The War of Blockades made it difficult to replace infrastructure destroyed in Gulf War I, and Gulf II re-ruined what had earlier been ruined. Ghali Hassan (2005), reporting upon living conditions in Iraq during the time of the Iraqi warring, notes that the United Nations Human Development Index for Iraq fell from 50th to 127th place out of 130 countries between 1995 and post-2003. Life was wretched: relatives and friends sick or dead, no work, little to eat, filthy water, terrible heat, and always the fear that there were people who wanted to kill you and yours. Hassan called this situation a “tragedy” (ibid.), an understatement. The US imperial elites’ project made an earthly hell in Iraq and called it liberation. This poses the question, why did they do it?

“Not There for the Figs’: *The Security Elites and Their Public Délires*

It [Gulf War II] has nothing to do with oil, literally nothing. (Donald Rumsfeld on CBS News, 14 November 2002, quoted in Easterbrook 2002)

The task of explaining why the US invaded Iraq begins with observation of a conundrum regarding US imperial elites’ understanding of why they warred in Iraq. As the above quotation illustrates, a least one Vulcan denied that oil was the reason. Furthermore, those who suggested differently ran the risk of considerable personal abuse. Consider, for example, the pillorying of Congressman Dennis Kucinich, a Democrat in the House of Representatives (1997–2013) who, speaking just prior to the invasion (February 2003) on the influential news program *Meet the Press*, proposed that the US was about to overrun Iraq because of its oil. The Vulcan Richard Perle, a co-panelist on the show who at the time chaired the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee, retorted, “It is an out and out lie” (in Diemer 2003). Examine, next, the treatment of Senator Chuck Hagel, a Republican senator from Nebraska (1997–2009), the secretary of defense in Obama’s second term, a decorated infantry soldier in Vietnam, and a successful businessman who sat on the board of directors of Chevron Corporation. During a 2007 speech he commented, “people say we’re not fighting for the oil. Of course we are,” adding, “We’re not there for the figs” (in W. Kristol 2013). Perhaps it was the figs that did it, but William Kristol, editor of *The Weekly Standard* and neoconservative hermeneut, could not refrain from labeling Hagel’s comments “vulgar and disgusting” (ibid.). Whether you were Democrat or Republican, certain Bush II loyalists declared you a loutish, sordid perjurer if you said warring in Iraq was about oil.

But certain Vulcan elites *did* affirm the “loutish, sordid” lie. Consider Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld’s deputy. When asked why the US had invaded Iraq, he answered, “Let’s look at it simply. The most important difference between North Korea and Iraq is that economically, we just had no choice in Iraq. The country swims on a sea of oil” (“US Admits” 2014). In a 1999 speech to the Institute of Petroleum at London’s Savoy Hotel, Dick Cheney, who fourteen months later was to become the Vice President, remarked a bit more circumspectly than Wolfowitz that “the Middle East, with two-thirds of the world’s oil and the lowest cost, is still where the prize ultimately lies” (in Muttitt 2012a: 4). Midge Dector, an original founder of neoconservatism and a onetime co-chair with Rumsfeld of the Committee for the Free World, said in 2004, after the hell in Iraq had become clear, “We’re not in the Middle East to bring sweetness and light. . . . That’s nonsense. We’re in the Middle East because we and our European friends and our European non-friends depend on something that comes from the Middle East, namely oil” (in Moore 2013). General John Abizaid corroborated

Wolfowitz and Dector, insisting, “of course it’s about oil, we can’t really deny that” (“Abizaid: ‘Of Course It’s About Oil’ 2008). Alan Greenspan, the influential former Chairman of the Federal Reserve who, though not in Bush II’s inner circle, was knowledgeable about economic matters, also stated that “the Iraqi war is largely about oil” (Greenspan 2007).

So there is a puzzle. Washington elites, including Bush II’s Vulcans, asserted opposing stories of why they went to war in Iraq: they did it for the oil, and they didn’t do it for the oil. This raises two questions: Did US security elites go to war over oil or did they not; and if they did, why did some of them deny it so vehemently? The response to these questions leads to the oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délire*s. First, evidence concerning the degree to which oil was a reason for the Iraq warring is considered.

### *Iraq Warring and the Oil-Control Public Délire*

Osama Kashamoula, an Iraqi Oil Ministry official, confided, “I lived in the West for more than seven years. ... We have oil and you need it” (in Maass 2009: 150).<sup>18</sup> Kashamoula was confirming what Cheney had earlier spoken about in his Savoy Hotel speech. There Cheney had noted the world needed oil and that oil was becoming more difficult for the oil companies to acquire. Then he rhetorically asked, “So where is the oil going to come from?” responding that “the prize ... lies” in the “Middle East” (in Muttitt 2012a: 4), and the “prize” would be Iraq. First discussed are the *délire*s guiding Gulf War I.

*Gulf War I and the Oil-Control Public Délire*: Gulf War I resulted from Saddam’s invasion of Kuwait, whose considerable oil resources he indicated he intended to acquire. At the NSC meeting held the morning after Saddam’s invasion (2 August 1990), oil played a part in discussions. Treasury Secretary Nicolas Brady “explained that Iraq would be getting potential oil profits of about \$20 million a day from Kuwait production. In all, Iraq now held 20 percent of the world’s known oil reserves. If Saddam were to take over Saudi Arabia he would have 40 percent” (B. Woodward 1991: 226). Both Bush I and the then Defense Secretary Cheney were concerned that the Iraqi army of a million soldiers posed a real threat to Saudi Arabia (*ibid.*: 227). Brent Scowcroft, Bush I’s NSA, brought up the Carter Doctrine, the original iteration of the oil-control public *délire*, suggesting that Saddam was in violation of that doctrine (*ibid.* 230). This first NSC meeting ended on an “inconclusive note” (*ibid.*: 229), but it was clear that oil occupied everybody’s mind.

At a second NSC meeting the next day, discussion concerned a CIA report on the situation that argued that the invasion threatened “the cur-

rent world order” because if it succeeded, the increased oil would turn “Iraq into an Arab superpower—a balance to the United States, the Soviet Union, and Japan” (ibid.: 237). Further, the CIA estimated that Saddam could get from Kuwait to the capital of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh, in three days (ibid.). Again, the meeting ended without a formal decision. Bush I asked that Cheney, the then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Powell, and CENTCOM Commander Schwarzkopf meet him at Camp David the next day to discuss procedural military options, indicating the drift of his thinking.

Later that day Bush met with Bandar bin Sultan, the influential Saudi ambassador to the US. Bush told him, “I give you my word of honor, I will see this through with you” (in ibid. 241). The president had indicated there was to be war with Iraq, and that the US would protect Saudi Arabia in the hostilities, in effect making a payment on its strategic rent to the Saudis. The question was what type of war, and the Camp David meeting settled that question. The Pentagon already had a plan for a campaign against Iraq called Operation Plan 90-1002, which would be a large-scale conflict involving hundreds of thousands of troops and extensive aerial bombardments. This plan was accepted. It became Operation Desert Storm, and as we have seen, when implemented it was over in a few days.

Bush I’s administration prevaricated little about the reasons for the war. Paul Aarts and Michael Renner (1991: 25) put it clearly: “This war was about oil access.” However, an important question is whose “access” was being contested. Cheney explicated the Bush I regime’s understanding of this invasion in 9/11 testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, declaring that “once [Saddam] acquired Kuwait and deployed an army as large as the one he possesses,” he would be “in a position to be able to dictate the future of worldwide energy policy, and that [would give] him a stranglehold on our economy” (in Klare 2004: 50). The defense secretary was saying Bush’s national security team feared that Saddam had stolen a page from the US’s own imperial military strategy. Saddam wanted to acquire access to Kuwaiti oil in order to “dictate” global “energy policy,” and nobody dictates to the New American Empire what it intends to dictate to the world. Saddam was a true monster-alterity, and the Kuwait invasion had to be reversed. Gulf War I, this evidence suggests, was fought in some measure to achieve control over petroleum resources. It was fought to deny an enemy the benefits of access to such resources. Consider the Iraq warring during the War of Blockades.

*The War of Blockades and the Oil-Control Public Délire:* The War of Blockades was waged by the Clinton administration as part of a “dual containment” policy announced in 1994 that was largely the formulation of

Martin Indyk, then head of Middle Eastern and South Asian Affairs at the NCS, and his boss, the NSA Anthony Lake. The policy goal, largely inherited from the previous administration, was to contain, not overthrow, the Baghdad and Tehran regimes through continuation of sanctions and, in Iraq's case, aerial bombardments.

Only obliquely did the Clinton security elites consider questions of Saddam's attempts to add to Iraq's oil reserves. However, as Jerry Mraz (1997: 3) emphasized, Clinton's security elites recognized "that uninterrupted access to oil from the Persian Gulf" was "of vital national interest" to the US. Further, Washington during this time was trying to protect the Persian Gulf's oil sheikhdoms, and of course Kuwait and Saudi Arabia were sheikhdoms. On 16 December 1998, Clinton began Operation Desert Fox, four days of especially heavy aerial raids on Iraq, including one of Saddam's palaces. Some believe these were to divert attention from impeachment proceedings slated to begin the next day in response to the president's sexual improprieties (Everest 2004: 203). However, Clinton defended the attacks in a speech to the nation, insisting they were "designed to degrade Saddam's capacity to develop and deliver weapons of mass destruction and to degrade his ability to threaten his neighbors" (Clinton 1999: 292). "Weapons of mass destruction" (WMDs)—chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons—would play a considerable role in the hermeneutic politics, especially in Bush II's presidency. Iraq's neighbors, of course, were the "oil sheikhdoms." The dual containment policy might be understood, at least vis-à-vis Iraq, as an iteration of the oil-control iteration of the global domination public *délire* because degrading Saddam's weaponry and his ability to threaten oil-producing "neighbors" reduced his ability to expand Iraq's access to oil.

Criticism of the dual containment policy increased in the hermeneutic politics of the later years of the Clinton administration. A key reason for this was that even though the policy was formally supposed to contain Saddam's regime, informally it was supposed to eliminate him, and in this it failed. Further, Baghdad appeared to flout UN inspections designed to ensure that it disarmed and did not develop WMDs.<sup>19</sup> So, early in 1998, the PNAC had sent an open letter to Clinton, signed by the major soon-to-be Vulcans, reporting a *délire* that the US entertain "a willingness to undertake military action" against Saddam because he was a "hazard" to "a significant portion of the world's supply of oil" (PNAC 1998). By the end of the year, the PNAC's *délire* was gratified: Congress had voted in favor of an act stipulating a US policy of regime change toward Iraq. Clinton signed the act in 1 November 1998. Consequently, as Richard Holbrooke noted, "Clinton changed U.S. policy from containment to regime change" (in Isikoff and Corn 2006: 125). Secretary of State Albright named Frank

Ricciardore the special representative to Iraqi opposition groups who were to receive military assistance in overthrowing Saddam.

Two struggles flared during 1999 and 2000. One was the presidential campaign to replace Clinton, with the Democrats hampered by their president's recent sexual improprieties. His nickname had gone in certain quarters from "Slick Willie" to "the Stainmaker" ("The Many Nicknames" 2002); the latter moniker referring to seminal fluid that stained an article of Ms. Lewinsky's clothing. The other conflict was the continual bombing of Iraq, unhampered by the Iraqi air defenses, which had been debilitated by earlier American raids. More than a hundred airstrikes were mounted against Iraq in 1999. Between 1999 and 2001 the US and UK air forces dropped on the order of 1.3 million pounds of bombs ("Clinton bombing of Iraq" 2005).

Bob Woodward (2004: 9) has said that the Clinton administration ran a "low grade war" against Iraq. From the perspective of the Iraqis who experienced food and medical deprivation along with bombing, it may not have felt so "low grade." However, Woodward makes an important point: Gulf War I never stopped; rather, the Clinton administration conducted it by other means, that is, blockade and air raids. Consequently, when Bush II took office on 20 January 2001, he did not so much start Gulf War II as continue combat operations begun by his Poppy and continued by Clinton.

### *Gulf War II and the Oil-Control Public Délire:*

"We won't do Iraq now," the president said, "we're putting Iraq off. But eventually we'll have to return to that question." (Bush to Rice, 15 September 2001, in B. Woodward 2004: 26).

Dubya, in the above quotation, was telling his NSA Condoleezza Rice four days after 9/11 how they would respond. They would not deal with Iraq first. Rather, the administration would begin with Afghanistan and then return to the problem of Iraq. In American English the verb "do" has a double significance. It can mean to "go about" something, as in "George is going to do homework." It can also have the more raffish meaning of having sexual intercourse with a woman, as in "George is going to do Mary." Further, in American English "fucking" has a double meaning of "to make love" or "to hurt someone," as in "I'm going to fuck you over." Perhaps Bush II's statement to Rice was rich in *all* these significations. On 20 March 2003, as dawn's rosy fingers spread over Baghdad, they revealed a city once again blasted and burning due to shock and awe. Bush II was really doing Iraq.

The question of when the Bush II administration actually decided to "do" Iraq has been debated. Richard C Clarke (2004), a member of the NSC from 1992 through 2003 and for a considerable time in charge of



anti-terrorism, has said Bush took office with a predetermined plan to attack Iraq. According to Ron Suskind, Bush's first treasury secretary, Paul O'Neill, recalled that Dubya's first NSC meeting, held ten days after the inauguration, "was all about finding a way to do it. The president saying, 'Go find me a way to do this'" (in Stein and Dickinson 2006: 3). "It" was invading Iraq. O'Neill later recanted what he told Suskind, saying, "Actually there was a continuation of work that had been going on in the Clinton administration" ("O'Neill: 'Frenzy'" 2004). Possibly, Clarke, Suskind, and O'Neill were all correct. Having adopted a policy of violent regime change, Clinton's people, especially those in the Pentagon, were likely to have formulated contingency plans for a possible war. Certainly the Vulcans, with their 1998 PNAC letter to Clinton urging Saddam's elimination, had expressed an intention to forcefully get Saddam, so it was entirely possible that they would have entered office with a generalized *délire* to do what Clinton had already been doing.<sup>20</sup>

Matters moved quickly after 9/11. Recall, on that day, Rumsfeld had ordered his officials to "judge whether [the evidence is] good enough [to] hit SH [Saddam Hussein]" (in Stein and Dickinson 2006: 4; edited for clarity). Eight days later the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board, headed by Richard Perle, declared that Iraq should be invaded after Afghanistan (*ibid.*). On 21 September, the intelligence community informed Bush that there was no evidence linking Saddam to 9/11 (*ibid.*). It made no difference. On 21 November Bush "collars Rumsfeld physically," asking "what have you got in terms of plans for Iraq? What is the status of the war plan?" (*ibid.*: 5). Three days after Christmas, Dubya has his answer. General Tommy Franks, now CENTCOM's commander, briefed the president on the status of the Iraq war plan (*ibid.*: 6).<sup>21</sup> War followed a lengthy campaign of vilification of Saddam, considered in the following section, and apparently was intended to impose at least five types of control over oil, thereby implementing the oil-control public *délire*.

Readers should be clear about the following enquiry. Its interest is in the intentionality of Bush II and the Vulcans' *délires*, not their achievement—the powers they wanted, not those they actually got. The first sort of control the Bush administration intended to gain from its global warring was US oil companies' access to Iraqi oil. In January 2003, before the invasion, it was "reported that representatives from ExxonMobil Corp, Chevron Texaco Corp, ConocoPhillips and Halliburton, among others, were meeting with Vice-President Cheney's staff to plan the post-war revival of Iraq's oil industry" (Leaver and Muttitt 2007: 3). This "revival," the *Washington Post* explained in 2002, was meant to provide a "bonanza for American oil companies" (in Everest 2004: 267–268). This "bonanza" was potentially enormous, as one appraisal projected future profits to private oil compa-

nies operating in Iraq running between a low of \$600 billion and a high in the order of \$9 trillion (Paul 2004).

Further, this access was believed, by at least some in the administration, to extend to control over the supply and the price of oil. Bush II's economic security elites believed that war would increase the supply of oil by bringing more of Iraq's oil on line, thereby keeping oil prices in check. Later, in February of 2003, the pro-war newspaper mogul Rupert Murdoch echoed this position, claiming that hostilities would hold the price of oil around \$20 a barrel and that this would be good for the world economy (Day 2003).

However, there was a problem. Iraqi oil had been nationalized as part of the wave of 1970s nationalization, which meant that Baghdad strictly controlled it, and part of this control included strict limitation of foreign enterprises' access. The Bush administration sought to eliminate this problem by awarding Bearing Point Incorporated a contract to restructure Iraq's economy, including the oil sector. Bearing Point, a financial and business consulting firm, was actually itself in financial disarray and would file for bankruptcy in 2009. A week after the invasion, however, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the development branch of the State Department, conferred a no-bid contract for \$240 million on Bearing Point, charging it, according to Naomi Klein (2006), with the responsibility of designing a private sector along the lines of "neocoon utopia."

The contract Bearing Point signed with USAID instructed the firm as to the sort of economy to create in Iraq. Its 100 pages clearly laid out the Bush administration's intention to open Iraq's economy in a neoliberal fashion (King 2004). USAID's intentions vis-à-vis oil were probably largely hammered out in the Oil and Energy Subgroup of the State Department's Future of Iraq Project (Muttitt 2006).

The Future of Iraq Project began on 1 October 2001, headed by Thomas Warwick.<sup>22</sup> It involved US and exiled Iraqi "experts" organized into seventeen working groups, and was charged with planning for "the day after" in Iraq (Economy and Infrastructure Working Group 2005: 4). It produced thirteen volumes and was the most extensive pre-invasion planning for post-invasion Iraq. The extent of its actual influence has been questioned. One senior CPA official remarked, "It's our bible coming out here" (Hasen 2006).<sup>23</sup> Critically, the Oil and Energy Working Group called for a "restructuring" of the "oil industry" (Oil and Energy Working Group 2005: 5) that involved its "denationalization" (*ibid.*: 9) and privatization. The Iraq National Oil Company would become private, and international oil companies would be allowed into Iraq (*ibid.*: 3).

Immediately following the occupation, General Jay Garner, who had been successful in humanitarian operations during Gulf War I, became the

head of the post-invasion occupation body, the CPA. He was succeeded by L. Paul Bremer III, a protégé of Kissinger, on 11 May 2003. For a while Bremer was a veritable viceroy of the newly conquered territory. He largely adopted Bearing Point's recommendations. Denationalization and privatization were forgone conclusions intended to allow all private companies, including American ones, access to Iraq's economy.

The privatization of the oil industry was to go as follows:

When Bremer left Iraq in June 2004, he bequeathed the Bush economic agenda to two men, Ayad Allawi and Adel Abdul Mahdi, who Bremer appointed interim Prime Minister and Finance Minister, respectively. Two months later, Allawi (a former CIA asset) submitted guidelines for a new petroleum law to Iraq's Supreme Council for Oil Policy. The guidelines declared "an end to the centrally planned and state dominated Iraqi economy" and advised the "Iraqi government to disengage from running the oil sector, including management of the planned Iraq National Oil Company (INOC), and that the INOC be partly privatized in the future." (Juhasz 2007)

Iraqi oil would be privatized through introduction of production sharing agreements (PSAs). These are contracts between oil companies and a state stipulating that oil ownership ultimately rests with the government, but that the more lucrative exploration and production sectors of the oil industry are given to the private companies under decidedly advantageous terms.<sup>24</sup>

Saddam's regime had awarded contracts to other countries' oil industries to develop Iraq's oil fields. In fact, sixty such contracts had been presented to firms from over thirty countries, especially France and Russia. None went to US companies (Juhasz 2007). The imposition of sanctions upon Iraq after Gulf War I had meant that few of these contracts were implemented, and there was fear that lifting them might threaten the American majors' access to Iraqi oil. However, because only seventeen of Iraq's eighty known oil fields have been developed, it was recognized that there would be room for US expansion into Iraqi oil, especially because it was believed that the American oil multinationals were more efficient and would consequently win contracts against their competitors. Clearly, Bush's security elites had planned to pry open access to Iraqi oil for US majors.

A second sort of control the Bush administration intended to provide through its global warring was that of denying Saddam, and his successors, control over their own oil, at least in ways that the US did not approve. They were grimly successful in the first of these goals. Saddam, soon after the invasion, inhabited a hole in the ground, where he was captured (14 December 2003), taken for trial, and eventually hung (30 December 2006). Thereafter, US occupation authorities attempted to induce post-Saddam Iraqi rulers to regulate the oil in the manner the US desired.

When Bremer left Iraq in 2004, he appointed Ayad Allawi and Adel Abdul Mahdi to run the Iraqi Interim Government. Allawi submitted proposals to Iraq's Supreme Council for Oil Policy for a new petroleum law that had been drawn up previously by Bremer's people and sought to induce the "Iraqi government to disengage from running the oil sector." Allawi's proposals also projected turning all undeveloped oil and gas fields over to private international oil companies, putting them beyond the control of Baghdad. Mahdi, commenting on these plans, stated, "I think this is very promising to the American investors and to American enterprise, certainly to oil companies" (in Juhasz 2007), something of an understatement. Allawi and Mahdi, doing Bremer's bidding, proposed to eradicate the Iraqi government's access to its own oil.

A third sort of control the Bush II administration intended its global warring to confer was to increase the business of US companies working in support of oil companies in Iraq. Such firms are called oil service companies, or colloquially "plumbers." Philip Carroll, who had headed both Shell and Fluor Daniel, an oil service and engineering firm, was appointed the CPA's adviser to the Iraq Ministry of Oil. Carroll brought success to not only the international oil companies but also the plumbers who helped them. Juhasz (2007) reported that in the three years immediately following occupation, "Halliburton received the largest contract, worth more than \$12 billion." Halliburton, headquartered in Houston, is the world's largest plumber.

As Iraq's oil industry reestablished itself in the years after 2006, US oil services companies' business flourished. In part this was because Iraq allowed only the "Big Four" plumbers (Halliburton, Baker Hughes, Weatherford International, and Schlumberger) to bid for contracts. The *New York Times* reported, "The oil services companies Halliburton, Baker Hughes, Weatherford International and Schlumberger [have] already won lucrative drilling subcontracts and are likely to bid on many more in one of the world's richest markets for companies that drill oil wells" (Kramer 2011).

A fourth form of control that Bush's security elites intended global warring to provide concerned the dollar's role as a reserve currency. In 1999 the euro was introduced as a common European Union currency. A year later on 6 November 2000, Saddam demanded that buyers of Iraqi oil pay in euros, a decision that potentially lessened demand for the dollar, reducing its value. The dollar did depreciate 17 percent against the euro in 2001. There were rumors that other OPEC nations might begin demanding euros for their oil. Consequently, by 2001 the US and Iraq were involved in a petrodollar war.

There is not much of a paper trail concerning the Bush administration's preparation to address the petrodollar war. However, in a document

drafted just prior to the invasion, the Economy and Infrastructure Working Group of the Future of Iraq Project stated, “Oil revenues can be expected to increase. ... This significant dollar flow must be used ... to finance current and future redevelopment” (Economy and Infrastructure Working Group 2005: 1). The working group did not recommend that oil sales be conducted in dollars rather than euros; rather, it assumed that they would be. Then, shock and awe attended the invasion on 7 March 2003, Saddam took to a hole, and on 5 June 2003 “Iraq ... stepped back into the international oil market for the first time since the war, offering 10m barrels of oil from its storage tanks for sale to the highest bidder. ... The tender ... switches the transaction back to dollars—the international currency of oil sales—despite the greenback’s recent fall in value” (Hoyos and Morrison 2003: 1). The petrodollar war was over. The US had won control over the currency in which Iraq would conduct its oil business, which would be greenbacks.

A fifth form of control that Bush’s security elites intended to gain through global warring was US clients’ access to Iraq’s oil, thereby helping the US pay its strategic rents.

During a 2001 series of meetings of Vice President Cheney’s Energy Task Force, charged with devising the new Bush II administration’s oil strategy,

a map of Iraq and an accompanying list of “Iraq oil foreign suitors” were the center of discussion. The map erased all features of the country save the location of its main oil deposits, divided into nine exploration blocks. The accompanying list of suitors revealed that dozens of companies from 30 countries—but not the United States—were either in discussions over or in direct negotiations for rights to some of the best remaining oil fields on earth. (In Holland 2006)

The map and the discussion at the meeting appear to have been about which non-Americans were likely to seek Iraqi oil, and whether Bush’s security elites would choose to assist or hinder them in the search for oil contracts.

When the Future of Iraq’s Oil and Energy Working Group reported its plans for “the day after” it was clear that it intended for there to be “international oil companies” in Iraq, not only American ones (Oil and Energy Working Group 2005: 3). They would be there because they had won PSA contracts in competitions open to different countries’ oil firms. Of course unstated, but understood, was that the US would help its friends win such contracts.

Robert Stevens has reported on some of the haggling over access to Iraqi oil that went on between the US and some of its allies. In late 2002, Baroness Symons was trade minister of Tony Blair’s government, and the UK was the staunchest of Bush II’s clients. Symons told British Petroleum

(BP) officials that Blair's government "supported British energy firms being given a share of Iraq's oil and gas reserves. She said this would be a reward for Prime Minister Tony Blair's military commitment to US plans for regime-change" (Stevens 2011). Further, Stevens quoted an article in the *Independent*, a newspaper, that discussed the minutes of a meeting between BP and the baroness on 31 October 2002, saying that the minutes, "show that Lady Symons agreed to lobby the Bush administration on BP's behalf because the oil giant feared it was being 'locked out' of deals that Washington was quietly striking with US, French and Russian governments and their energy firms" (ibid.). These quotations indicate that in the months just prior to the invasion, Bush II's security elites were busy "striking" deals about the "reward" there would be for client countries' oil companies. Remember, there was a purported \$600 billion to \$9 trillion dollars of Iraqi oil profit to be made, suggesting that the rewards could be substantial. Of course, another term for such rewards is strategic rents.

The previous discussion concerned imperial *délires vis-à-vis* oil. Were they gratified? As Iraq acquired more sovereignty after the invasion, it strove to develop its petroleum resources on its own terms. Initial Iraqi support for denationalization gave way after 2005 to a complex struggle to retain control over their petroleum resources, best documented in Muttitt (2012a). A Transitional National Assembly began to function in 2005, and its members were suspicious of anything that looked like privatization to benefit foreigners. Nevertheless, occupation authorities required the assembly to pass an oil law favorable to them. By 2007 it was clear that there were not enough votes to pass the law. As of 2013 it still had not passed. Nevertheless, Iraqi government officials allowed Big Oil to bid on different oil fields, and by 2010 BP and the China National Petroleum Company were developing the Rumaila oil field; France's Total was developing the Halfaya oil field; ExxonMobil and Royal Dutch Shell were developing West Qurna I; Russia's Lukoil and Norway's Statol were doing the same for West Qurna 2; and Shell and Petronas, a Malaysian company, had the Majnoon oil field (Stevens 2011). Moreover, access was secured not through PSA contracts but through Technical Service Contracts, under which international oil companies gained less control and profits, for shorter time periods. Muttitt concludes that "any oil company victory in Iraq," by which he means the Big Oil of the US and its allies, "is likely to prove as temporary as George W. Bush's triumph in 2003" (2012b)

In June 2013 Denise Natali, a Middle East expert at the National Defense University in Washington, noted in the *New York Times* (in Arango and Krauss 2013) that "the Chinese are the biggest beneficiary of this post-Saddam oil boom in Iraq." By 2013 they appeared to have acquired more than half of Iraq's oil (ibid.). As the *Times's* reporters observed, "Chinese

state-owned companies seized the opportunity, pouring more than \$2 billion a year and hundreds of workers into Iraq, and just as important, showing a willingness to play by the new Iraqi government's rules and to accept lower profits to win contracts" (ibid.). In 2013, the Chinese sought to reduce US access to Iraqi oil by "bidding for a stake ... owned by Exxon Mobil in one of Iraq's largest oil fields" (ibid.). Michael Makovsky, a former Bush II Defense Department official responsible for Iraq oil policy, ruefully grumbled, "The Chinese had nothing to do with the war, but from an economic standpoint they are benefiting from it, and our Fifth Fleet and air forces are helping to assure their supply" (in Arango and Krauss 2013). So the Vulcans' global warring against Baghdad increased access to Iraqi oil for the Chinese; who, after all is said and done, are a grave potential threat to the New American Empire. Increasing an opponent's power is not a recommended strategy for the successful empire.

It is time to draw a conclusion regarding global warring in Iraq and the oil-control iteration of the global domination public *délire*. Fixated upon oil, Bush II's security elites sometimes found their intentions thwarted, yet these were nevertheless manifest in statements and plans: prior to the commencement of hostilities, the intention was to war so as to control Iraq's oil in five different ways. Hence, the resort to violent force to achieve the power of such control was an implementation of the oil-control public *délire*. Saddam knew what was happening: a few months before the invasion, he had told the UN General Assembly that the US wanted "to destroy Iraq in order to control Middle Eastern oil" (in Yetiv 2004: 2). The empire went about destroying Iraq. Yet, as Muttitt (2012b) judges, the destruction vis-à-vis oil appears to have been "mission unaccomplished."

### *Iraq Warring and the Anti-terrorism Public Délire*

When you read George Bush, Tony Blair, Bill Clinton, and all the rest of them, they tell you, "We have to go after Saddam Hussein, this guy is such an evil monster that he even used chemical weapons against his own people." It is true. (Chomsky 2002)

Consider, for a moment, the development of the international law of war. From the Franco-Prussian War (1870) through World War I and on to World War II (1945), there were seventy-five years of wars of aggression, where one country attacked others to gratify its elites' *délires*. The result was devastation at unimagined and unintended levels. The legal judgments that the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal (1945–1946), specifically held to try Nazi War criminals, have come to have the moral and legal weight of international law. The Tribunal had blunt words about "wars of aggression." Its chief US prosecutor at the tribunal, Judge Robert H. Jackson,

stated, “To initiate a war of aggression, therefore, is not only an international crime; it is the supreme international crime, differing only from other war crimes in that it contains within itself the accumulated evil of the whole” (in P. Scott 2007: 180).

Of course, the New American Empire’s attacking other countries to achieve power over the world’s oil is an offensive exercise of violence to control the force resource that allowed power over other force resources and, thereby, the world. It was aggressive warfare. It was an “international crime.” Not only that, it was the “supreme” such crime. This falsified any US assertion—claimed and reclaimed by elites from Governor Winthrop in 1630 to Bush II—to be “a city upon a hill” divinely elected to lead the world to heaven on earth.

However, the US might still claim “city upon a hill” status if it could show that it had—a bit like Saint George and the Dragon—slain the fire-breathing terror monster. Chomsky, in the quotation that begins this section, tells his readers that the security elites, “all ... of them,” said Saddam was an “evil monster,” and that consequently they had to “go after” him. The following narrative shows the string of events that portrayed Iraq’s president as a monster (worse than a fire-breather, he was a chemical spewer); how this monsterization allowed the Security Elites 3.0 to war on the basis of the anti-terrorism public *délire*, camouflaging the actuality that the US was a “supreme” international criminal. The analysis begins with a spot of phantasmagoric baby killing.

*Gulf War I and Baby Killing*: Saddam invaded Kuwait in 1991. In his eyes and undoubtedly those of numerous Iraqis, this was not commencing a war of aggression, but correcting a colonial injustice by returning to Iraq what British imperialism had severed from it. When this context was ignored, however, Saddam’s invasion was very much a war of aggression if you believed the evidence of your eyes, which saw Iraqi tanks streaming into Kuwait City. A US invasion of Iraq to stop the Saddamite needed selling. At this point the public relations business Hill and Knowlton Strategies (H&K) enters the narrative.

In the late 1980s and 1990s H&K was the world’s largest public relations firm and had special Republican ties. In the 1960s it was famous for representing the tobacco industry’s denial of links between smoking and cancer. More recently it has represented the domestic US gas and oil industry in support of fracking. During Gulf War I its Washington office was headed by Craig Fuller, a close friend of Bush I and his former chief of staff in vice presidential days. After Saddam’s invasion, Kuwait hired H&K to make the case for its liberation by the US. The Wirthlin Group, Ronald Reagan’s former pollsters, did H&K’s research. It was their job to discover



the messages that struck Americans as emotionally powerful. A Canadian Broadcasting Company television documentary, *To Sell a War*, presented an interview with a Wirthlin Group official who said the most emotionally compelling message they had found concerning the Iraq situation was one constructed as the “fact that Saddam Hussein was a madman who had committed atrocities even against his own people, and had tremendous power to do further damage, and he needed to be stopped” (CBC 1992). The Wirthlin Group revealed this to H&K, which in turn revealed to Bush I’s security elites that in order to fight terrorism, he needed “a madman” terrorist who “committed atrocities.” Monsterization of Saddam was on.

There needed to be a “hook”—something that grabbed people’s attention and made them believe that the former ally and CIA asset who ran Iraq was a monster. H&K’s hook was an old one, adapted from one the British had employed to monsterize the Germans during World War I: the Huns killed little babies! H&K’s hook would be that Saddam’s soldiers killed little babies. They first presented their hook on 10 October 1990, at a Human Rights Caucus hearing on Capitol Hill. Explosive testimony was delivered by Nayirah, a sobbing Kuwaiti teenager who recalled what she had witnessed in a Kuwait City hospital: “I saw the Iraqi soldiers come into the hospital with guns, and go into the room where ... babies were in incubators. They took the babies out of the incubators, took the incubators, and left the babies on the cold floor to die” (in MacArthur 1992: 58). Nayirah’s story was distributed worldwide.

It was untrue. Nayirah was the daughter of Kuwait’s ambassador to the US. She never saw babies being removed from incubators. Other stories with similar messages were produced. One person recalled, “I heard Bush Sr. personally deliver an atrocity tale that had been revived from I don’t remember where. The Iraqis ordered a family to bring out their sons who were shot before the parents’ eyes. ‘And then they charged the parents for the bullets used to kill their sons,’ said Bush” (in Center for Media and Democracy 2005).<sup>25</sup> Here was the Saddamite, a monster disgorging terror; and under the anti-terrorist public *délire* the procedure for treating such terror was to go to war against its perpetrators, as Bush I did in Desert Storm.

The point here was that H&K constructed Saddam as a monster prone to terrorizing. Did Bush I and his security elites believe their propaganda? They certainly interpreted him as a distinctly scary character who as such warranted application of the anti-terrorist public *délire*: he could be perceptually understood as a terrorist, which meant he was procedurally a monster to be attacked. Ponder next Saddam’s treatment during the Clinton administration.

*The War of Blockades and WMDs:* During the Clinton years, much of the foreign policy attention focused upon Africa and the Balkans. The Iraq policy was the previously mentioned “dual containment” iteration, with Iraqi containment performed by the sanctions. Saddam was not forgotten, but for much of the time he was on the back burner as the debacles in Somalia and Rwanda detonated and as Yugoslavia disintegrated. All this changed in 1997.

The sanctions regime imposed following Gulf War I included creation of a UN group, the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM), charged with responsibility to inspect for Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction and, upon finding them, to eliminate them. UNSCOM and Saddam had a testy relationship throughout the early and middle years of the 1990s. Testy became dysfunctional when it became clear that UNSCOM was supplying information to US intelligence.<sup>26</sup> Unsurprisingly, on 11 November 1997 Baghdad requested that US personnel working for USCOM leave Iraq. The following day Clinton met with his top security elites, and they decided to move toward war. This involved a campaign to inform Americans of the reasons for such aggression.

Clinton’s “campaign” lacked the melodramatic hook of the previous administration. There were no babies dying on hospital floors. Rather, the president started the campaign in his 27 January 1998 State of the Union address, declaring, “Saddam Hussein has spent the better part of this decade and much of his nation’s wealth not on providing for the Iraqi people, but on developing nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and the missiles to deliver them” (W. Clinton 1998b). The presidential message was that Saddam had developed monster weapons, WMDs, to terrorize. This was a reprise of an earlier Cold War trope shown on television screens across America during the 1950s to warn against the USSR: a rising mushroom cloud from an atomic explosion triggered by monster Soviets. Let us call this the “scare-them-with-monster-weapons” trope. Khrushchev had nuclear bombs. Saddam, even more terrifyingly, had WMDs that included ghastly poisonous gases, terrible epidemic diseases, and atomic weapons. Clinton told Saddam point blank in the State of the Union address: “We are determined to deny you the capacity to use them again” (*ibid.*).<sup>27</sup>

Three weeks later, three principals of the security elites—NSA Sandy Berger, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and Secretary of Defense Bill Cohen—traveled to the campus of Ohio State University to hold a “town meeting” to further excoriate the Baghdad regime. Albright told her audience, “Iraq is a long way from Ohio, but what happens there matters a great deal here. For the risk that the leaders of a rogue state will use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons against us or our allies is the greatest

threat we face” (in Freedom Agenda 2012). The secretary of state had elevated Saddam to “the greatest threat,” a monster with WMDs.

Did Clinton’s security elites actually believe their monsterization? Iraq had *had* a nuclear weapons program. There *had* been a biological weapons program. With the assistance of Europeans and the connivance of the US, Saddam *had* used chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq War. UNSCOM *had* destroyed considerable quantities of WMDs, and nobody really knew what might be hidden out in the desert. Clinton’s security elites had reason to believe. Seen in this light, their aggression against Iraq was implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire* to keep the terrorist in check. Attention turns now to how the Bush II administration dealt with the Saddamite.

*Gulf War II and “Repeating Things Over and Over Again”*: A nugget of wisdom from a candidate on the 2000 campaign trail, delivered to high school students in Rochester, New York, let slip a secret of how he planned to govern: “See in my line of work you got to keep repeating things over and over again for the truth to sink in, to kind of catapult the propaganda” (in “Bush: ‘You Have to Keep Repeating Things’” 2005). Dubya and his Vulcans would “keep repeating over and over again” that the problem with Saddam was WMDs and the terror they caused, in effect “repeating over and over again” the Clinton administration’s rant against Saddam.

It began with Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, who from the outset of Bush II’s presidency, well before 9/11, had supported the idea that Saddam was a terrorist. He did so by championing the views of Laurie Mylroie, a Harvard political science Ph.D. and an Iraq “expert.” Initially she had supported US government attempts to ally with Saddam, but eventually she made a 180-degree turn and insisted that he was behind much of the world’s terrorism (Mylroie 2000). Her arguments were later dismissed as crackpot (see Plotz 2001). Wolfowitz, however, used her views to argue to the new administration that Saddam was the world’s terrorist mastermind (Isikoff and Corn 2006: 66–67). When 9/11 finally occurred, Wolfowitz immediately insisted Saddam was behind it. A year after 9/11, in an address on Ellis Island with the Statue of Liberty in the background, Bush echoed Wolfowitz in a speech, saying, “We will not allow any terrorist or tyrant to threaten civilization with weapons of mass destruction” (in Isikoff and Corn 2007: 42). Saddam was a bad guy. Why did Bush II and Wolfowitz link Saddam with terrorism and WMDs?

They may have done it simply because the Clinton administration had previously done it. However, Wolfowitz suggested a second reason for linking terrorism with WMDs and Saddam when he recollected, “For bureaucratic reasons, we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction

[as justification for invading Iraq] because it was the one reason everyone could agree on” (in Counterpunch News Service 2003). “Everyone” could “agree” because in the past it had been known that Saddam had WMDs and used them. After all, there were the widely screened 1988 films of his gassed victims in Halalja. Even journalists, the most skeptical of observers, thought Saddam had WMDs. When Patrick Cockburn installed himself in Iraq to cover the war, he found that “in what had been the lobby of the hotel was a birdcage with a canary called Diehard 2 which was expected to provide early warning of a poisoned gas attack by dutifully expiring at the first whiff” (2006: 43–44).

It was in the summer of 2002 that the Vulcans became serious about tying Saddam to WMDs. Chief of Staff Andrew Card and Karl Rove, Bush’s senior advisor and *eminence grise* of political strategy, inaugurated a task force that came to be known as the White House Iraq Group (WHIG) to market the anti-Iraq message. Key WHIG members included Condoleezza Rice; her deputy Stephen Hadley; Irve “Scooter” Libby, Cheney’s deputy; and Michael Gerson, Bush’s speechwriter. According to James Bamford (2005: 325), WHIG operated as follows: upon receiving “false or exaggerated intelligence; then [they] ... leak it to friendly reporters, complete with prepackaged vivid imagery; finally when the story breaks, senior officials point to it as proof and parrot the unnamed quotes.” Gerson is supposed to have provided WHIG members with their most vivid imagery, the potential mushroom cloud rising over America if Saddam’s regime was not dealt with (Isikoff and Corn 2007: 35). The mushroom cloud evoked memories of school days for many mature Americans who had had to “duck and cover” under their school desks in anticipation of a Soviet nuclear attack. What a hook!

After WHIG was formed, senior Vulcans began a barrage of announcements decrying the dangers of Saddam’s WMDs. The opening salvo was made by Cheney in a 26 August 2002 speech to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, in which he announced, “Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam now has weapons of mass destruction” (in “Context of ‘August 26, 2002’” 2003). A few weeks later on 8 September, Rice took to the Sunday talk shows, insisting certain aluminum tubes that had been discovered in Iraq were “only really suited for nuclear weapons programs” and that it was inadvisable to ignore this because “we don’t want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud” (Blitzer 2003). She had used Gerson’s hook. On 27 September Rumsfeld said the evidence linking Iraq and al-Qaeda was “accurate and not debatable” (Stein and Dickinson 2006).

Two days later on September 29, the DIA demurred, judging there was “no reliable” evidence of Iraqi WMDs (Stein and Dickinson 2006). To counter this breach in the hermetic seal, the CIA was tasked with the

chore of creating an NIE concerning Iraq and WMDs. Recall that NIEs, as compendiums of all the US intelligence agencies' views on a particular topic, are the "last word" on the government's views on intelligence matters. The 2002 NIE's last word, released in October of that year, was: "We judge that Iraq has continued its weapons of mass destruction" (NIE 2002). Tenet, using a basketball metaphor, told his president the case for Saddam having WMDs was a "slam dunk" (in B. Woodward 2004: 249). In a 7 October speech in Cincinnati, Bush ignored his DIA and accepted the NIE, once again employing Gerson's hook by telling his audience that "facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof—the smoking gun—that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud" (Stein and Dickinson 2006). Rumsfeld reiterated Bush's claim on 29 January 2003, appearing to give it quantitative legitimacy by revealing that "the Iraqi regime has not accounted for some 38,000 liters of botulism toxin, 500 tons of sarin, mustard gas, VX nerve gas and upwards of 30,000 munitions capable of delivering chemical weapons" (in Rosenberg 2006: 2).

A little over six weeks before the attack on Iraq, the constructing of Saddam as a WMD toting terrorist gained greater stridency. On 5 February Powell gave his embarrassing speech at the UN, declaring to the world that Iraq was awash in WMDs. Three days later in his weekly radio address, Bush warned the American people, "We have sources that tell us that Saddam Hussein recently authorized Iraqi field commanders to use chemical weapons" (in B. Woodward 2004: 139). Ominously, on 10 February the newly instituted Department of Homeland Security advised Americans to buy plastic sheeting with which to seal their houses from Iraqi chemical or biological attacks (Stein and Dickinson 2006). The assault on Iraq began on 19 March. No Iraqi WMDs were used in the combat. Two and a half years later (18 December 2005), speaking from the Oval Office to a world audience, Bush admitted "we did not find those weapons" (in B. Woodward 2006: 435).

Many people around the world believed the slogan "Bush lied. People died." Scholars have suggested that it was known before the onset of hostilities that the case for Iraq's possession of WMDs was weak (Cole 2013c). Did Bush's security elites really believe Saddam had WMDs? Tenet, perhaps, was representative of Vulcan understandings on this matter. In his memoir he disputes Woodward's account of his "slam dunk" exclamation, asserting he was not maintaining it was a slam dunk case that Saddam had WMDs, but that a slam dunk case could be made that he had them (Tenet 2007: 362).<sup>28</sup> However, a few lines after this assertion he insisted he "strongly" believed Saddam had WMDs (*ibid.*). After all, Saddam had once had them, and he had used them. Bush (2010: 269) stressed in his memoirs that "supporters of the war believed it [that Saddam had WMDs];

opponents of the war believed it; even members of Saddam's own regime believed it." Some might wonder if Bush is truthful here. However, many did worry about the possibility of Iraqi WMDs. Remember the journalists in Irbil with their canary, Diehard 2.

Meanwhile, "slam dunk" proof was elusive. Prewar US intelligence, an oxymoron, was poor. Bush's security elites added to the problem by biasing their intelligence against Saddam. Tenet (2007: 348) regretted that only "much later" did he realize Wolfowitz, Libby, and Feith had been purveyors of tainted intelligence. Feith's Office of Special Plans (OPS) was especially notorious for distributing anti-Iraq information, what Tenet called "Feith-based analysis" (ibid.: 342–358).<sup>29</sup> At the same time, the Vulcans also had to contemplate data indicating that WMDs had not been found, realizing too that Iraq was a large place with a large desert in which to hide WMDs. Consequently, when Bush security elites examined intelligence upon Iraq, what was clear was that either there were, or there were not, WMDs.

Finally, Tenet and Gates have identified emotional states relevant to Vulcan dispositions during the run-up to Iraq II. Gates, in his memoir of his years as defense secretary, confided that the Bush II security elites felt that by not preventing 9/11 they had "let the country down" and consequently had a "huge sense of having allowed a devastating attack on America to take place on their watch" (2014: 93). Tenet reminded readers in his memoir that "few understand the palpable sense of uncertainty and fear that gripped those in the storm center in the aftermath of 9/11" (2007: 496). Bush and the Vulcans were the ones in the "storm center," and they had failed horribly in 9/11. Now they were scared. Bush II wrote in his memoirs, "I still see the Pentagon smoldering, the towers in flames, and that pile of twisted steel. . . . And it redefined my job. . . . I would pour my heart and soul into protecting the country, whatever it took" (2010: 151). Rice (2011: 88) confided in her memoir that she felt Bush "was carrying a weight heavier than any other president, at least since Abraham Lincoln." Perhaps she was a bit hyperbolic here.

But Dubya *was* the president, after all, and his window of authority authorized him to be the "decider." He knew that if anything else appalling happened, "I would be responsible" (Bush 2010: 237). So the "decider" felt failure as well as "fear" and the *délire* to avoid it. Dreading that some other horrible event could occur on their watch, and sensitive that it was their responsibility to prevent it, Bush and his Vulcans consequently interpreted Iraq's president as a monster Saddamite—the better to prevent him from hurting them, even though deep down in their heart of hearts they probably did not *really* know the truth of their interpretation.

The preceding information reveals that perceptually, Bush II and his Vulcans understood Saddam's regime as that of a monster terrorist, which

meant that procedurally, if no other way was found to address Saddam, war was required. This suggests that Gulf War II was, at least in part, implementation of the anti-terrorism public *délire*. So elimination of terrorism was a *délire* in each of the wars the US Leviathan fought against Saddam. Were the security elites successful in their anti-terrorist warring?

They certainly eliminated Saddam. However, Saddam had kept al-Qaeda out of Iraq. After his demise in 2003, al-Qaeda in Iraq, led by the Jordanian Abu Musab al Zaqawi, was formed to resist the Americans. It became influential during the occupation. Its powers were curbed by the time of the surge but were never completely eliminated. Al-Qaeda in Iraq became a magnet for foreign Islamic radicals from throughout the Middle East and other Muslim areas, providing them with training and experience in insurgency. These radicals tended to return to their home countries and in turn diffuse al-Qaeda doctrines and warring skills. This grew terrorism, according to two NIE reports in 2006 (Mazzetti 2006). How much the Iraq War contributed to the growth of terrorism has been debated, but support that this was the case has come from journalists (Priest 2005), scholars (Gunaratna 2004), security research institutes such as the International Institute for Strategic Studies (Sengupta 2004), and US intelligence agencies (NIE 2006, 2009<sup>30</sup>). Bluntly, the empire increased terrorism by warring to fight it.

The preceding established that the twenty-year imperial war in Iraq involved implementing the oil-control and anti-terrorist iterations of the global domination public *délire*. In the implementation of later iteration, it might be added, a violent grab for energy force resources believed able to facilitate reproduction of the US Leviathan was cloaked in the noble light of purging terrorist monsters from the world. Of course the Security Elites 3.0 could only attack the Saddamite when they believed that non-violent ways of achieving their intentions had failed. The following section investigates the hermeneutic politics that led to the awarding of Shultzian Permission in Gulf War II.

### *The Conflict that Led to the Conflict: The Hermeneutics Politics of Shultzian Permission in Gulf War II*

“Mr. President, this force is ready. D-day H-Hours is 2100 hours tonight Iraqi time...”

President Bush nodded to the NSC, then, turned toward me.

“All right. For the sake of peace in the world. ... As of this moment I will give Secretary Rumsfeld the order to execute Operation Iraqi Freedom.”

“Tommy,” The President added, his voice firm, “May God bless the troops.” (Franks 2004: xvi–xvii)

“Tommy” was CENTCOM Commander General Tommy Franks, sitting in the conference room of his headquarters in Doha, Qatar. The president, of course, was Dubya, thousands of miles away in Washington, sitting with the Vulcans of the National Security Council. “For the sake of peace” the “order to execute” did just that: it began Gulf War II and executed hundreds of thousands of people, most of them civilians. It has already been suggested that the Vulcans proceeded on the basis of the two oil- and anti-terrorist public *délires*, but a question remains: why did the actually give themselves Shultzian Permission? This had to do with the hermeneutic politics of a very restricted circle of Vulcans, discussed next.

Remember, Bush was the “decider.” Further, understand that the president largely took his decisions from the Vulcans, within whose *délires* he was hermetically sealed. Actually, the choice to war occurred within an inner circle of the inner circle of Vulcans. Five made Gulf War II—the NSA, Rice; the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld; the Vice President, Cheney; the Secretary of State, Colin Powell; and the Director of the CIA, George Tenet.

These actors’ relationships to each other, and to Bush, varied. Cheney originally had the closest ties to the president. As Dubya once told Bob Woodward, “I love Cheney” (in Woodward 2004: 420).<sup>31</sup> Rumsfeld “impressed” Bush (2010: 84), who found he had a “captivating vision” for the defense department. One wonders what was “captivating” about an institution whose practice was to slaughter enormous numbers. Nevertheless, Bush saw Rumsfeld as having “strength and experience,” and besides, Cheney “recommended him strongly” (ibid.). Rumsfeld and Cheney were a “secret cabal”—as Powell’s State Department Chief of Staff, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, put it (Froomkin 2005)—in “alliance” throughout Bush II’s presidency (Gordon and Trainor 2006: 44) in a collaboration dating from the Ford administration.

Rice, as the title of her memoirs made clear, found “no higher honor” than in serving Bush II (Rice 2011). Gordon and Trainor (2006: 168) found her to be “more coordinator than maestro” as compared to her NSA predecessors Kissinger and Brzezinski. She seems to have believed her task was to divine Dubya’s *délire* and then help deliver it. Secretary Powell’s Chief of Staff Wilkerson claimed in a 2005 speech that Rice, aiming to strengthen her closeness with the president instead of transmitting the best possible advice, would send what she believed Dubya wanted to hear (Froomkin 2005).<sup>32</sup>

Tenet’s relations to Bush resembled those of Rice, though for different reasons. The CIA director had also been Clinton’s final head of the agency. Bush found he “spoke bluntly” and grew to like the “blue-collar,” “cigar-chomping,” “Greek-to-the-core” guy (Bush 2010: 84). Others have



reported that Tenet strove energetically to win Dubya's backing (B. Woodward 2004: 67–68). He had to. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG 2005: vii) had examined CIA operations prior to 9/11 and concluded, "the Director of Central Intelligence," Tenet, "was either unwilling or unable to marshal the full range of ... resources necessary to combat" terrorism. Thus condemned as "unwilling or unable," Clinton's man had to work harder to please Bush II.<sup>33</sup>

As for Powell, I once met a grandmother, a knowing matriarch, who as a child had played with Powell's sister. He was the little brat brother who tagged along. They used to put him in the closet. In a sense, the story told below concerns what happened to Powell after he got out of the sisters' clutches, going from the closet to the refrigerator. Bush's relations with Powell were, according to Rice (2011: 20), "complicated," which puts the matter mildly. Importantly, Powell had "extraordinary stature" and had been spoken of as a candidate for the presidency (*ibid.*: 21). Further, he had had far more political and military experience at the highest levels of Washington than had the president. So regardless of whether or not he intended it, Secretary of State Powell was the president's competitor. Bush II, for his part, had lost the popular election and only been granted the presidency—illicitly, many believed.

Make no mistake about it: neither Rumsfeld nor Cheney liked Powell. Rice (2011: 22) observed that "Don and Colin did not get along," which "the President knew." Cheney, according to Bob Woodward (2004: 411), insisted "Colin always had major reservations about what we were trying to do." Gordon and Trainor (2006: 44) believe that "Cheney's alliance with Rumsfeld allowed him to set the terms of the policy debate," leaving Powell "the odd man out."

Tenet (2004), reflecting on the time when it was decided to attack Iraq, has said, "There was never a serious debate that I know of within the administration about the imminence of the Iraqi threat." That is, there may never have been discussion of the "imminence" of danger from Saddam, in the sense of when it might occur. However, in addition to personal animosities toward each other, members of the inner circle had opposing views of what to do about the "threat." These differences were the conflict that led to the conflict.

Gordon and Trainor (2006: 44) revealed the heart of these differences when they observed, "Bush had picked Cheney and Rumsfeld for a number of reasons and their tough-minded approach to the exercise of power was one of them. It was a troika. The president would preside, the Vice President would guide, and the defense secretary would implement." "Tough-minded" meant pro-war, and as Cheney told the world on national television just after 9/11, this would be war working on "the dark side"

(Cheney 2011: 335). Going to the “dark side” meant a number of things to Cheney and Rumsfeld, one of which was having their underlings run campaigns to provoke conflict with Iraq. The key underlings working for Rumsfeld were Wolfowitz, Feith, and Pearle; Scooter Libby was the most important of those working for Cheney. Going to the “dark side” also meant utilizing unlawful forms of extreme violence. Bush II would become the first president in US history to authorize torture of captured prisoners.<sup>34</sup>

It is sometimes said that Powell opposed going to war in Iraq. Powell’s differences with Cheney and Rumsfeld were more nuanced than that. He agreed with Cheney and Rumsfeld that Saddam was a thug. He also agreed that the regime probably had WMDs. So he shared with them the perception that Iraq was a menace. Nevertheless, speaking in 2007, Powell (2007) remembered, “I tried to avoid this war.” This was because he was troubled by the way Cheney and Rumsfeld proposed to address Iraq. The basis for this foreboding was his professional soldier’s worry about what the “secret cabal” planned to do. As Gordon and Trainor (2006: 577) observe, “Rumsfeld and Franks dominated the [war] planning” and Cheney “never once challenged the realism of Rumsfeld’s expectations.” Powell recognized flaws in the plans well before combat began. Specifically, he “raised both the issue of insufficient troops and the difficulties the U.S. would encounter in post war Iraq” (ibid.).<sup>35</sup> Following his experiences in Vietnam, he had formulated what became known as the Powell Doctrine, first articulated during preparation for Gulf War I (C. Powell 1992).

This doctrine has a number of elements. Two are basic: the resort to violent force should only occur after all peaceful means are exhausted; and when this happens, overwhelming force should be applied. The first element accepts the validity of Shultzian Permission as a condition for commencing hostilities, while the second reflects the belief among some in the US military that such tactics will reduce US casualties and shorten hostilities. In planning for Gulf War II, General Franks, Cheney, and Rumsfeld violated the Powell Doctrine in two ways. First, they proposed to go directly to war without seeking Shultzian Permission. As a soldier, and perhaps due to the success of the coalition he helped build as chief of staff during Gulf War I, Powell appreciated that seeking such permission facilitated alliance-building, which helped with the fighting and insured its legitimacy. Second, Franks and his colleagues did not plan for applying overwhelming force. Rather, they sought “a revolution in war” by using relatively few US soldiers in what was termed a “turbo-blitzkrieg.” From Powell’s perspective, this was unrealistic because it did not anticipate post-conflict difficulties, such as the possibility of insurgency.

So, the Powell versus Cheney/Rumsfeld debate was not over interpretations of perceptions. According to Powell (2012: 222), “None of us knew

that much of the evidence was wrong,” the “evidence” being the proof of the existence of WMDs.<sup>36</sup> Everybody perceived Saddam had WMDs, knew he had used them, and so was a monster who should go. The dispute was over procedure. How was he to go? Here, considerable differences led to hermeneutic politics that ended in the granting of Shultzian Permission, which ultimately ushered in Gulf War II. Let us follow the course of the (hermeneutic) conflict that led to the (violent) conflict.

*Granting Shultzian Permission:* The inner-circle conflict was most rancorous between Powell and Cheney. The stage was set for acrimony probably immediately after 9/11. Cheney (2011: 369) reports that in the emotional days following the destruction of the World Trade Center, he “spoke ... privately” to the president:

I was aware that Secretary Rumsfeld had set up a process to review all Department of Defense war plans, and I suggested to the president that it would be useful to make certain that Rumsfeld had assigned priority to planning for possible military action against Saddam Hussein. ... I also suggested that our planning be ... under the command of General Tommy Franks.

Bush accepted Cheney’s “suggestion” and asked Rumsfeld to start planning for war in Iraq, “two months after 9/11” (Bush 2010: 234). Almost immediately afterward on 27 November, Rumsfeld told Franks to begin developing an Iraq war plan (Franks 2004: 329). Bush (2010: 234) is careful to say in his war memoirs that this planning was not necessarily to actually go to war; rather, it was “the coercive half of coercive diplomacy.” It is impossible to discern at this point whether Bush is telling the truth about coercive diplomacy, or whether he and Cheney in their private conversations actually intended to go to war all along. Nevertheless, two months after 9/11 the formulation of the plans that would be used against Iraq was initiated.

Powell, his “megastar wattage” notwithstanding, was already in trouble. In the first sixteen months of Dubya’s administration he and Armitage joked about how he (Powell) was “in the refrigerator” (B. Woodward 2004: 149). The press noticed this and suggested the secretary of state was on the way out. Not only was he a nonentity, but as Mitchell and Masoud (2009: 275) judge, “By directing Rumsfeld to work on an invasion plan, Bush gave an advantage to the pro-war faction. ... This meant that Powell” was “further hamstrung in trying to influence the policy process.” Cheney, Franks, and Rumsfeld kept the actual invasion planning between themselves and the president. Bush (2010: 235) recalls that Franks briefed him about war planning “more than a dozen times” between December 2001 and August 2002. The details for invading Iraq were well under way, and Powell was chilling in the fridge.

In the spring of 2002, Cheney (2011: 380–81) “began hearing ... that Secretary Powell and Deputy Secretary Armitage were not only failing to support the president’s policies, but were openly disdainful of them”—information likely to have been passed on to Bush II. For Powell, it looked like he was being moved from the refrigerator to the freezer. Powell (2007) remembered that, hoping to strengthen his position, “I went to the president in August of 2002, after coming back from a trip and seeing all the planning that was under way, and we had a long meeting upstairs in the residence.” This meeting, which took place on 5 August between himself, Rice, and the president, has come to be known as the “Pottery Barn” meeting. At it Powell used the pro-war cabal’s understanding that they were conducting coercive diplomacy to begin a string of events that resulted in the granting of Shultzian Permission, and war.

Powell’s rhetorical tactics at the meeting appear to have been meant to inform the president of the frightening consequences of invading Iraq.<sup>37</sup> At one point, he told Bush that if the hostilities were successful, “‘You are going to be the proud owner of 25 million people,’ and ‘You will own all their hopes, aspirations and problems. You’ll own it all’” (in B. Woodward 2004: 150). The press called this the “Pottery Barn rule.” Retail stores selling fragile ceramics and earthenware, like those in the Pottery Barn chain, can have a “you break it, you own it” rule, meaning that if you break it, you must pay for it. Broken pottery was a metonym for all the damage invasion might cause in Iraq, and a warning to Bush that if he broke the stuff, he would have to pay.<sup>38</sup>

Bush (2010: 238) recalled of the meeting, “I listened carefully and shared Colin’s concern.” Woodward says that Bush eventually inquired, “What should I do?” (2004: 151), to which Powell responded, “You can still make a pitch for a coalition or U.N. action,” cautioning that “if you take it to the U.N., you’ve got to recognize that they might be able to solve it” (ibid.). What taking “it to the U.N.” actually meant during the Pottery Barn meeting was probably left unclear, though it would have been understood that it included asking the Security Council to conduct inspections for WMDs. Bush did not commit to going the UN route at the meeting, but he certainly leaned toward it.

There followed a month of fierce hermeneutic politics during which, in General Franks’s somewhat amazed terms, the “Washington bureaucracy fought like cats in a sack” (Aslam 2013: 69), the two chief combatants being Cheney and Powell debating whether to go to the UN. Bob Woodward (2004: 155), with long and detailed knowledge of the capital’s intrigues, reports, “Rarely ... had there been such deep division within a national security team as between Cheney and Powell.” The dogfighting commenced at a 14 August NSC principals’ meeting from which the president was

absent. During the meeting Powell argued for going to the UN. Woodward writes, “Powell believed he had Cheney boxed in, and to a lesser extent Rumsfeld. He argued that even if anyone felt that war was the only solution, they could not get to war without first trying a diplomatic solution” (ibid.: 156). In a sense, Powell was saying they could only grant themselves Shultzian Permission if peaceful, that is, diplomatic measures had been tried and failed. Powell believed, according to Woodward, that Cheney was “terrified” of the prospect of going to the UN because going diplomatic “might work,” so he “harangued” against the UN, saying that dealing with it would lead to “a never-ending process of debate” (ibid.: 157).

The 14 August meeting resolved nothing. However, the next day the *Wall Street Journal* ran a piece by Bush I’s close associate and former NSA Brent Scowcroft, headlined “Don’t Attack Saddam,” that recommended taking the Iraq problem to the UN. It appeared that the father was sending the son a message, one Cheney did not want to hear. “Boxed in,” the vice president went out and delivered the 26 August speech to the Veterans of Foreign War in which he announced that there was “no doubt” that Iraq had WMDs. This led to a Labor Day (1 September) meeting at the White House between Powell and the president, with Rice present as usual. Worried about the effects of Cheney’s speech, Powell asked Dubya if it was his policy that inspectors should return to Iraq. The president responded yes, “though he was skeptical that inspections would work” (ibid.: 167). Powell was relieved, believing that at least for the moment Cheney was “neutralized” (ibid.). However, ominously, WHIG was formed two days later to make the case that Saddam had WMDs.

On 6 September there was a principals meeting at Camp David, again in the president’s absence. The principals were to consider the UN issue and the upcoming summit meeting with the UK prime minister before the full NSC meeting the next day. Once again, Cheney did not trust the UN and Powell did, so the “conversation exploded into a tough debate” (ibid.: 175). Powell remembered that Cheney argued with a “fever” and that he was “beyond hell bent for action against Saddam” (ibid.). However, “the decider” was absent, so no decision could be taken. The next day the “decider” was there to meet with the NSC principals. Powell once again argued for the need “to offer a plan to begin inspections again as part of any reengagement with the U.N.” Cheney listed all the reasons this “could mire them in a tar pit” (ibid.: 176). Tenet (2007: 319), recalling the meeting, said Bush “pretty much let them duke it out.” Woodward (2004: 176) reported that Bush thanked the debaters and “promised to think about it.”

As Rice (2011: 181) observed, “Some people have claimed that the president never asked his advisors whether he should go to war against Saddam.” Solicitous of Bush’s memory, she disagreed, declaring that the

7 September meeting “was the culmination of the debate that had been playing out over the summer,” which finally “decided on a course of action” (ibid.: 180). The verdict came in obliquely as the president announced what Saddam’s response to renewed inspections would be: “Either he will come clean about his weapons, or there will be war” (quoted ibid.: 181). Later that day, Bush met with UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. He informed Bush that in order to achieve parliamentary consent for war in Iraq, he had to first go to the UN. Bush knew the UK was likely to be his only major ally, one that would deliver a substantial number of soldiers and weapons. So he informed “Blair he had decided to go to the U.N.” (ibid.: 178).

The “decider” had decided. They would go to the UN. Powell had won, for the moment. It is important to grasp just what was chosen. It was a procedure to resolve whether, or not, peaceful means of settling the argument with Saddam had been exhausted and Shultzian Permission could be granted. Bush was clear. If Saddam did not “come clean” there would be war. War preparations continued. Bush told Blair where he stood on the matter at the summit, affirming, “Saddam Hussein has weapons of mass destruction” (in B. Woodward 2004: 178). On 8 September, WHIG organized the entire Vulcan inner circle to appear on the Sunday talk shows to excoriate Saddam and insist he possessed WMDs. This was when Rice told the world that the smoking gun of Saddam’s WMDs might be a mushroom cloud (ibid.: 2002). That autumn US “troops and supplies” began moving to the region (Cheney 2011: 438).

Now that they had decided to go to the UN, they had to actually do it. This was Powell’s job, and it involved negotiations with the UN that were made difficult by what were considered the US’s bellicose intentions. Nevertheless, the negotiations were successful and resulted in the 8 November UNSC Resolution 1441, which gave Iraq a final chance to comply with its disarmament requirements by providing a “complete accounting of all aspects” of its WMD programs and allowing UN inspectors immediate and unrestricted access to these programs. Iraq had thirty days to comply and was warned that it faced serious consequences if it failed.

Some Bush security elites made efforts to make clear to Iraq that this was Saddam’s last chance. General Franks (2004: 407), for example, remembered how, during a visit with Yemen’s President Ali Abdullah Saleh, who had ties to Saddam, he asked Ali to tell Saddam that “he should cooperate with the UN immediately.” On 27 November, UN inspectors led by Hans Blix, head of the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, and Mohamed El Baradai, head of the International Atomic Energy Commission, entered Iraq. Iraq responded to Resolution 1441 on 7 December, within the required time frame, sending the Security Council a 12,000-page declaration that it lacked WMDs. On 27 January, Blix

spoke publicly about Iraq's compliance with Resolution 1441 to the Security Council, announcing, "Iraq appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance—not even today—of the disarmament" (Blix 2003).

The Vulcan inner circle smelled blood. Rice (2011: 186) believed "Saddam seemed to be playing games with inspectors." Rumsfeld (2011: 442) dismissed Iraq's declaration as "contemptuously incomplete." Franks (2004: 417) thought the problem was that the Iraq declaration "was basically a collection of papers judged false in the 1990s." At an 18 December NSC meeting, as remembered by Feith, the president observed, "It's clear that Saddam is not cooperating," to which Powell responded, "That's right" (in Feith 2008: 339). Yet it seems that Rice was the person who convinced Bush that Saddam had not confessed. Dubya (2010: 251) recollected in his memoirs that "she had been a strong supporter of inspections. But after meeting with Blix and his team, she was convinced Saddam would do nothing but stall." Woodward (2004: 251) reports that during the Christmas holidays of 2002, there "was a lot of stress." Bush told him, "I would constantly talk to Condi."

During one of these tête-a-têtes, the conversation went: "What do you think?" the president asked Rice, 'Should we do this?' He meant war... 'Yes,' she said" (ibid.). Gates tells readers in his defense secretary memoir that Rice reported that "the fact is we invaded Iraq because we believed we had run out of other options. The sanctions were not working, the inspections were unsatisfactory, and we could not get Saddam to leave by other means" (Rice in Gates 2014: 27). When Rice insisted they had "run out of options," she meant peaceful ones. Thus Shultzian Permission could be given and her president's stress relieved, and "Yes," they could go to war.

On 16 March, three days before the start of the invasion, Cheney was asked on the nationwide television program *Meet the Press* whether Saddam's 7 December declaration was a true confession that Iraq possessed no WMDs. To some extent the confession Saddam was being asked to make resembled those demanded of persons accused of witchcraft in medieval and early modern Europe (Thurston 2001): the accused (usually women) were told to admit their witchcraft, whereupon refusal to confess was judged further proof of guilt and reason for burning at the stake. Bush and his Vulcans appear to have expected Saddam to perform a ritual of public confession of his WMDs. Saddam, not having any WMDs, did nothing of the sort. So when asked whether Saddam had made a true confession, the vice president responded, "We asked for a declaration of all of his WMD [so he would] come clean. He refused to do that. He's, again, continued to do everything he could to thwart the inspectors" (Cheney 2003).

The hermeneutic politics had come down to a public ritual during which the Iraqi president was to confess to WMDs. The 7 December "Declara-

tion” denied possession of such weapons. The inner circle of Vulcans interpreted this to mean he did not “come clean.” So the granting of Shultzian Permission was appropriate. Many, many innocent Iraqi were burned at a figurative stake of US military operations. A year later Blix changed his mind and declared that 700 inspections had occurred in Iraq and none had found WMDs. Further, he announced that during this time the US government had had the “same mind-frame as witch-hunters of the past” (in Azab Powell 2004). It is time to review the narrative just presented.

Each of the three stages of the Iraq War—Gulf War I, the War of Blockades, and Gulf War II—can be accounted for in part as a result of the implementation of the oil control and anti-terrorist iterations of the global domination public *délire*. Furthermore, there is evidence that in Gulf War II that the actual triggering of hostilities was due to a hermeneutic politics pitting the secretary of state against the other members of the inner circle over whether the violations of the oil and anti-terrorist public *délires* could be diplomatically resolved. The inner circle believed Saddam had not “come clean” and interpreted this to mean that peaceful diplomacy was impossible, which allowed them to award themselves Shultzian Permission.

The war that followed was a preemptive war of aggression—preemptive, because it was supposed that Iraq intended to harm America; aggressive, because the US invaded Iraq. Iraq, already crushed by Gulf War I and the War of Blockades, had neither the intention nor the means to attack America. Because it was a war of aggression, it was a crime under international law. Recollect that Robert Jackson, the chief American prosecutor at the Nuremberg Tribunal, had classified wars of aggression as “the supreme international crime.” Recall additionally that although the figures for Iraq civilian deaths and injuries during Gulf War II vary, they do so at high levels—from hundreds of thousands to millions killed and wounded.

Moreover, the three phases of US global warring with Iraq actually left the Hawks’ and Vulcans’ *délires* frustrated. With regard to fighting terrorism, they may have eliminated Saddam, but they allowed al-Qaeda into Iraq, where it had never been before, and where the Islamic State has grown. With regard to controlling oil, the wars appear to be, as Greg Muttitt puts it, a case of “mission unaccomplished,” with Chinese oil companies a primary beneficiary of the US warring.

Finally, the evidence concerning the Iraq War is consistent with the global warring hypothesis. Prior to and during the global warring, there was intensification and coalescence of the cyclical, the land/capital, and the dominator/dominated contradictions. Shultzian Permission was granted in Gulf War I and the War of Blockades because hostilities were already ongoing when the US intervened; and in Gulf War II because, as Rice put it, they had run out of peaceful “options.” Bush I, Clinton, and Bush II saw to



it that the global warrings they executed were implementations of the anti-terrorist and the oil-control public *délires*. Obama, as Gates (2014: 297) has reported, has claimed that the US ended the war in Iraq “responsibly.” Perhaps, but consider what the US Leviathan was responsible for. Its myrmidons came, butchered (perhaps over a million people), and cut and ran.

The Iraq War was but one of a number imperial wars during the changing of millenniums. Attention now turns to another Persian Gulf hostility in a “fairylnd” where there is a lot of oil and there has been a lot of global warring.

### Twilight Warring in “Fairylnd”: 1994–2013

Winston Churchill, who helped the UK acquire control over Iran’s oil industry in the early twentieth century, in words of condescension and, perhaps, sexual innuendo, called this acquisition “a prize from fairylnd beyond our wildest dreams” (in Kinzer 2008: xi).<sup>39</sup> We have already seen how the US engaged in global warring against “fairylnd” in 1953 and again during the Iran-Iraq War. According to David Crist (2012: 572), a former US military officer with combat experience in the Persian Gulf, after 1979 there were “three decades of twilight war.” By “twilight” warring Crist meant relatively small-scale, largely indirect, clandestine global warring. Ari Ratner (2012), of the United States Institute of Peace, has spoken of a “covert war” between the US and Iran during the Bush II and Obama administrations. Actually, information on the period under review points to indirect, overt and covert global warring beginning during the Clinton administration in 1994 and continuing through 2013, which warring is evaluated below.

#### *Twilight Warring*

During his inaugural address in January 1989, Bush I announced to Iran that “goodwill begets goodwill” (in Haass 2010). From the American perspective, Iran did not respond with much “goodwill,” especially because Khomeini’s officials dragged their heels about freeing American hostages held by Iran-backed Hezbollah. Of course, from the Iranians’ vantage point Bush I’s 1990 awarding of the Legion of Merit to Will Rogers III, who had downed the civilian Iranian airliner at the end of the Iran-Iraq War, did not seem an act of “goodwill.” There were numerous complications between the two countries. However, according to Richard Haass (2010), who was George H. W. Bush’s special assistant (1989–1993), “The U.S.-Iran relationship was largely stagnant during the Bush administra-

tion.” As it stands, this assertion is correct but misleading, for the inertia was of a particular sort. During the Bush I years, as had been the case since the elimination of the US-imposed shah, ill will beget ill will. So what remained stagnant, in the words of Donald Rumsfeld (2011: 4), was that “U.S.-Iran relations” were “poisoned.”

Rumsfeld (2011: 638–39) notes in his memoirs that “every American administration since the Iranian revolution has participated in some form of diplomatic engagement with” Iran. However, recall that he believed such diplomacy to be “poisoned.” Steven Kinzer (2008: xviii–xix) identified the toxin when he observed that “the American political class has never recovered from the shock of losing the Shah and the humiliation of the hostage crisis that followed.” The poison is “humiliation,” and US security elites, having drunk deeply of it, are impelled to stealth violence against Iran whenever they think they can get away with it, in effect granting themselves Shultzian Permission against Tehran.

During the Clinton administration this violence involved two sorts of global warring: blockades and CIA covert operations. Washington had been sanctioning Iran since 1979 and the taking of US embassy hostages. Under Clinton the sanctioning became considerably more onerous in the spring of 1995, when he signed Executive Order 12957, barring any trade with Iran’s petroleum industry, and Executive Order 12959, prohibiting any US trade with Iran. A year later, the US Congress passed the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, which punished all foreign companies that invested in Iranian hydrocarbons. Additionally, in 1995 the Clinton administration allocated 18–20 million dollars for covert operations inside Iran. This money was in principle to be used as part of the administration’s dual containment policy.<sup>40</sup> The exact operations of this “containment” are unclear, but Tehran would probably have regarded all of them as hostile. So, by the mid 1990s the New American Empire was globally warring in Iran, largely by blockading its oil sector—its greatest source of wealth—while running covert operations.

The Bush II administration had its hands full dealing with its invasion of Iraq. As part of it, the Vulcans had to confront a “counter invasion of Iraq” from Iran that “followed shortly after the American attack. MOIS and Quds force officers arrived in southern Iraq on the heels of U.S. tanks driving north to Baghdad” (Crist 2012: 468). The MOIS was Iran’s Ministry of Intelligence and National Security, the Iranian equivalent of the CIA. The Quds Force was a special unit of Iran’s Revolutionary Guard, which by the 1990s had become a “blend of U.S. Special Operations and the Peace Corps” (Crist 2012: 468). The combination of MOIS and Quds Force strengthened Shiite rebellion against the American occupation. How would Bush II’s Vulcans respond?

Evidence circulated in 2006 of U.S. covert military operations inside Iran aimed at destabilizing the country. When this covert warfare began is unknown, but it is clear that in 2007 the Bush II administration allocated \$400 million to increase it (S. Hersh 2006). How this money was spent is uncertain. It appears U.S. commandos were ordered into Iran to establish contact with Kurdish, Baloch, and Arab ethnic groups that opposed the Iranian government. There were charges that the U.S. was using the Mujahedin el Khalg, an opposition movement in exile that advocated the Islamic Republic of Iran's overthrow, to conduct cross-border operations between Iraq and Iran (Bergman 2008). It is known that drone missions over Iran were initiated, as was Operation Olympic Games, a program for cyber attacks on Iran's nuclear program. It can be speculated that at least some of the covert funds went to media campaigns against the Tehran regime and to dissenting members of its governing elite. In sum, probably starting around 2005, the US had considerably escalated covert global warfare against Iran, though instead of using the Iraqi state as its proxy as it had during the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s, it now appeared to be relying upon its own covert operations.<sup>41</sup>

Obama, largely because of his Iran adventures, was labeled “George W. Bush on steroids” by one critic (A. Miller 2012). Such a designation seems melodramatic. Nevertheless, his regime did further escalate global warring against Iran. It added new and broader sanctions against Tehran designed to hinder all sectors of its economy, especially its financial sector. It has also pressed the UN and individual countries to impose their own sanctions upon Tehran. Consequently, Iran faced a harsh sanction regime intended to strangle economic life by blockade. This was only one aspect of the New American Empire's violent operations against the country.

Obama's Security Elites 3.0 have specialized in covert campaigns of “high-tech sabotage” (Ratner 2012). They took the Bush II administration's Olympic Games to a new level of performance. Apparently in collaboration with the Israelis, a computer virus called Stuxnet was developed and deployed in 2009 and 2010. It was designed to, and did, destroy centrifuges in Iran's nuclear program.<sup>42</sup> The Obama security elites have had an elective affinity for drones, whose use in Iran has seemingly been largely for intelligence purposes. Iranian facilities (refineries, pipelines, and a missile development center) have had a high rate of explosions; Iranian nuclear physicists have been assassinated on the streets of Tehran (probably by Israeli agents); and US Special Ops teams have been inserted in several places for undisclosed covert goals. So it is clear a “twilight war” began under Clinton, strengthened under Bush II, and intensified still further under Obama, posing the question of what the fighting was all about. This brings

the analysis back to the anti-terrorist and the oil-control iterations of the global domination public *délire*.

### *The Anti-terrorist Public Délire*

Iran may be “fairyland,” but according to the Security Elites 3.0, “fairyland” is a bastion of terrorism. Katzman (2010: 26–37) catalogs the extent of Iran’s terrorist activities, as recorded by the US government. During Clinton’s presidency his NSA Anthony Lake proposed that some countries were “rogue states” because, among other things, they sponsored terrorism. Rogue states were to be isolated and punished. Lake labeled Iran a prime example of such a rogue. Bush II continued this theme in 2002, when in a speech he branded Iran (along with Iraq and North Korea) part of an Axis of Evil for its state support of terrorism. As Obama’s Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton (2007) condemned Iran as “the country that most sponsors state terrorism.” Iran’s purported nuclear weapons program has especially concerned US imperial elites since the Bush II administration.<sup>43</sup> Thus, the New American Empire’s attacks on Iran have been entirely consistent with implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire*.

### *The Oil-Control Public Délire*

In 2007 Iran was the fourth largest oil producer. It has the fourth largest oil reserves, slightly ahead of Iraq. Global warring against Iran might contribute to maintaining or increasing US imperial control over oil, securing a number of the different types of control. However, making this happen would require regime change, with a new government returning Iran to US client status. First, consider the positive potential of global warring for the New US Empire’s control over access to oil. Kinzer (2008: xiii) has reported that “those who like the idea” of attacking Tehran believe it will “allow American oil companies free access to Iranian petroleum” because it would facilitate re-entry of both US oil production and oil-support firms into the Iranian petroleum industry. Another potential consequence of such fighting is that it could prevent Tehran from subverting either Kuwait or Saudi Arabia in ways that restrict their production and/or prevent US oil companies from doing business there, as the State Department and Pentagon feared was possible during Khomeini’s rule (Kinzer 2008). A decrease in Kuwaiti or Saudi Arabian production would roil both the supply and the price of oil. Yet another possible consequence of such fighting is that it could facilitate distribution of oil. The Iranian navy can mine the Strait of Hormuz—the point where the Persian Gulf opens onto the seelanes to Europe, the US, and Asia—through which roughly 40 percent of

the world's oil flows. A successful closure of shipping at the choke point of the strait would gravely disrupt the movement of oil to its markets. During the Iran-Iraq War, Tehran did mine the Strait of Hormuz. However, the US Navy's Operation Praying Mantis in 1988 removed the mines, proving it feasible to use naval force to keep sea-lanes open.

An additional positive potential of US global warring against Iran is that it could help the Security Elites 3.0 pay strategic rents. Should Tehran return to being a client in the US imperial system, then control over Iranian oil will provide the US elites with "carrots and sticks" to utilize as strategic rents. Provision of the "carrot" of access to Iranian oil to another country would constitute payment to that country of rent equal to the amount of money its companies earn in the Iranian petroleum sector. Meanwhile, the wielding of the "stick" of denying access to Iranian oil to another country would constitute a potential cost to the client equal to the amount its companies could earn if they had access to Iranian oil.

Third, global warring could help the US Security Elites 3.0 maintain the dollar as the world's reserve currency. Like Baghdad, Tehran had planned an oil bourse based on euros rather than dollars (W. R. Clark 2005: 150–157), and it opened in 2008. This threatened the petrodollar. Regime change might well eliminate the Iranian oil bourse, facilitating the dollar's continuation as the world's reserve currency. Such information is consistent with the view that Security Elites 3.0 have conducted overt war and covert war to implement the oil-control public *délire*.

US security elites 3.0 have been conducting "twilight" global warring in "fairyland" since 1990. Since the 1990s the US Leviathan has faced intensification and coalescence of the cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions. Shultzian Permission has been de facto granted since the debacle of the US embassy hostage-taking and subsequent failure to rescue them. The hostilities appear to be an implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délire*s. This is evidence consistent with the global warring hypothesis.

Unfortunately, from the perspective of the US Leviathan's masters and commanders, this global warring has been disappointing. There has been no regime change in Tehran. If anything, the Iranian political elites' rancor toward the New American Empire has deepened. The insistence upon warring via blockades has, according to one source, led to a "growing tension between the US and its international allies and rivals" (Howard 2007: xii), "undermining" the Leviathan's "global power" (ibid.: 23). This is because of the sanctions that oblige countries to forgo economic activities with Iran, including those in the petroleum sector. Sanctions equally burden the US economy. American companies estimate that they cost US business \$19 billion a year and on the order of 250,000 jobs (ibid.: 57). The

Iranian nuclear program has not been substantially harmed by US-Israeli cyber attacks on it.

Worse, US covert warring against Iran has contributed to the formation of a “Shiite Necklace.” Alliances might be imagined as necklaces, with countries the jewels in the strands of an alliance. The empire’s global warring in the Middle East spurred the forging of an alliance involving Shiite Iran and other countries with Shiite populations that oppose US domination. The biggest gem in the necklace is Iran. Oil-rich Iraq, also predominantly Shiite, is another rich jewel in the necklace. Iran encouraged closer cooperation with Iraq once the US’s removal of Saddam and his Sunni government allowed the majority Shiites to take power—a result of US warring there. The Iraqi government was delighted to enter into this cooperation as a way of resisting US occupation. Together, Iran and Iraq boast enormous oil reserves (294.3 billion barrels). Syria is a third jewel in the necklace. Since the 1990s its government has “built increasingly close ties” with Iran (Rumsfeld 2011: 640). The fourth jewel is Lebanon’s powerful Hezbollah, the most effective paramilitary in the world, which has received Iranian financial and military support since the 1980s. The Shiite Necklace stretches from Iran’s border with Pakistan and Afghanistan in the east to Lebanon’s Mediterranean shoreline in the west. It has strengthened due to US warring since the 1990s, with Iraq and Syria being strung more securely on it, and has become a powerful bloc contesting the Middle East with the US Leviathan.

This leads to the question of why the US has not exercised greater violent force against Iran. After all, the potential benefits of controlling its oil are significant. Consider, however, that Iran is the eighteenth largest country in the world in terms of landmass, and much of it is rugged and mountainous, that is, ideal for guerilla operations. It has almost 80 million people, and in the Iran-Iraq War it demonstrated its ability to war for long periods over large areas. It has allies, especially Hezbollah, that allow it to strike widely in the Middle East. Recently, Austin Long and William Luers (2013) summarized the results of a study analyzing the costs and benefits of overt, direct warfare against the Islamic republic. The resulting document was endorsed by thirty-two major security elites ranging from former NSAs to senators to a State Department official and a gaggle of generals, including a former commander of CENTCOM. It judged that extensive military strikes against Iran would set back Iran’s nuclear program for about “four years” (ibid: 9)—in other words, not very much—and “would increase Iran’s motivation to build a bomb” (ibid.: 12). Further, occupation of Iran “would require” more violent force resources than “the U.S. has expended over the past ten years in the Iraq and Iran wars” (ibid.: 10). Churchill may have been right about “fairyland” in a manner he did not understand.

“Fairyland” *appears* to be a “prize” “beyond” the US security elite’s “wildest dreams.” The narrative now turns to a third area of US global warring in the Middle East. Once again, it is Libya.

### Once Again Libya, 2011: “A Model Intervention”?

When we last left the tale, Gaddafi, who termed himself the Brother Leader, had been condemned by Reagan’s security elites as a terrorist monster. Attempts to destroy him had failed, though readers were warned that he faced troubles ahead. These came in February 2011 in the form of an Arab Spring rebellion against his regime. The US and its European allies sided with the rebels as part of a liberal hawk “responsibility to protect” (R2P) hermeneutic to rid Libyans of their monster. It was an intervention that Ivo Daalder, a former NSC member and permanent US Representative to NATO, and Admiral James Stavridis, a commander of EUCOM and NATO, “hailed as a model intervention” (Daalder and Stavridis 2012: 2).

Hostilities commenced in February 2011. They were effectively over by 20 October, the date Gaddafi was killed. Upon learning of Gaddafi’s death, Hillary Clinton, then Obama’s Secretary of State, jovially channeled Julius Caesar by quipping, “We came. We saw. He died” (in Daly 2011). Perhaps she should have said, “We came. We saw. We sodomized.” The Brother Leader, whom the rebels called Abu Shafshufa (“Old Fuzzhead”), was trying to escape in a convoy. After it was strafed by NATO planes, Old Fuzzhead was captured—dragged from the culvert he was hiding in as one rebel attempted to thrust a knife in his anus (Shelton 2011)—and shot.<sup>44</sup> Let us analyze this “model intervention,” especially as it pertains to the anti-terrorist and oil-control iterations of the global domination public *délire*.<sup>45</sup>

#### *Duct Taped and Krazy Glued*

Libya had successfully resisted the global warring of the Reagan administration, but it emerged from the hostilities weakened in a number of ways. The first of these pertained to the fiasco of the Chad campaign. According to Alison Pargeter (2012: 133), the Chadian defeat “was not lost ... on the Libyan army, which was deeply embittered over a reckless campaign.” This made Gaddafi suspicious of his officers’ loyalty, leading him to downgrade their effectiveness to lessen their likelihood of attempting coups. He was entirely successful in this degradation. By the time of the rebellion his government was reliant on three units estimated at ten thousand troops. These included the Revolutionary Guard Corps, recruited largely from Gaddafi’s own ethnic group; the Khamis Brigade, commanded by Gaddafi’s youngest

son; and the Amazon Corps, a personal guard composed of women. US officials judged these troops to be “not very skilled” and to have “equipment far from cutting edge,” so that by the time of the rebellion they were “trying to hold things together with duct tape and Krazy Glue” (in Hosenball 2011). International sanctions imposed upon Libya also contributed to the sorry state of his armed forces because “the country was never able to recover and rebuild its armed forces” (Pargeter 2012: 133). Consequently duct taped and Krazy glued, Gaddafi’s ten thousand would take on the New American Empire.

*Gaddafi Faces Problems at Home:* Following Reagan, and in part because of Libya’s alleged guilt in the downing of Pan Am 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988, the Clinton administration influenced the UN Security Council to impose a regime of sanctions on Libya in 1991 and 1992. These did not prohibit oil exports, but they banned importation of spare parts and other consumer goods. This hurt the oil industry and raised importation costs, leading to high inflation of 35 percent per year from 1993 to 1997. Inflation eroded public services like schools and hospitals, and made acquisition of imported staples more onerous.

For most citizens, “simply getting by became more difficult,” so “resentment hardened,” leading to an “utter desperation for change” (Pargeter 2012: 172–173, 188). “Desperation” engendered resistance, by citizens against their government. To some extent this involved spontaneous manifestations on the part of the populace. However, starting in the late 1980s Islamists threatened the regime for the first time, and Gaddafi responded in two contradictory ways by increasing both repression and handouts for ordinary citizens and for elites. Although tortured and imprisoned individuals experienced this repression as grim, its level appears to have been relatively modest.<sup>46</sup> In an additional response to these problems, Gaddafi began to reform his regime in a more Western direction.

Reform involved submitting to Washington and its allies’ demands that the Libyan economy be opened to neoliberal policies; destroy its weapons of mass destruction; forgo terrorism; and pay reparations to the relatives of the downed Pan Am 103. A kowtowing Gaddafi appointed his hybrid-elite, intellectual son Saif-al Islam to oversee the process of liberalization. Saif al-Islam had an MBA from a Viennese university and a Ph.D. from the London School of Economics, and had hobnobbed with English high society at the turn of the millennium. Perhaps Saif’s most notable act was to negotiate elimination of Libya’s WMD program. In 2004, in the midst of warring in Iraq, Bush II signed an executive order lifting any remaining US sanctions against Libya. A team of US officials visited Libya in 2009 and congratulated the country as “an important ally in the war on terror” (in



Dinucci 2011). Gaddafi was back in the fold of the New American Empire, or so he thought.

Unfortunately for Gaddafi, going neoliberal solved neither the problems with his people's welfare nor his problems with his people. In fact these worsened, and they did so along lines of existing geographic antipathy. The country has long had an east/west antagonism pitting the old Ottoman provinces of Cyrenaica in the east with its capital Benghazi, against Tripolitania in the west with its capital Tripoli.<sup>47</sup> The 1969 coup transferred control over the country from King Idris, of the east, to Gaddafi, of the west. Consequently, throughout Gaddafi's 42-year reign eastern Libya was always more discontented. Especially disgruntled were the Islamists, who were largely from the east. A number of them had had combat experience in Afghanistan, and in 1989 the regime had discovered armed militant cells in the eastern cities of Benghazi and Ajdabia (Pargeter 2012: 166).

Throughout 2009 and early 2010, Arab Spring rebellions against authoritarian governments to the east in Tunisia and Egypt were successfully occurring. Unsurprisingly, they diffused westward to an already disgruntled Cyrenaican populace, and spontaneous uprisings in Benghazi began on 15 February 2011. Very quickly, Washington and its allies chose sides. Old Fuzzyhead was abandoned. On 17 March the UN Security Council voted to establish no-fly zones in Libya, using "all necessary measures" (in Daalder and Stavridis 2012: 2).

Two points are unclear concerning the onset of the Libyan revolts: how much they resulted from diffusion of the idea of rebellion during the Arab Spring, and how much the New American Empire helped shape the spontaneous uprisings. Wayne Madsen (2012) and Maximilian Forte (2012) report that American, British, and French Special Ops were on the ground in eastern Libya before Obama's security elites' began insisting on intervention, a suggestion substantiated by Nazemroaya (2011).<sup>48</sup> If this was the case, the message of rebellion may have been carried to eastern Libya from the Arab Spring, but the actual violence may have been choreographed by helpful hints from the CIA, MI6, and SAS.

### *Hermeneutic Politics*

Senior security elites in the Obama administration entered into a hermeneutic politics over whether Washington should go about "getting involved" in the anti-Gaddafi insurgency (Gates 2014: 518). Robert Gates, then defense secretary, reported the politics were between liberal hawks and their opponents. On the liberal hawks' side were Susan Rice, then US Ambassador to the UN; Samantha Powers, on the NSC; and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. All argued the US Leviathan "had to" get involved

(ibid.: 518). Opposed to the Hawks were principally Vice President Biden, Defense Secretary Gates, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen, and Obama's NSA Tom Donilon. Those opposed to intervening in Libya basically interpreted such operations as risky and unnecessary. The US had already engaged in two difficult and expensive wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The political perils were great. The US had invaded two Muslim countries since 1991; how would the Islamic world feel about a third? The military consequences were too open-ended—what if the fighting dragged on? Finally, what vital US national security issues were at stake just because Old Fuzzyhead's citizens repudiated him?

The liberal hawks, on the other hand, interpreted the situation through the optic of the R2P hermeneutic. Perceptually, Gaddafi used bloodcurdling rhetoric, vowing to crush the rebels with “no mercy, no pity” (in Golovnina and Worsnip 2011). Procedurally, the liberal hawks believed that if this was the case, it was necessary to intervene “to prevent an anticipated massacre of the rebels,” as Gates (2014: 511) expressed it. On 3 March 2011 President Obama declared Gaddafi “must go” (ibid.: 515).

Twelve days later (15 March) a NSC meeting was convened over the issue. Obama went with his liberal hawks. He told Gates that his decision to accept the Hawk interpretation “had been a 51-49 call” (ibid.: 518). One wonders is if this was really the case. As reported in a previous chapter, Obama was a liberal hawk, so the interpretations of Clinton, Rice, and Powers simply reinforced his hermetic seal into R2P. Two days after the NSC meeting the UN established the no-fly zone in Libya.

*Operation Unified Protector:* Regardless of the degree to which the original rebellion was “spontaneous,” the US, UK, and France initiated land and sea bombardment of Libya two days after establishment of the no-fly zone. Eventually the global warring came to be directed by NATO in a campaign called Operation Unified Protector, but Daalder and Stavridis (2012: 3) are clear: the US “played a critical role.” Manlio Dinucci (2012: 1–2), summarizing these hostilities, reported that for

over seven months, US and NATO air forces carried out 30,000 missions of which 10,000 were offensive air strikes, using more than 40,000 bombs and missiles. Additionally, Special Forces were infiltrated into Libya, among them thousands of easily concealed Qatari commandos. They also financed armed tribal groups hostile to the Tripoli government and supported Islamic groups that only months earlier were watchlisted as terrorists. The operation in its entirety was directed by Washington, according to the US ambassador to NATO.

The duct taped and Krazy-glued ten thousand did not stand a chance. Operation Unified Protector was over on 31 October, 222 days after it had

commenced. Why did the US Leviathan do it? This question leads to discussion of the roles of the anti-terrorism and the oil-control public *délire*s.

### *R2P and The Anti-Terrorist Public Délire*

Bear in mind, hostilities were already underway in February of 2011, so if the US Leviathan was to intervene in Libya, it had to do so in a situation where hostilities were ongoing. This meant that peaceful options were over and Shultzian Permission granted. Even though Obama's security elites had decided Libya was an "important ally" against terrorism in 2009, two years later they returned him to monster status, organizing a press campaign depicting him as a terrorist.

As Thomas Josceyln (2011), writing for the conservative *Weekly Standard*, put it, "Gaddafi is, after all, a terrorist." As mentioned earlier, Obama's UN ambassador Susan Rice, speaking to the Security Council in April 2011, claimed Gaddafi was supplying his troops with Viagra "to encourage mass rape" (MacAskill 2011).<sup>49</sup> Once again, America's foe was "paranoid" and full of "horror." With Gaddafi back in the docket as a terrorist, as Daalder and Stavridis (2012: 2–3) explain, it was easy for US to lead "the charge" for "intervention" on the basis of "the responsibility to protect." Of course, "responsibility to protect" was the way that liberal hawks discoursed about the anti-terrorist public *délire*: if you perceived a monster terrorist, then it was your responsibility to protect against it, by killing it. However, US intervention in Libya was not entirely about slaying monsters. Libya has oil that is cheap to produce and highly profitable, so as is about to be shown, the oil-control public *délire* was equally relevant to the global war in Libya.

### *The Oil-Control Public Délire*

Libya had already kowtowed to Washington and begun neoliberal reform by 2004. What more could concern the New American Empire about Gaddafi? Plenty, it turns out. Tripoli may have reconciled with Bush II, but the old revolutionary's heart was not comfortable settling into New American Empire client-state status. In 2009, at the second Annual Africa–South America Summit, Gaddafi joined with fellow revolutionary Hugo Chavez in calling for an "anti-imperialist" front. For Security Elites 3.0 back in Washington, three aspects of such politics were especially distressing. The first had to do directly with oil. Back in the 1970s Gaddafi had been one of the most aggressive oil nationalists, pioneering nationalization of oil production and the increased flow of black gold to the oil producers. At the turn of the millennium, even as Libya was supposedly opening up to invest-

ment from the US and its allies, Libya resisted giving away the oilfields and imposed higher royalties than the foreign oil companies wanted to pay. So imperial security and oil industry elites worried that Gaddafi might outfox them and return to his old nationalism.

Two other areas of concern pertained to oil, though less directly. At the very end of his government Gaddafi proposed two financial innovations for the African continent. These were an African Investment Bank to be located in Syrte, Libya, and an African Monetary Fund to be based in Yaoundé, Cameroon. Both would be backed by Libyan assets ultimately derived from oil. Their opening was to be followed by introduction of a pan-African currency, the dinar, backed by gold derived from Libyan oil. The bank and the fund would invest in African projects at loan rates below those of international financing institutions like the IMF or the large private banks. Payments for oil would be made not in dollars, but in the new dinars. Gerald Perreira (2011), one of the few journalists to have worked in Libya for an extended period, wrote at the onset of the attack upon the regime,

Gaddafi's creation of the African Investment Bank ... and the African Monetary Fund ... would have supplanted the IMF and undermined Western economic hegemony in Africa. Furthermore ... creation of a gold dinar based on the African gold reserve to replace reliance on the U.S. dollar, the French franc and the British pound threatened to finally swing the global economic pendulum.

Such an endeavor threatened the US dollars reserve currency status, among other things.

Finally, and similarly at the very end of the regime, Gaddafi was frustrating US Security Elites 3.0's major African policy initiative. By the end of the 1990s competition for African resources, especially oil, was accelerating. Alarmingly, this was due to Chinese economic operations. In 1999 Chinese investment in Africa was \$6 billion; a decade later it was \$90 billion and had displaced the US as the continent's largest trading partner (Glazebrook 2013: 5). US security elites in the Bush II administration began to develop US military force resources in Africa (see the section on Africa in the following chapter). Just as CENTCOM had been created to establish control in the Middle East; so a new military command, AFRICOM, was initiated in Africa in 2006 for the same purpose. If the empire could not hold the continent with economic force, it intended to do so with violent force. However, Gaddafi was a fly in the AFRICOM ointment because "leaked US diplomatic cables make it very clear that Libya was viewed by the US as THE main obstacle to establishing a full muscular US military presence on the African continent" (Glazebrook 2013: 5).<sup>50</sup> It is

argued next that addressing each of these three concerns with global warring against Libya could contribute to the New American Empire's control over Libyan oil and was in this sense an application of the oil-control public *délire*.

The following points warrant this judgment. First, imperial fighting could increase the empire's and its allies' oil and oil-supply companies' access to Libyan oil. The degree to which this actually occurred is unclear. However, once source asserts that there has been a "give-away" of Libya's oil, "with contracts allotted according to the number of bombing runs each country had made—France on behalf of Total, Spain on behalf of Repsol, Italy on behalf of Eni, England on behalf of BP, and the US on behalf of Marathon, Hess, and ConocoPhillips" (Barahona 2012: 3). The precise nature of these contracts remains to be seen. However, talk of a "give-away" is a report of the empire's and its allies' increased access to Libya's oil, suggesting that imperial security elites perceived that the rebellion against Gaddafi offered an opportunity to increase the empire's access to oil, an opportunity they seized with the NATO intervention.

Second, imperial fighting could help maintain the dollar as the world's reserve currency by eliminating the alternative of the gold-backed dinar. Since termination of hostilities in October 2011 there has been no African Investment Bank or African Monetary Fund. Gold-backed dinars are nowhere to be found in circulation; which may be unfortunate for African development but is just fine for the dollar. The non-occurrence of the competing currency recommends the view that imperial financial elites intended its elimination, which suggests they perceived the anti-Gaddafi rebellion as an opportunity to defend the dollar—which they seized with the NATO intervention.

Third, imperial fighting could help the empire pay its strategic rents. A letter signed by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Libya, a forerunner to the National Transitional Council, and published in the French daily, *La Liberation*, recounted a deal struck at a 29 March 2011 summit on Libya held in London, where Hillary Clinton met Mahmoud Jibril, head of the rebels. It was reported that the New American Empire would side with Brother Leader's opponents. The quid pro quo of the deal was that the empire and its allies would get a percentage of Libya's oil. France's cut was to be 35 percent of the crude oil (Barahona 2011: 1). The French Foreign minister at the time, Alain Juppe, considered this to be "logical and fair" because, after all, armed intervention is "expensive" (quoted *ibid.*: 3). Further, by removing the Brother Leader the security elites were eliminating his opposition to AFRICOM, helping the empire acquire oil spoils not only in Libya but in other areas of Africa as well. China might be snapping up African oil resources, but US military would help ensure the empire's allies

got their fair share and in so doing pay its security rent to its allies. In sum, the Libya War could contribute to strengthening US control over Libyan oil in three different ways and as such was an application of the oil-control public *délire*. However, security elites cloaked this oily reality by declaring “Old Fuzzyhead” a monster and US global warring a noble undertaking of R2P.

Unlike the covert activities in Iran, the Libyan global war of 2011 was no “twilight” operation but had been broadcast in the full glare of the empire’s media. It was short and extremely violent—you actually saw the guy try to stab Gaddafi in the rectum on television. Hostilities occurred when cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions were intensifying and coalescing. Shultzian Permission had been granted due to the ongoing aggression that was the uprising against Gaddafi in the east. The ensuing combat was implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*—all of which is evidence supportive of the global warring theory.

Supposedly the Libyan War rid the world of a terrorist monster and gave the New American Empire greater control over Libyan oil. Did it succeed? In the immediate aftermath of fighting, the “model intervention” appeared to have given the empire’s oil companies greater access to Libyan oil, to have helped it defend the petrodollar, and to pay its strategic rents. However, by 2013 oil production had almost entirely “stopped” owing to “disintegrating” governmental authority (P. Cockburn 2013). Any Libyan assault on the dollar appears to have been thwarted. But if oil production is greatly reduced, then are the empire’s Big Oil companies actually acquiring greater access to Libyan oil, and is much strategic rent being paid?

What about the elimination of terrorism? The English NGO Global Civilians for Peace in Libya (“The Standard of Living in Libya” 2011), reviewed the literature bearing upon Libyans’ standard of living at the end Gaddafi’s regime. Gaddafi had actually used Libya’s oil wealth to give its citizens the highest standard of living in Africa, with wealth fairly equitably distributed. Libya under Gaddafi had gone from being one of the poorest countries in the world to being 64th out of 187 countries on the UN Human Development Index.

Post-Gaddafi Libya is described by *Time* magazine as “demonstrating remarkable stability” (Hauslohner 2012). Is this really so? Cyrenaica, where two-thirds of the oil is located, has declared itself a semi-autonomous region. Ahmed al-Zubair was appointed as its head—a reactionary move, because he is the grandson of the King Idris deposed by Gaddafi in 1969. Throughout the country, paramilitaries—armed and trained during the war by the empire’s soldiers—defied central government authority, ruling considerable chunks of territory as their fiefs. Certain of these are headed

by Islamists, some with al-Qaeda links (*ibid.*: 2012). In 2012 some Islamists killed a US ambassador on a visit to a diplomatic mission in Benghazi. This was largely given over to the CIA (Friedersdorf 2013), which appears to have been training counterrevolutionaries to attack the Islamists (Schmitt, Cooper, and Schmidt 2012). By 2014, Khalifa Hiftar, whose earlier adventures as a CIA proxy were recounted as part of Reagan's war against Gaddafi, had left his Virginia home and was back in Libya attacking Islamists and declaring the overthrow of the government (Stephen, Black, and Ackerman 2014).

The UN Security Council has expressed its concern with “ongoing illegal detention, torture, and extrajudicial killings” in post-Gaddafi Libya (in Dinucci 2012: 2). Forte reports an account of the current situation as experienced by an ordinary Libyan as follows, “Two years ago the anti-Gaddafi uprising had the strongest support in Benghazi but today a very different mood has emerged. ‘Most people would say they are very unhappy,’ a local worker said. ‘Some say they are worse off than before’” (in Forte 2013: 1). It is unclear what the future might hold, but currently there is no state in Libya. It is a place of marauding paramilitaries, some affiliated with al-Qaeda, others tied to the Islamic State. Overall, the “model intervention” hardly moved Libya into the realm of “remarkable stability.” Consider next US global warring in Syria, where a dead man is said to be walking, or maybe not.

### **Syria 2011–2013: Dead Man Walking?**

Since December 2010, the Middle East had been experiencing an Arab Spring of popular unrest against authoritarian governments, first in Tunisia and Egypt; then in Lebanon, Oman, Yemen, and Morocco; and in February 2011 in Libya with, as just documented, terminal consequences for Gaddafi's regime. A month later, on 15 March 2011, “spring” began in the Syrian city of Daraa.<sup>51</sup> Protesters insisted on an end to Baath Party rule and the resignation of President Bashar al-Assad, whose father Hafez al-Assad had held the Syrian presidency from 1971 until 2000. The father had governed adroitly but with an iron fist when necessary, especially in his suppression of a 1982 uprising in Hama. As the popular demonstrations spread there was question as to how the son would respond. Hafez had been a military man. Bashar, like Saif al-Islam, was a hybrid elite: an ophthalmologist, educated in part in London, married to a woman who had worked for J.P. Morgan (Ajami 2012). He appeared to be a geek who had inherited the government only after his elder brother—a dashing military man—was killed in an automobile crash.

However, Bashar proved ophthalmologists too have moxie. The Syrian army was ordered to crush the uprising. Easier ordered than done! After months of government military strikes against local protests, the protesting groups converged into a countrywide armed rebellion. By the end of 2011 it was a full-blown civil war, with the rebels seizing considerable chunks of territory. By 2012 this war had come to have a sectarian dimension, pitting mainly Sunni rebels against a largely Alawi branch of Shiites in the government. By 2013, approximately a hundred thousand rebels faced Bashar's forces. Government forces were reinforced by Hezbollah, and the rebels by radical Islamists, including the Jabhat al-Nusra and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), now called the Islamic State.<sup>52</sup> US diplomats are sometimes called "cookie pushers" by other security elites because their job is imagined to consist of walking around at receptions proffering refreshments. Frederic Hof, cookie pusher *par excellence*, declared Al Assad to be a "dead man walking" (in Matthew Lee 2011). What do cookie pushers know? What follows is an answer to this question.

### *The Shiite Necklace and Another Dead Creature Walking?*

Let us begin by clarifying the Americans' glee at Bashar's discomfiture. During Bush II's Iraq war, the Vulcans had been furious that Syria allowed anti-American fighters to slip across its border to fight in Iraq (Rumsfeld 2011: 463; Cheney 2011: 437). After this war wound down, it became clear that Syria was part of what was earlier termed the Shiite Necklace. The Security Elites 3.0 were gleeful at Bashar's problems because if Syria could be broken, the Shiite Necklace might come unstrung, and the US Leviathan's position in the Middle East would be strengthened.

A counter coalition to the Shiite Necklace had formed in 2011 to oppose Assad. Based upon the New American Empire's clients, it included Israel, NATO, and states in the Gulf Cooperation Council, with Saudi Arabia and Qatar especially active. Operations and leadership of this countercoalition have been murky. The overt policy of Obama's administration toward the Syrian uprising was initially to provide "humanitarian, medical, and communications assistance" in what was termed a program of "band aids and halal happy meals" (Rogin 2013). However, knowledgeable observers were not buying this. The respected geopolitical analyst Mahdi Nazemroaya (2012) reported that Syria was being attacked in a strategy orchestrated by Washington that emphasized proxy operations.

The US Leviathan's coalition's basic operations were to provide covert military support to the rebel organizations, which were disorganized and increasingly dominated by radical Islamists.<sup>53</sup> Rebel political organizations included the Syrian National Council (founded in 2011) and the National



Coalition for Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces (founded in 2012). Rebel military groups included the Free Syrian Army, more or less allied with a collection of around a thousand localized “brigades.” The radical Islamists included the Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIL. Saudi Arabia and Qatar have been especially active in arming the rebel military.<sup>54</sup> Initially the rebel forces were successful. At the end of 2011 rebel brigades brought the fighting to Damascus, Syria’s capital, and Aleppo, the country’s largest city.

But the ophthalmologist hung tough. The rebel offensives against Damascus and Aleppo were blunted by the fall of 2012, when the national army began a counteroffensive. On 26 March 2013, rebel commander Khaled al Hamad, leader of the Al Farooq al-Mustakilla Brigade, fighting near the Syrian town of al-Qusayr, consumed the flesh of a dead government soldier, proclaiming “I swear to God, you soldiers of Bashar, you dogs, we will eat from your hearts and livers! O heroes of Bab Amr, you slaughter the Alawites and take out their hearts to eat them!” (Baker 2013). Snacking on their opponent did not work; on 5 June government forces retook al-Qusayr, a town of strategic significance.

Mustafa Alani, director at the Dubai-based Gulf Research Council, warned, “This is an Iranian fight. It is no longer a Syrian one,” adding, “The issue is hegemony in the region” (Sly 2013). The war had spread. It was the New American Empire versus the Shiite Necklace. In the Security Elite 3.0’s terms, the “issue” was not hegemony; it was defense of empire. The empire had been weakened by cutting and running in Iraq, and by the strengthening of the Shiite Necklace. Defeat in Syria would further threaten it. So what did the cookie pusher know? Not much, for the “dead man walking” was still walking tall by 2013, part of a war for the Middle East. Something drastic had to be done to strengthen the Americans’ hand.

Unsurprisingly, eight days after the fall of al-Qusayr, US news sources publicly announced the US government’s news that Assad’s forces had used chemical weapons, killing up to 150 people in this manner (out of a total 93,000 fatalities up to that time). Earlier, Obama had declared (20 August 2012) use of such weapons to be a “red line” not to be crossed. The line had been crossed, and US officials announced they would begin to arm the rebels (Goodenough 2013; Mazzetti, Gordon, and Landler 2013). Until this day, 13 June 2013, Obama’s Security Elites 3.0 had been involved in a twilight covert, indirect global war against Syria. Thereafter, imperial warring in Syria was to be neither entirely covert, nor entirely indirect.

The Assad regime was not especially attractive. It was authoritarian, prone to violent repression, and in bed with its crony capitalist elites. Nevertheless, it had not the slightest intention of attacking America because it could not attack America; its violent forces were too puny. Obama’s administration had received no UN approval to war in Syria but he was do-

ing it, if only in a desultory manner. Desultory or not, US warring in Syria was an unsanctioned war of aggression and thus illegal. Recall that when Obama (2009) accepted the Nobel Peace prize, he warned in his speech, “For make no mistake: Evil does exist in the world.”

“Evil” was about to make an appearance. In the days after the “red line” was crossed in June, the ophthalmologist’s troops continued to make gains against the rebels. Then, on 21 August 2013, a sarin gas attack in Ghouta, an agricultural belt to the south and east of Damascus, killed substantial numbers of civilians—1,429, the US claimed (White House 2013: 1). Nine days later, the White House released a report declaring, “The United States Government assesses with high confidence that the Syrian government carried out a chemical weapons attack in the Damascus suburbs” (ibid.).<sup>55</sup> Obama’s Security Elites 3.0 asserted, none more passionately than John Kerry, his new secretary of state, that this time the Assad regime had crossed the red line blatantly and massively. It had terrorized its people with a weapon of mass destruction. Assad, according to Kerry, was the author of “inconceivable horror,” a “thug” and a “murderer” (Mohajer 2013). “Evil” had arrived, and the US Leviathan’s R2P, superseding the international law of war (at least according to liberal hawk fixations), obligated the empire to punish Syria for its “Evil.” The US proposed that this punishment be an attack by US forces. Whether the attack might be the launching of a few cruise missiles or a long-term aerial bombardment went unspecified. What was specified was that the New American Empire would overtly increase use of violent force directly against Syria.

Then something curious happened. There was unexpected (at least in the eyes of Obama’s security elites), widespread rejection of the empire’s proposal. Polls showed that Americans strongly opposed intervention. Such polling certainly influenced Obama’s decision to turn to the Congress for authorization to strike Syria. The mere fact of requesting Congress’s permission to war was unprecedented since World War II and reflected presidential weakness. Moreover, it appeared that a majority of Democrats and Republicans in Congress opposed attacking Syria. Beyond US boundaries almost everyone (except the French) condemned the proposed military intervention. The Pope was against it. The BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) were against it. The fact that the Russians and the Chinese were against it frustrated any UN Security Council authorization of US force. Significantly, key imperial clients opposed it. The UK parliament refused to allow Great Britain to participate in any attack on Syria. A meeting of EU Foreign ministers refused to authorize US intervention. The bonds of empire appeared to be loosening.

Luckily for US Security Elites 3.0, the Russians proposed that the Syrians might give up chemical weapons in exchange for not being attacked by

the US, and the Assad regime quickly agreed. The Obama regime equally accepted, grumbling that it was its idea that Assad give up his chemical stockpiles, and that if he didn't, Damascus would be walloped by imperial rocketry. A decision to attack the ophthalmologist's government had sparked widespread rebellion against the empire. Could it be that Obama just might be another candidate for "dead man walking"? His Republican Congressional antagonists certainly appeared to think so when they began conducting their own foreign policy that bypassed the President. Dead man walking or not, Obama has been guided by the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délire*s while seeking to manage the Syrian debacle. These are explored next.

### *The Anti-terrorist Public Délire*

Arabi Souri (2013) claims that "Bashar al-Assad has been systematically demonized by the mainstream and so-called alternative media who claim that he is a brutal dictator." This was not always the case with the Obama administration. Initially, talks were begun with Assad. As part of this initiative, Hillary Clinton referred to him as a "reformer" (Case 2012). Then, when the popular demonstrations began, Washington remembered it had listed Syria as a state sponsor of terrorism since 1979. At that point Bashar's monsterization began. Typical of these efforts was the *New York Daily News*' transmogrification of Bashar from a "reformer" to a "brutal dictator," a "pampered London-educated eye doctor" who led a "blood-soaked crackdown" on pro-democracy demonstrators (Weinthal 2011). Theodore Dalrymple (2012) continued this theme in the UK paper *The Telegraph*:

When you look at pictures of Assad you see a weak man, whom you would expect to be a pettifogger rather than a brute. But push a pettifogger to the wall and he is capable of the greatest obduracy, which is the strength of the weak. A cornered rat, that normally resides incognito, is a ferocious and dangerous beast, even if he remains in essence weak and highly vulnerable.

Surveying Syria after 2011, Obama's liberal hawks perceived Bashar as a "pampered," "brutal" "rat" commanding a terrorist state. They saw "Evil." Given such a perception, Obama publicly requested on 18 August 2011 that Bashar step aside. Following the Ghouta incident, he proposed to blow the "thug" aside with imperial rocketry if he did not step down. The "thug"- "rat" refused. In such situations, nonviolent ways of doing things had failed. It was time for granting Shultzian Permission. Further, the anti-terrorist public *délire* directs, once such permission has been accorded the proper procedure is to eliminate the terrorists with violence. This was precisely what the Obama administration began to implement—first co-

vertly and indirectly; then, at the time of al-Qusayr, overtly, and directly; and finally, upon realizing he lacked support domestically as well as from his clients, he backed off, with Russian assistance.<sup>56</sup> Let us consider a role for the oil-control public *délire* in Syria.

### *The Oil-Control Public Délire*

Syria produces oil, but its fields are depleting rapidly from a high of 610 thousand barrels per day in 1996 to roughly 385 thousand barrels per day in 2010. Such a modest amount is not a tempting prize for the New American Empire. Rather, Syria's relevance to the Security Elite 3.0's oil-control *délire* has to do with its potential power over the distribution of petroleum products, and the implications of the Shiite Necklace for overall control of Middle Eastern oil. Consider, first, distribution issues, which are all about pipeline politics.<sup>57</sup>

In February 2013, Iraq authorized the signing of an agreement for an Iran-Iraq-Syria pipeline to transport natural gas from Iran's South Pars field across Iraq to Syria (AFP 2013b). This pipeline, easily extendable to Lebanon and Europe, would further boost Iran's position as a formidable global player in the oil industry. Additionally, the Iran-Iraq-Syria project directly competed with Qatar's plans for a pipeline running from Qatar's North field, contiguous with Iran's South Pars field, through Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, and on to Turkey, also with a view to supply European markets. Pepe Escobar (2013) explains, "It's crucial to remember that the Iran-Iraq-Syria pipeline is ... anathema to Washington. ... The difference is that Washington in this case can count on its allies Qatar and Turkey to sabotage the whole deal." The Syrian and the Qatar pipeline dreams were in competition. Qatar, a member of the GCC and the host of the chief US naval base in the Persian Gulf, was a close ally of the US. Clearly, Washington preferred the Qatar pipeline. Regrettably, and equally clearly, "Only Al-Assad" was "in the way" (ibid.). Syria, then, stood in the way of Washington's control over gas distribution in the Persian Gulf.

Then there is the fact that Syria is allied with Iran in the Shiite necklace. The two are curious bedfellows: Syria's Baathist dogma is secular and [in principle] socialist; Iran's ideology is Islamic and supposedly scandalized by godless socialism. However, having strong enemies in common makes for strong friendships. Having the US and Israel as heavy-duty enemies has helped cement strong Iranian-Syrian bonds. This alliance began after Iran's 1979 revolution and was formalized in 1982 with the conclusion of bilateral oil, trade, and military agreements. Since then, the two countries have coordinated political and military force resources. This involved developing a stable of surrogate militias to frustrate their opponents' designs

that has at different times included, besides Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and an array of radical Palestinian groups. Their collaboration flushed US forces from Lebanon in 1984 after the bombing of the Marines in Beirut, and thwarted Israel's effort to dominate Lebanon during an eighteen-year occupation that finally ended in Israel's unilateral withdrawal in 2000. By doing this, *The Iran Primer* reports, they, "inflicted repeated setbacks on six American presidents" (Goodarzi 2013).

Otherwise put, Obama's Security Elites 3.0 harbored a grudge against Syria—the more so because it strengthened the Shiite Necklace, and a strong necklace could better contest the Americans for overall control over Middle Eastern petroleum resources.

At this juncture the oil-control public *délire* becomes relevant. Perceptually, the Syrian pipeline threatened US control over petroleum product distribution. Worse perceptually, Syrian friendship with Iran strengthened the Shiite Necklace menacing US Middle Eastern oil control. Under such conditions, the appropriate action was to put violent force into operation, if Shultzian Permission had been granted.

Had Shultzian Permission been approved? Earlier we suggested it had. In his memoirs Rumsfeld (2011: 639) reported, "For decades, Syria has been considered a prized quarry for optimistic American diplomats," a quarry that has never been captured. Rather, the reverse appears to have been the case, as noted above in the *The Iran Primer* (Goodarzi 2013), with Syria engineering setbacks for six presidents. The US Leviathan, according to Rumsfeld, had tried to settle differences with Syria diplomatically and failed. So, given the reality of open rebellion in Syria by 2011, US security elites effectively granted themselves Shultzian Permission and began implementing the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*.

Consider the following: US global warring in Syria occurred during intensification and coalescence of the cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions; Shultzian Permission had been granted following the failure of peaceful fixes of problems with Syria and the onset of hostilities there; and covert, indirect and overt, direct global warring was implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*. All this information is consistent with the global warring theory.

By 2014, Assad—dead guy walking—was still walking. Moreover, after two years of fierce hostilities, the inability to break the Shiite Necklace at the point of Syria promised trouble for the New American Empire's control of Middle Eastern oil. The UK's refusal to countenance an imperial attack on Syria after the Ghouta gas attack indicated the US's closest client was dissatisfied with American imperial operations. Saudi Arabian officials, on the other hand, "boiled over," promising a more independent policy following the Obama administration's eventual refusal to attack Syria after

the Ghouta incident (Mohammed and Wastall 2013). Ominously, the existence of disgruntled clients indicates strain on the bonds of empire. All this suggests, if not a dead empire walking, a wobbly empire wobbling. Sadly, according to the UN, by the middle of 2013 about a hundred thousand Syrians had found peace—that of the grave (AFP 2013c).

Consider, next, Yemen, in whose wars the New American Empire has been droning on and on.

### **The Prophet's Place of Refuge: Yemen 2001–2013; Warfare Droning On and On...**

Early in his career, his religion attacked from all sides, and himself driven from Mecca into the desert, the Prophet Muhammad is said to have advised, “When disaster threatens, seek refuge in Yemen” (in Johnsen 2012: xi). Many centuries later, the followers of another prophet took this advice to become a thorn in the side of the New American Empire. The narrative now turns to an account of how the US became involved in global warring in Muhammad's place of refuge and the implications this had for certain of his later followers.

#### *Droning On: A Lighter Footprint*

The US, according to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, has conducted both direct and indirect, covert warfare in Yemen since 2001 (Drones Team 2012a). The signature weapon in these hostilities has been unmanned aerial vehicles, called drones—the latest robotic killing technology. Drones can either fly autonomously or be directed by a “pilot” sitting at a console, perhaps continents away from the vehicle itself. They may be used to gather intelligence or to fire rockets. People hunted by drones are often up against an invisible machine raining Hellfire (the name of the preferred US rocket). According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, between 2002 and 2013 in Yemen there were 44–54 confirmed drone strikes and 78–96 possible additional strikes, in addition to 12–76 other sorts of covert actions (probably largely JSOC ninja raids) (Serle and Woods 2013: 1). The use of drones began in the Bush II years and increased during those of Obama. From the perspective of Yemenis, global warring drones on and on. Why?

Greater reliance on drones has to do with the Obama administration's response to how the Bush II administration had globally warred. Dubya's security elites, as seen in the Iraq War, waged large-scale, troop-intensive global wars that were expensive. US global warring in Iraq, Afghanistan,

and Pakistan has cost an estimated \$4 trillion (Costs of War Project 2013). The financial burden of Vulcan warring became worrisome after 2007 owing to constrained government revenues as the US, along with the rest of the globe, entered the Great Recession. Moreover, though the American public may have shown indifference to casualties among the peoples its military attacked, which ran into the millions, it was increasingly distressed about the death and injury done to its own.

Given this context, a procedural hermeneutic politics about how to continue fighting developed among Obama's security elites. On one side, Hillary Clinton in State; Robert Gates in Defense; and Petraeus, then in the CIA, argued for continuing a large military footprint. On the other side, Vice President Biden argued for "a modest military footprint around the world" (Sanger 2013). Initially, the Clinton-Gates-Petraeus faction appeared to have won: there was, as will be analyzed later, an increase in US troops in an Afghanistan surge (2010–2012). Gradually, especially under the stewardship of John O. Brennan—first as Obama's chief counterterrorism advisor and then as Petraeus's CIA replacement—the US moved toward a lighter footprint. Drones, actually first used by the Vulcans, were a key element of Brennan's policy. They were an "efficient way to kill" (C. Kirk 2012). They replaced people with machines, reducing costs. They were especially useful used in targeted assassination programs aimed at opponents' leaders in order to "decapitate" their organizations. We will encounter them in several of Obama's global wars. Why were they so important in Yemen?

The answer to this question turns upon appreciation of Yemen's geographic position and its tumultuous recent political history. Yemen occupies the southwestern end of the Arabian Peninsula, bordered to the north by Saudi Arabia, to the south by the Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea, to the west by the Red Sea, and to the east by Oman. For the most part the landscape is grim: arid, baking coastal plains leading to interior mountains and desert. The southwestern-most point in Yemen is at the entrance to the Bab al Mandab, a strait that joins the Red Sea to the Indian Ocean and is one of the most heavily used waterways in the world.

Since the 1960s Yemen has had a politically rowdy time of it. After years of civil war the area of northern Yemen became the Yemen Arab Republic in 1968. The southern region, more strategically important because of Bab al Mandab's location there, remained a British colonial possession until 1967, when a communist rebellion ended UK domination and led to a socialist state, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Relations between the two Yemens in the 1970s and 1980s alternated between wary amity and open hostility. In 1978 Ali Abdallah Saleh became president of North Yemen. Then, in 1990, the two Yemens' governments agreed on

unification, joining on 22 May 1990. Saleh became president and had to fend off persistent threats to his rule, especially the Harak Uprising (1994 and ongoing) and the Houthi Rebellion (2004 and ongoing). His rule continued until Arab Spring demonstrations brought it down in 2011. Yemen contains numerous, powerful tribes that have competed with the state for control since its inauguration.<sup>58</sup> The combination of Haraks' and Houthis' rebellion with tribal competition has meant that the central government has often not had control in many areas of the country.

The Republic of Yemen, as the country is formally known, is one of the poorest Arab states. The economy centers on oil, which is unfortunate because Yemen actually has few reserves. Production was at 170,000 barrels per day in 2011, down from 259,000 the previous year (EIA 2012b). Reserves are predicted to be exhausted by 2017. There is natural gas, which has only just begun to come into production. The country has been, and continues to be, plagued by poverty (affecting 43 percent of the population in 2009) (Breisinger et al. 2011). Its "economy is caught in a jobless slow growth cycle leading to stagnant per capita incomes and rising levels of unemployment, particularly amongst the youth and women" (Pournik and Abu-Ismaïl 2013; see also Pridham 1985; World Bank 2013). Yemen, then, is the poor, dusty, rugged outback of the Arab world whose central government maintains tenuous control. All in all, it is just the place to hide from enemies.

In 2009, Admiral Dennis Blair, then Obama's director of national intelligence, reported in a Congressional appearance that "we are concerned about their (al-Qaeda's) ability to move around. It's kind of like toothpaste in a tube" (in Scahill 2013: 255). Curious metaphor: al-Qaeda is the "toothpaste," squeezed from place to place in the "tube," which is the container in which the US seeks imperial domination. The defeat of the Taliban government in Afghanistan after 9/11 might be imagined as Security Elites 3.0 pressing down on the al-Qaeda toothpaste tube and squishing adherents elsewhere. Unsurprisingly, one of the places they went was to Yemen.<sup>59</sup>

Osama bin Laden's family originally came from Yemen. He had contacts there. Even before 9/11, al-Qaeda took refuge there and began organization. Abu Ali al-Harithi appears to have been the earliest leader, operating in the mountainous Shabwa Province—east of Sanaa, Yemen's capital. In early 2000, Abu Assem al Ahdal, an al-Qaeda leader operating in Saudi Arabia, was captured by Saudi authorities and expelled to Yemen. There he joined forces with al-Harithi, and together they planned and implemented the attack upon the American destroyer the USS *Cole* as it was being refueled in the port of Aden. After that they shifted operations to the Marib province, also to the east of Sanaa. The Bush II government, in the midst of its Iraq War planning, took the time to execute one of the first drone



strikes in Yemen, directed at and killing al-Harithi (3 November 2002). The strike was successful and, together with other anti-terrorist activities that either killed or imprisoned partisans, al-Qaeda appeared vanquished (Hull 2011). In fact, it had merely sought deeper refuge.

Thereafter, as Scahill (2013: 130) explains, “The period following from 2003 to 2006, was notable only insofar as the Bush administration seemed to take almost all focus off Yemen and potential al-Qaeda threats emanating from that country.” In Sanaa in 2006, the years of planning and organization in deep refuge culminated in a prison escape by a number of jailed al-Qaeda including Nasir al-Wihayshi and Qasim al Rayni, who immediately began further developing their movement. Soon they were conducting operations throughout Yemen that culminated in a September 2008 assault on the US Embassy in Sanaa. Several months later, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) was inaugurated, amalgamating the Yemeni and Saudi branches in a common rebellion. The Obama administration responded by introducing a targeted assassination program to rain Hellfire (missiles) on al-Qaeda leaders (Becker and Shane 2012).

Some al-Qaeda leaders were destroyed by drones. New ones appeared. AQAP, for its part, tried to assassinate Saudi Arabia’s Deputy Interior Minister Muhammed bin Nayyif in January 2009. In December of that year it attempted to blow up a Northwest Airlines flight over Detroit using Richard Reid, who had a bomb in his underpants. In the same year, General Petraeus, then CENTCOM commander, “approved a plan developed with the US Embassy in Sanaa and the CIA and other intelligence agencies to expand US military action inside Yemen” (Scahill 2013: 258). The plan was implemented and a busy time followed. Drones flew. Yemeni security forces were trained and sent in harm’s way. JSOC ninjas raided. Unfortunately, al-Qaeda was not eliminated. In fact during the time of Yemen’s Arab Spring, AQAP seized a fair amount of Yemen’s land. Thus, between 2001 and 2013, Security Elites 3.0 engaged in indirect and direct covert operations that gradually became less covert, as the press reported them. Al-Qaeda persisted. Why did the US fight an indecisive conflict in Yemen? This question leads us to the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délire*.

### *The Anti-Terrorist Public Délire*

From the moment al-Qaeda was identified as the perpetrator of 9/11, the Bush II administration considered it by far the gravest terrorist threat. The “presidential findings and other directives” decreed in the days immediately after the attacks directed US Special Operations troops (Spec Ops) to eliminate al-Qaeda; with Yemen, the rugged hideout for al-Qaeda partisans, “put on a list of potential early targets” (Scahill 2013: 64). We have

seen how rocket attacks, as in the 2002 case of al-Harithi, became the favored tactic for hitting al-Qaeda targets in Yemen and elsewhere.

“Less than a year into President Obama’s term, Yemen would be catapulted to the top of the list of trouble spots on the US counterterrorism radar” (ibid.: 269). It will be recalled that when Obama became president he authorized escalation of the drones and with them the targeted assassination program. In fact, his Security Elites 3.0 employed drone attacks, especially in Yemen and Pakistan, five times more than had the Bush II administration. Yemen was of especial concern to Obama because some of AQAP’s attacks had targeted the US, and because there was worry that AQAP imams like Anwar Awlaki, an American citizen and a compelling leader, might inspire other Americans to join al-Qaeda.

So, visions of charismatic clerics and ticking bombs in terrorist tighty whities danced in liberal hawk heads. Admiral Blair, in that same testimony to Congress in which he likened al-Qaeda to toothpaste, announced an “intensifying al-Qaeda presence in Yemen,” stressing concern “about the potential for homegrown American extremists, inspired by al-Qaeda’s militant ideology, to plan attacks inside the United States” (ibid.: 255).

The preceding observations indicate that in both the Bush II and the Obama administrations there was a perception that Yemen was a place of activity of the most dangerous terrorist organization in the world, al-Qaeda, and that the proper way to proceed against such an organization was to answer its violence with the empire’s violence via a covert war of targeted assassinations, which everybody eventually found out about. Such observations suggest that global warring in Yemen has been an implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire*. But US fighting in the prophet’s land of refuge has not been only about terrorism.

### *Oil-Control Public Délire*

Yemen, as earlier noted, possesses little oil. So the problem of controlling it is not that of acquiring access to it. Rather, the difficulty is one of its distribution from Persian Gulf producers to its consumers, many in Europe: a disquiet prevails because this oil must pass through the Bab al Mandab, which means “Gate of Grief” in Arabic. The “grief” in the Bab al Mandab refers to Arab legends of navigating fragile boats in it. The exigencies of US imperial control over oil suggest the possibility of another sort of grief for American security elites.

The US Energy Information Administration reports:

The Bab al-Mandab is 18 miles wide at its narrowest point, making tanker traffic difficult and limited to two 2-mile-wide channels for inbound and outbound shipments. Closure of the Strait could keep tankers from the Persian Gulf

from reaching the Suez Canal or SUMED Pipeline, diverting them around the southern tip of Africa, adding to transit time and cost. In addition, closure of the Bab el-Mandab would mean that oil entering the Red Sea from Sudan and other countries could no longer take the most direct route to Asian markets. This oil would instead have to go north into the Mediterranean Sea through other potential chokepoints, such as the Suez Canal and SUMED Pipeline. (EIA 2012c: 10)

In 2010 approximately 3.5 million barrels of oil passed daily through the Bab al Mandab (EIA 2012b).

AQAP understood the strategic significance of the strait. As reported in the *New York Post* toward the beginning of 2010, Sufyan al Azdi al Shahri, who then was the second highest ranking al-Qaeda leader in Yemen, stressed “the importance of Bab al Mandab which if we, God willing, controlled it, and brought it back to the house of Islam, would be a great victory and would give us great influence” because AQAP would be able to “close the door and tighten the noose” (in “Al Qaeda Leader in Yemen” 2010). Likewise, the Iranian government appears to have understood the significance of Bab al Mandab by 2013. The Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, a conservative think tank, responded to information in the Middle Eastern press by warning in June 2013 that Iran was attempting to ally with the Southern Mobility Movement (Hirak), which was itself still trying to re-establish a separate state in the south that would lie along the Bab al Mandab. Iran was said to be training Hirak militants. Should the Hiraki be successful, an alliance with Tehran would give Iran some ability to “close the door” of the Bab al Mandab (Foundation for the Defense of Democracies 2013). What were US security elites doing about this threat?

They were on the job. Colonel Yadoomi, a Yemeni officer, explains how. In 1991, while participating in a program at the US Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, he wrote a paper documenting US military interest in the Gate of Grief. He explained how the strait was already “an important base for control and command of petroleum as well as the route for transporting it” (Al-Yadoomi 1991: 16). Colonel Yadoomi’s recognition that the strait was “important” for oil’s “control” was probably no surprise to the US naval officers because, he reports, at that time there were already four naval installations (at Massawa, Caneo, Diego Garcia, and Masira) functioning to “support free navigation through the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab, and to make sure of continuing the flow of the Gulf oil to U.S. allies in Europe” (ibid.: 17). By the turn of the millennium, the US had provided assistance to train and supply a modern Yemeni coast guard to defend the Bab al Mandab (Sharp 2009).

The US government “got it” with regard to the Gate of Grief. If they lost control of it, their power to control global transportation of oil was

reduced. Consequently, security elites classified this waterway as an “oil transit chokepoint” (EIA 2012c) and ensured it was directly defended by naval bases and indirectly protected through support of Yemen’s coast guard. Furthermore, the direct global warring by JSOC ninjas and drone attacks maintained the Yemeni government’s client status, thereby helping to keep the Bab al Mandab open.

US global warring in Yemen, given the preceding, is a way for the US to control oil by maintaining power over distribution of oil production. Equally, it is a way of helping the empire pay its strategic rents. Guaranteeing unimpeded shipping through the Gate of Grief assures European clients they will have the oil supplies they need. US government global warring in Yemen would appear to be an application of the oil-control public *délire*. The actions of US Security Elites 3.0 indicate they perceived global warring in Yemen as strengthening two sorts of controls over oil—control over oil’s distribution, and payment of strategic rents. Given this perception, the proper procedure was to implement the oil control public *délire*, which they did.

The empire’s warring in Yemen has droned on and on. Has it worked? Has AQAP been eradicated? After ten years of combat operations, John O. Brennan, Obama’s counterterrorism chief, judged in fall 2011 that the AQAP was “gaining strength” (DeYoung 2011). Not only was the AQAP ever stronger, but in 2014 the Houthi insurgency captured Sanaa. Houthis practice a form of Shiite religion and are suspected of having ties with Iran. Perhaps a new jewel has been added to the Shiite Necklace.

In the spring of 2013, in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombings, Qassim al Rimi, then AQAP’s military leader, addressed “A Letter to the American People.” Rimi taunted, “Have you eliminated the jihadist groups that have spread everywhere after they had only been in Afghanistan? Today, they are in your land or close to it,” which, he warned, meant that “every day you will be hit by the unexpected and your leaders will not be able to defend you” (AFP 2013d). Cheeky man! Nevertheless, he has a point. US global warring as practiced in Yemen has been a losing proposition. It is time to quit Muhammad’s place of refuge and contemplate a place where the New American Empire always wars (if indirectly), wins, and in so doing loses.

### Israel: The “Aircraft Carrier”

In a 2006 interview with Noam Chomsky, Khatchig Mouadian (2006: 1) reminded him of his (Chomsky’s) frequent reference to Israel as the “cop on the beat” and then asked him to explicate this phrase. Chomsky responded:

The expression “local cop on the beat” comes from the Nixon administration. It was their conception of how the Middle East should be run. There should be a peripheral region of gendarme states (Turkey, Iran under the Shah, Israel joined after the 1967 war, Pakistan was there for a while). These states were to be the local cops on the beat while the US would be the police headquarters.”

A nice trope: a cop is an enforcer and, in the case under discussion, Chomsky was claiming that Israel was a client enforcing US interests in the Near East and elsewhere. Those who view Chomsky as radical and thus biased might look instead to the reactionary Senator Jesse Helms, who famously called Israel (in Pipes and Clawson 1995) “America’s aircraft carrier in the Middle East.” Here two gentlemen from opposite ends of the political spectrum concur in their judgment: Israel does the empire’s work. Below it is argued that the US has been involved in indirect, overt global warring on the side of Israel because Israel, as America’s cop in the Middle East, hurts enemies of the empire who threaten its control over oil. Documentation of this claim begins with a discussion of Israel’s wars, and the US’s role in them, since the 1990s.

### *Israel’s Wars in Lebanon and Gaza*

Prior to the 1980s Israel had largely, overtly warred against other Arab states. There was the Suez Crisis (October 1956) when Israel, allied with the UK and France, attacked Egypt; followed by the Six Day War (June 1967) when it engaged Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and Iraq; and then, the Yom Kippur War (October 1973), when it again fought Egypt. Since that time it has warred overtly, largely in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, and covertly throughout the Middle East, but especially in Syria, Iraq, and Iran. It is important to specify the US’s role in this warring.

Israel is the largest recipient of American foreign aid in the world, receiving \$3 billion annually since 1985, the vast bulk of it going to Israel’s military. The goal of this investment in violent force is to maintain Israel’s “‘qualitative military edge’ (QME)” (Sharp 2012: 3). Israel’s military, the Israel Defense Force (IDF), has 176,500 soldiers on active duty and is the thirty-fourth largest active military in the world. There are 445,000 troops in the reserves. The country’s air force has approximately 600 combat aircraft. Israel also has 200 attack helicopters, 3,600 tanks, 9,000 armored personnel carriers, some 1,400 artillery pieces, 360 ballistic missiles, and three nuclear submarines. The country is also suspected of holding stocks of chemical and biological weapons. Despite its government’s policy of “nuclear ambiguity” regarding nuclear weapons, Israel is known to possess between 75 and 400 nuclear weapons (IMEU 2005).

Most of these weapons systems either are American or were made possible by American funds and technical assistance. They are the reason Israel enjoys QME. Helm's likening of Israel to an aircraft carrier is appropriate. Such a ship is a technologically sophisticated killing machine. Israel, flaunting its QME technology, is an entire country serving as a killing machine.<sup>60</sup> Make no mistake: when Israel wars, the Leviathan is a major, indirect participant, because the US makes it possible. The Israeli aircraft carrier and the US Leviathan cruise the oceans, killing together.

Israeli warring in Lebanon emerged from the original fighting at Israel's creation in the late 1940s, which entailed an ethnic cleansing of Palestinians (the *Nakba*), many of whom were driven north and east into Lebanon and Jordan as refugees. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), headed by Yasser Arafat, formed in 1964 to defend Palestinian interests. Fatah, its military branch, having recruited supporters in Lebanon from among Palestinian refugees, began cross-border attacks in the late 1960s. The PLO leadership, along with many Palestinian refugees, was expelled from Jordan in the 1970s and fled to Lebanon, intensifying raids into Israel from there. In 1978 Israel invaded Lebanon and pushed the PLO north of the Litani River. This failed to stop the cross-border attacks. Subsequently, Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982. Tens of thousands of civilians were killed in grim urban warfare in Beirut. In time the PLO was driven from Lebanon and Arafat fled to Libya. Israel withdrew to a narrow buffer zone in southern Lebanon, held with the aid of its proxy, the South Lebanon Army (SLA).

A new resistance group, Hezbollah, began to form in the wake of the PLO's departure. Whereas the PLO had been a secular, nationalist organization, Hezbollah was begun by Shiite clerics in southern Lebanon and thus had Islamist roots. It was supported by Iran and Syria. By 1985 Hezbollah was strong enough to call for armed struggle to eject Israel from Lebanon. By the late 1980s, Hezbollah had taken over where the PLO left off and was successfully conducting an insurgency against the IDF. Israel had a serious problem on its northern border.

To address this problem the IDF attacked Lebanon in Operation Accountability (25 July 1993–31 July 1993), an operation that displayed Israel's QME. Its aerial bombardments were described as "state terror" because much of the bombing targeted civilians (Gordon 1999). Lots of Lebanese infrastructure was destroyed, and 300,000 Lebanese were turned into refugees and fled to Beirut. The IDF lost two soldiers. Still, Hezbollah, though weakened, was not destroyed and soon returned to harass the IDF and SLA. Three years later Israel launched Operation Grapes of Wrath (11–27 April 1996). Another display of air power and more state terror ensued, and infrastructure was destroyed in large amounts in large areas

of Lebanon. This time 350,000 to 500,000 Lebanese were displaced. Only three IDF soldiers were killed in action. Nevertheless, there was a problem. Operation Grapes of Wrath did not destroy Hezbollah any more than Operation Accountability had. Only fourteen Hezbollah partisans were killed, and this time Hezbollah managed to strike back, firing rockets into northern Israel and displacing 20,000 to 30,000 civilians. Israel had had enough. In July of 2000, abandoning its proxy SLA allies, it unilaterally evacuated southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah had driven Israel from territory it had conquered. This ceding of territory was a first for the IDF. Hezbollah strengthened and continued its harassment, this time in northern Israel itself. In July of 2006 its actions were especially enervating (from the Israeli perspective) as it launched rocket attacks and tried to kidnap IDF soldiers. So once more Israel struck, in what was to be called the Second Lebanon War (12 July–14 August 1996). The IDF inflicted heavy air and artillery strikes throughout Lebanon, largely targeting civilian infrastructure (including Beirut's airport) and civilian residential areas. There was a complete air and naval blockade. A hundred thousand cluster bombs were dropped, 90 percent of them in the last three days of combat. Additionally, there was an IDF ground assault on southern Lebanon. Hezbollah stood its ground and was not dislodged; meanwhile it launched more, and more sophisticated, rockets into northern Israel, largely against Israeli civilians.

Compared to the previous hostilities, the Second Lebanon War had consequences that were altogether more serious for both parties in the conflict. More people were killed, more wounded, more property destroyed. Israeli hermeneuts claimed, "Hezbollah lost, and Hezbollah knows it" (Toten 2009). Yet Hezbollah partisans could not be routed, even in facing an assault from the IDF. Their rockets forced the evacuation of 300,000 Israeli citizens in the north of Israel. Hassan Nasrallah, by then Hezbollah's head, declared "divine victory." Since 2006 Israel has refrained from assaulting its northern neighbor. Rather, it has turned its wrath upon Palestinians in Gaza.

The Gaza Strip is a territory on the Mediterranean Sea in the southwestern part of Israel. It is tiny, just 139 square miles, but for its size it has a large population, about 1.7 million, almost all of whom are Palestinian. It is governed by Hamas, a Sunni group founded as an offshoot of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood in 1987. Hamas contests Israel's right to exist, though in 2006 Ismail Haniyeh announced that if a Palestinian state was formed along the borders allotted to it in 1967, then Hamas would be willing to declare a truce that could last for up to twenty years.

The year of Hamas's founding also saw the start of an insurrection against Israel, the First Intifada (1987–1991). This involved acts of civil disobe-

dience, sometimes quite violent, against Israelis in Palestinian operations organized by the PLO and Islamist groups like the new Hamas and Islamic Jihad. No outside Arab states joined in the uprising. Israel responded with what it called its Iron Fist policy of killings, deportations, and beatings of its opponents. The First Intifada showed that Palestinians could wage their own battles for statehood. The following Second Intifada (2000–2008) was a gorier affair. The PLO was less involved in this insurrection, in which Hamas, Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and the al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades conducted insurgency against military and civilian targets, utilizing ambushes, sniper attacks, and suicide bombings. Remote-controlled landmines were employed against Israeli armor, as were car bombs and drive-by shootings.

Toward the end of the Second Intifada, Arafat died (2004) and Mahmoud Abbas was elected to head the Palestinian Authority (2005), which, it was hoped, would evolve into a Palestinian state. Abbas, a moderate, opted for peaceful negotiations and the end of violence as the way to achieve this statehood. His consequent close cooperation with Israeli authorities led to conflict with the more radical Hamas, which held that the Israeli government would not allow the Palestinians' peaceful accession to statehood. In 2006 Hamas won a majority of seats in the Palestinian Legislative Council, designated to be the legislative branch of the Palestinian state. Abbas declined to cooperate with Hamas. The US and the EU declared it a terrorist organization and refused funding to any Hamas-dominated institution. Hamas seized control of Gaza, ejected Fatah, and has governed there since June 2007. Israel responded by completely blockading the Gaza Strip, seeking to destroy industry, reduce nutritional levels, and exacerbate health conditions.

Unsurprisingly, Israel attacked Gaza in Operation Cast Lead (27 December 2008—January 18, 2009). The *casus belli* was rockets fired from Gaza into Israel in response, Hamas said, to attacks by Israel. Between 2005 and 2007, the IDF had fired 14,600 155 mm artillery shells into Gaza (Human Rights Watch 2007). Operation Cast Lead began with air strikes followed by a ground invasion. Many Palestinians were killed, especially civilians, who after all had no place to flee to. Gaza was conquered. Both sides declared unilateral ceasefires, and Israel withdrew from Gaza. Who won? Israel claimed a tactical victory. Hamas had withstood the enormous violent force of Israel and endured. It continued to govern Gaza.

Three years later, Israel attacked Gaza again in Operation Pillar of Defense (14–21 November 2012). Again the Israeli rationale was that the Palestinians were firing rockets at them. Again the IDF attacked with a vigorous air campaign. Again many Palestinians died. The Israelis lost two soldiers. This time there was no Israeli ground invasion. Hamas was a bit



stronger and was firing somewhat more advanced rockets into southern Israel. So the Egyptians arranged a ceasefire. Once again Israel chalked up a tactical victory, but Hamas was still there and was, if anything, stronger in its military experience. You learn fast, surviving the IDF.

Some in Israel refer to the wars they fight with Hezbollah and Hamas as “mowing the grass” (Pillar 2012). This may strike some as snide, given that the figurative blades cut off lives, not grass. However, this trope holds an unpleasant truth: grass grows back after being cut. Now, on both its northern and its southwestern borders, Israel has two foes who have fought it and grown back like grass, that is, grown in terms of their ability to choreograph violent force. What does all the Israeli warring have to do with US global warring? Part of responding to this question is to assess how strongly one may assert that Israel has been America’s air craft carrier.

### *Sailing the High Seas*

What evidence is there that Israel is the empire’s “air craft carrier”? To respond to this question, Israeli operations in the New World, Africa, and the Near East are examined next.

*Air Craft Carrier in the New World:* Writing in the late 1980s, Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi (1988: 107) states, “Israel’s activities in Latin America ... were part of an American strategy to counter radicalism in the area.” Specifically, starting in the 1970s, Israel supplied weapons and training to reactionary regimes that the US government favored in Central America, including Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Additionally, within Latin America, Israel provided weapons and training to the Pinochet regime in Chile beginning in the 1970s, to the junta in Argentina during its eight years of military dictatorship (1976–1984), and to dictatorships in Bolivia and Paraguay. With the end of the Cold War, the US’s need to prevent Latin America from going over to the Soviets disappeared, and its concerns migrated to other regions that posed new reproductive vulnerabilities. Israel made a parallel migration.

*Air Craft Carrier in Africa:* After the 1970s, Africa became a continent of insecurity due to wars, as well as a place with supplies of oil that the US *délired* to control. At this time, “Israeli weapons and trainers ... [were] observed in numerous African trouble spots” (S. Wezeman 2011: 14). Unsurprisingly these were not random “trouble spots.” Rather, they were ones where the US had its interests.

Consider first Sudan, during the long civil war in what then was southern Sudan (1955–1972, 1983–2005). Khartoum accused Israel of assisting

the rebel army in the south, the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLA). Later, when civil war erupted in the province of Darfur in 2003, Khartoum again accused Israel of aiding the rebels there. US global warring in Sudan is discussed later. Suffice it to say that there is oil in Sudan, that the US lost control of it during the Clinton administration, and that the empire was interested in re-establishing that control. Israeli training and weapons to rebels in both the south and the west of Sudan was reported. Support to those rebels helped the New American Empire weaken Khartoum's control over its oil. Since 2003 Chad, Sudan's neighbor to the west, also has oil, whose production ExxonMobil largely controls. It is in Washington's interest to maintain Exxon's position in Chad. Israel has supplied weapons to the government of President Déby in his struggles with rebellions against his rule that could threaten Exxon (P. Wezeman 2009).

Nigeria is the largest oil producer south of the Sahara. Production occurs in the Niger Delta region and is largely done by US or US clients' companies (Shell, Chevron, ExxonMobil, Agip, and Total). Since the early 1990s there has been armed rebellion in the delta against the central government and the oil companies over the distribution of revenue from the oil, almost none of which goes to the people in the delta. Needless to say, rebellion threatens the US Leviathan's oil interests. Israel's ambassador to Nigeria announced in 2008 that the Nigerian Ministry of Defense was "well connected" with the Israeli military (Pindiga 2011). These connections included Israel's clandestine provision of training and other services to Nigerian troops deployed to combat the Niger Delta rebellion (ibid.: 2011). Israel certainly appears to be policing the empire's oil interests in Nigeria.

Angola, according to *The Economist*, had the highest GDP growth rate in the world, 11.1 percent per annum, between 2001 and 2010. (*The Economist Online* 2011). This is largely because of its abundant petroleum resources. Some predicted that Angolan production could surpass that of Nigeria. For a long time the US was suspicious of the Angolan government. It seemed too socialist for Washington's tastes. However, oil began to be produced in the 1970s. Nominally, the government went from a one-party socialist state to a multiparty democracy in 1992. In 1998 an economic reform in the country introduced neoliberal structural adjustment. Angola had become a country in which the empire could do business, which it did. Angolan oil is largely produced by the US's or its clients' oil companies (Texaco, ExxonMobil, Total, Agip, BP, and Petrobras). It is important to the empire that its oil companies retain their dominance in the Angolan oil sector. To this end, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute observed, "The largest *reported* Israeli arms deal in Africa is a set of contracts worth \$1 billion with Angola in 2006" (S. Wezeman 2011: 14). Once again, Israel appears to be assisting the US's Angolan oil interest.

Consider, finally, the case of Uganda. Oil has been discovered in Uganda and in Kenya as recently as May of 2012. Tanzania is believed to have oil, though no commercially exploitable amounts have yet been located. It is known, however, to hold reserves of natural gas. East Africa is thus starting to be of interest for its petroleum resources. It also harbors some determined terrorists, especially al-Shabaab in Somalia. Enter Yoweri Museveni, who became president of Uganda in 1986 after proving himself a skilled general in African conflicts. Soon after he was inaugurated he began neo-liberal structural adjustment, to Washington's delight. Appreciative of the military prowess of Uganda's president, the US designated the country as having, according to Wendy Sherman, Obama's under secretary of state for political affairs, a "leadership role" in policing US interests (in Okwir 2011). Not surprisingly, Uganda receives "significant military aid" from Israel (Pfeffer 2013). It might be said that Israel became the policeman's policeman in Uganda during the early years of the new millennium. Clearly, in Africa and Latin America too, Israel has helped to US to secure certain military interests, especially as they pertain to the control of oil. Now, let us explore Israel's role as a US cop in the Middle East.

*Air Craft Carrier in the Middle East:* Israeli military and intelligence have fought for the empire in three major places in the Middle East—Iraq, Iran, and Syria. Consider first Iraq. By the advent of the new millennium, Israel had been running covert operations in Iraq for well over three decades. Perhaps the most significant of these was the 7 June 1981 bombing of the Osirak nuclear reactor, which was nearing completion when the Israeli air force destroyed it early in Reagan's administration. The reactor was being constructed with the help of the French. Washington was wary of Osirak because Security Elites 2.0 believed it would allow Saddam to develop nuclear weapons, a destabilizing prospect. However, these same officials were for the most part averse to terminating it because that would be an act of blatant aggression, one likely to elicit criticism in world opinion. So the Israeli air force did the job for the Americans and absorbed the UN Security Council's condemnation of the raid. In principle, Reagan was furious about the raid, but in his diary he reported he recognized that Saddam "was trying to build a nuclear weapon" and was a "no good nut" (Reagan 2007). Six months later, the US and Israel signed a statement of strategic accord (30 November 1981). The communication that announced it stated that the "the two countries" would "act cooperatively, to provide each other military assistance to cope with threats to the security of the entire region (Gwertzman 1981). This strategic accord might be said to have replaced the lost twin tower of the shah's Iran with the cop of Israel. The cop continued activities in Iraq.

Prior to the founding of Israel, a significant Jewish population in northern Iraq had had affable relations with the Naqshbandi, an important Sufi order, as well as with the Barzani family. These good relations continued after the founding of Israel, importantly with Massoud Barzani, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party. By 1980, Mossad was training the *peshmerga*, the Kurdish military force. This Israeli-Kurdish amity gave Israel the ability to operate on the ground in Iraq. This became especially important after the US's 1991 invasion of Iraq, when US officials entered a condition that Bob Woodward (2006: 96) termed "intelligence blindness," which was especially detrimental to Washington as it began to prepare for a second war against Saddam after 9/11.

However, Tel Aviv hurried to Washington's aid. Prior to Gulf War II, Israeli agents, especially the Mossad, had moved into northern Iraq. According to Iraqi sources, one of their activities was formation of front companies, supposedly Arab or European firms, which operated throughout Iraq (Hersh 2004b). Israel, of course, was cooperating with the US and in effect provided Bush II's security elites with on-the-ground information that the Americans otherwise lacked.

There were two further ways Israel supported the US in the buildup to Gulf War II. First, Israeli covert forces trained "Kurdish fighters in anti-terrorism techniques" (Urquhart and Howard 2005). This created the possibility of a northern front against Baghdad. Second, according to the retired Brigadier General Schlomo Brom of the IDF, "Israeli intelligence was a full partner with the US and Britain in developing a false picture of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction capacity" (Lévesque 2012). As we have seen, once Gulf War II was winding down, Washington focused its attention on Iran.

Here too Israel's stealth operations have been considerable. Of course, they have been performed with US cooperation.<sup>61</sup> Perhaps the most controversial of them has been a "decapitation" program that uses assassins to eliminate "human assets" critical to Iran's nuclear program (ibid.: 2009). A special unit of the Mossad—*kidon*, "the tip of the spear"—performs the murders. There appear to have been four or perhaps five killings of senior scientists, which may seem a small number until one imagines what would happen if a foreign country was known to have assassinated four or five senior US personnel.

Israel has commingled traditional and high-tech sabotage to undermine Tehran. The old-fashioned sabotage has included blowing things up. In November 2011, the assassination program involved a serious explosion at an Iranian missile base that killed the then head of missile development (Raviv and Melman 2012). Additionally, Israel has set up front companies

to sell Iran goods needed for its nuclear program, including critical items that are defective and accordingly hinder its progress.

More novel sabotage tactics have utilized computer-based assaults upon Iranian nuclear installations. These were part of the US-Israel collaboration in Operation Olympic Games, which was authorized in 2006 by Bush II, reauthorized in 2009 by Obama, and implemented as a collaboration between the CIA and the NSA on the one hand, and Unit 8200 of Israeli military intelligence, often called Aman (Vielhaber and Bleek 2012), on the other. Operation Olympic Games developed Stuxnet, a computer worm that attacked Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant and its Natanz uranium enrichment facility. The atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was the first use of nuclear arms. Stuxnet's deployment was the first use of computer malware in the history of warfare.

A final area of Israeli covert operations against Iran is espionage. From a Kurdish base, intelligence agents launch cross-border operations to find "smoking gun" evidence that Tehran is actually building a nuclear warhead (Lévesque 2012). As of this writing no such evidence has been found, though not for want of trying. So much for Israel in Iran; next, consider Israel in Syria.

Mahdi Dasrius Nazemroaya (2013), an award-winning sociologist and journalist with the Voltaire Network, notes that "the US President told the Telemundo network that the Israelis were justified in striking Syria and that the United States was coordinating against the Syrian government with Tel Aviv." So it appears that Obama has deployed its Israeli cop for missions against Syria. In 2007, Israel did to Syria what it had already done to Iraq and bombed a nuclear reactor at Al Kibar that was apparently funded by Iran and nearing completion (Hersh 2008). Nazemroaya (2013) claims that Israel has sent spies, vehicles, and drones into Syria.

Lévesque (2012) is concerned that there is "a rerun of previous attempts to funnel fabricated evidence into the news chain" about Syria's possession of WMDs. Lawrence Wilkerson, Powell's chief of staff during the Bush II administration, speculated more specifically that reports of the use of chemical weapons in Syria could be the result of an "Israeli false flag operation" (Edwards 2013). These allegations should be treated with some caution. Conflict is still very much ongoing in Syria. Covert participants are still very much hiding their operations, but it does appear that Israel is up to old tricks launching stealth missions for the New American Empire. Lamentably (from the American and Israeli perspective), as observed in the earlier section on Syria, the "dead man walking" is still walking. Israel, then, has been a formidable aircraft carrier sailing the violent seas of US global warring. Of course, Tel Aviv receives the reward of a strategic rent,

which is discussed below in the context of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*.

### *Anti-terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délires*

Certain facts from the previous analysis need to be highlighted. First, the US's military supply of the IDF provides Israel with its qualitative military edge, which means that when Israel wars, the US is indirectly globally warring because it provides Israel with much of the violent force it needs for success. Thus, when Israel fights, the US Leviathan is conducting secondary warring, as the term was defined in chapter 2.

Second, since the 1990s, when the US turned to Middle Eastern global warring against terrorists and for oil control, Israel has participated as a US proxy. Because the US is fighting in the Persian Gulf to combat terrorism and control oil, and because Israel is a US force resource in this fight, it therefore can be said that the US's secondary fighting in support of Israel is implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*. Shultzian Permission was granted because Israel functioned as a US proxy when hostilities were ongoing, so that peaceful opportunities were effectively terminated.

The following is clear: the US has used Israel in global warring during the time of coalescence of the cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions; Shultzian Permission has been granted because of ongoing hostilities; and global warring has implemented oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délires*—all of which supports the global warring theory.

In the book *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, the respected political scientists John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt (2007) argue that pro-Israeli lobbying, especially by groups like the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, has overly influenced US foreign affairs, hurting both the US and Israeli interests. Their book provoked venomous criticism that branded the authors as anti-Semites, among other things. Lost in the name-calling was recognition of what Israel does for the US. It is the cop in rough Middle Eastern neighborhoods, and policing costs a lot. US deference to Israeli interests is part of the strategic rent it pays for that policing. Mearsheimer and Walt's argument that US deference to Israel may hurt both countries' interests should be taken seriously. Israel's covert warring in Iraq II was not able to influence the outcome, nor has it been decisive in either Iran or Syria. However, whenever and wherever Israel wars using US weaponry, abhorrence of Tel Aviv and Washington is generated throughout Middle Eastern peoples and others around the world. For many in the Middle East, such antipathy motivates the *délire* to institute terrorist movements like Fatah, the PFLP, Abu Nidal, Hezbollah, and al-

Qaeda. Thus, the more the US supports Israeli wars against Palestinians and others, the more it is a catalyst for terrorism. It is time to conclude discussion of imperial world warring in the Middle Eastern Theater.

## Conclusion

Recall that Mustafa Alani of the Dubai-based Gulf Research Council observed that “the issue,” concerning US fighting in the Middle East, “is hegemony in the region” (Sly 2013). He is correct. Since 1991 imperial global warring has, in different ways, been about implementing the anti-terrorist and the oil-control public *délirés* to dominate the Middle East and control its prize, oil, allowing relaxation of the vulnerabilities generated by the perfect storm of contradictions. Further, in each of the cases analyzed in this chapter—Iraq, Iran, Libya, Syria, Yemen, and Israel—the evidence supports the global warring theory: it has been a time of intensifying and coalescing contradictions; for various reasons Shultzian Permission was granted; implementation of the oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délirés* resulted in global warring.

The US Leviathan’s War of Middle Eastern Domination was ongoing in 2014, so conclusions about it must be tentative. Nevertheless, consider Iraq first: the US Leviathan came, warred, and cut and ran. Imperial fighting caused enormous harm, stimulating the growth of terrorism and leaving the country highly unstable. It has not led to greater imperial control over Iraqi oil resources. Next contemplate “Iran,” which Churchill called “fairyland.” Pretty tough fairies: no regime change; no real stopping of nuclear development; and although US sanctions have hampered Iranian oil production, these same sanctions are said by one source to have equally “undermined” US “global power.” Furthermore, US “twilight” warring against Iran has strengthened the Shiite Necklace, the alliance formed to resist US attempts to control the Middle East. Next, in Libya the “model intervention” left the country’s oil production almost “stopped,” meaning there is little oil for the empire to control. The country’s governance is dominated by violent paramilitaries, making it something of a “failed state.” The paramilitaries’ violence terrorizes Libyans of all stripes and spreads their terrorism to other areas such as Syria. Now remember Syria, where the US, with its ally Israel, has been unable to break the Shiite necklace. At the same time terrorism has flourished. Washington’s proposed direct intervention caused friction with its close allies, like the UK and Saudi Arabia, a further sign of weakened bonds of empire. Now recall Yemen, where the empire has specialized in drones and targeted assassinations. These helped the terrorists. The Yemeni branch of al-Qaeda, AQAP, is described as “gaining

strength.” Finally, consider US secondary warring for Israel in return for Tel Aviv’s acting as an empire cop. Israeli warring has not been decisive in the course of any of the conflicts the US has engaged in in the Middle East. Rather, imperial support for Israel has nurtured the forces of terrorism. *Deadly Contradictions* is a peregrination, and travelers to the vicinity of the empire’s Near Eastern warring observe a Leviathan, accompanied by its aircraft carrier, in trouble.

## Notes

1. Debate exists about how many world wars there have been. Eliot Cohen (2001), counselor to Condoleezza Rice (2007–2009), insisted the “war on terror” was World War IV.

2. Introductions to Wahhabism can be found in DeLong-Bas (2008) and Commins (2009).

3. The claim that Israel ethnically cleansed Palestine of Palestinians during the creation of Israel in the late 1940s is rejected by many Israelis. The case for it is made by Ilan Pappé (2007, 2012). Pappé has been criticized (see Karsh 1996; B. Morris 2004), but his argument is credible.

4. There is a hefty literature on the Arab Spring. More conventional approaches can be found in the Council on Foreign Relations (2011b), Galvin (2012), and Bradley (2012). More leftist takes on these events can be found in Binh (2013), Dabashi (2012), and Petras, Morley and Smith (2012).

5. It might be objected that the Kuwaitis did not want unification, because in 1991 Iraq was acting as an imperial thug, just as Britain had done in 1921. The House of Sabah had Iraqi roots, having emerged from a clan within the Bani Ulbah, a tribal confederation with ties to Basra in Iraq. Nevertheless, by the late twentieth century the Kuwait royal lineage and merchants resisted returning to Iraq. Both had thrived by collaborating with the English and later from acquiring oil revenues (Crystal 1995). It is far from clear what ordinary Kuwaitis felt about Iraqi occupation. After all, in 1939 they had revolted in favor of reunification with Iraq.

6. Mary Fawzi and Sarah Zaidi in an Food and Agriculture report estimated the child mortality due to sanctions at 567,000 (in Crossette 1995). The US government and much of the American press has tended to either disregard or challenge this figure. Fawzi and Zaidi were professionals who utilized standard estimation methods.

7. The actual invasion plans were formulated by General Tommy Franks, CENTCOM head, and went through a number of iterations described by Bob Woodward (2004). The plans actually called for shock and awe “lite”; as destruction of infrastructure was emphasized less, in part because much of it had not been rebuilt after Gulf War I.

8. The shock and awe doctrine has been subject to criticisms. One is that all aerial attacks involve shock and awe (Correll 2003). Perhaps the most serious criticism is that such a strategy is not applicable to counterinsurgencies. When the enemy has no infrastructure, their location is a mystery, and they will not stand up and fight, where does a diligent commander shock them?

9. The insurgency developed in part due to the incompetence of the US occupation, especially during Bremer’s time (2003–2004). The decision to ban the Baathists was important in igniting it. Where this decision originated has been unclear. Wolfowitz appears to have had a hand in it. He scrawled, on the margins of a memo suggesting reconciliation with former Baathists, “They are Nazis” (in Crist 2012: 421). Patrick Cockburn (2006), who was in Iraq at the time, provides the fullest account of occupation horrors. Even Bush recognized in his memoirs that there was “chaos” (2010: 259). The Defense Department was charged with managing the occupation, even though much of the planning for it had been done in the State



Department. Secretary Rice blamed the occupation's failure on post-invasion turmoil, saying, "Unfortunately, the Pentagon had minimal ability to manage the elaborate [postwar] plans given the chaos on the ground" (2011: 210). The Rand Corporation performed a detailed evaluation of the prewar occupation planning, concluding, "The evidence suggests that the United States had neither the people nor the plans in place to handle the situation that arose after the fall of Saddam Hussein" (Bensahel et al. 2008: xvii).

10. Gates was a member of the ISG and has described its workings (2014: 27–38), remarking "how much fun" it was (2014: 30). Gates does not say that the ISG supported "cutting and running." Rather he emphasizes that important committee members, including himself, were interested in a short-term surge. However, the surge was conceived as an operation that would allow reducing American combat forces; i.e., cutting and running.

11. Ricks (2009) and Fred Kaplan (2013) describe the rise of Petraeus and COIN. Two others arguing for COIN were David Kilcullen (2010), who originally served in the Australian military and held a doctorate in anthropology, and John Nagl (2005), from the US military, a tank platoon commander during Operation Desert Storm. A key problem was to account for the debacle of COIN in Vietnam. Petraeus offered an explanation in his PhD (1987) dissertation. Nagl (2005) did the same. Kilcullen (2010) explained how to win with COIN, using the British handling of the Malayan insurgency as a model. Arrequin-Toft (2002) has offered a critique of US COIN.

12. The Human Terrain System, a project designed to integrate anthropologists into the US Army, was condemned by the American Anthropology Association in 2007 (AAA 2007).

13. Scahill (2013) provides the most complete account of the JSOC. It was formed out of the debacle of the failed mission to rescue the American hostages held in the US embassy in Tehran in 1979 and modeled after the British Strategic Air Services (SAS), and includes Navy Seals, the Delta Force, and the 75th Army Rangers.

14. Some believe that Petraeus's 2003 pacification of Mosul was a "just so" story. A US army report analyzing the success of counterinsurgency in Gulf War II found that around Mosul, "insurgent organization and violence increased throughout" 2003 (Broemmel, Nielsen, and Clark 2006: 27), and that the same was so during 2004 (*ibid.*: 52), the time of Petraeus's command there. Mansoor (2013), who was Petraeus's executive officer during the Surge, has written an account of it that is favorable to his commander.

15. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld did not approve of COIN. Eight retired senior admirals and generals called for Rumsfeld's resignation on grounds of incompetence in early 2006. He resigned his position on 6 December of that year. His replacement, Robert Gates, quickly approved the surge with its adoption of COIN.

16. The neoconservative think tank The American Enterprise Institute took credit for suggesting the "surge" (Kagan 2007).

17. Perhaps, the commander Petraeus most resembles is Civil War General George B. McClellan. Petraeus, like McClellan, never really won a decisive battle. Like McClellan, he "never missed an opportunity to make a friend in the media" (W. Stern 2012). There was a bit of the intimidator in Petraeus. Once, when he and Defense Secretary Gates were in disagreement, Petraeus threatened Gates: "You know I could make your life miserable" (Gates 2014: 68). Gates was not amused.

18. The most complete analysis of the role of oil in Gulf War II is Muttitt (2012b).

19. Mraz (1997) discussed the dual containment policy and its problems. The United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) was in charge of inspecting Iraq's disarmament and WMD development. Just prior to Operation Desert Fox, Baghdad refused or hampered inspections, claiming that the US was using UNSCOM to spy on it. It was on the basis of these debates over inspections that Clinton ordered the 1998 bombing. The US was using UNSCOM to spy on Iraq (Everest 2004: 202–203).

20. Linda McQuaig (2004: 84–85) has suggested there is evidence to believe the Vulcans intended to war against Iraq by February of 2001.

21. Franks, in consultation with Rumsfeld, would end up revising the war plan several times. Initially there was a plan called 1003V, left over from the Clinton administration. It was replaced by a “generated start” plan, a “running start” plan, a “hybrid” plan, and in the end, the plan actually used, Cobra II, which was finished only in February 2003, a month before the onset of hostilities.

22. The Future of Iraq Project documents were originally secret. Their publication date is given as 2005, the year they were declassified. Most appear to have been drafted between 2002 and 2003.

23. Other major planning for postwar Iraq was done in the Defense Department office of Undersecretary for Defense Policy Douglas Feith, who created an Office of Special Plans that issued guidance papers. There was little cooperation between the Office of Special Plans and the Future of Iraq project, which hindered postwar planning. Bensahel et al. (2008: xvii) provide an account of the imperfections of the planning for postwar reconstruction, which they declare to have been “unprepared” for the situation after Saddam’s fall.

24. The proposal that PSAs should be introduced in Iraq is discussed in Muttitt (2006). It was first suggested in 2002 by the Oil and Energy Subgroup of the Future of Iraq Project (Oil and Energy Working Group 2005: 4, 5).

25. The quotation is the first “Comment” to the *PRWatch* piece (Center for Media and Democracy 2005).

26. The *Washington Post* revealed in November 1999 that US intelligence used UNSCOM to spy on Iraq (Gellman 1999). In 1996 the CIA mounted a failed coup attempt against Saddam using UNSCOM information.

27. Clinton’s condemnation of Saddam’s use of poison gas was hypocritical. During the Iran-Iraq War the US had provided the Iraqi military with information on the disposition of the Iranians, which the Iraqis needed in order to gas them. As one US intelligence officer noted, the Pentagon “wasn’t so horrified by Iraq’s use of gas. It was just another way of killing people” (in Everest 2004: 104).

28. What Tenet actually meant by his “slam dunk” remark is open for debate. Bob Woodward (2004: 440) reported that Powell “knew very well that Tenet had told the president ‘in brash New York language’ ... that the case on WMD was a ‘slam dunk.’” Being from the Bronx, Powell would have known such language when he heard it.

29. Seymour Hersh (2003) was instrumental in revealing the activities of the OPS. Feith (2008: 294) defends the OPS and fulminates against Hersh in his memoirs. One whopper certainly came out of OPS: the claim that Iraq was ultimately responsible for 9/11 (Isikoff and Corn 2006: 111). Feith (2008: 295) outlined the distribution network of his work when he reported that one “paper” was sent to Rice, “who then distributed it to Cheney, Powell, General Myers, and Tenet (and to the White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card and the Presidential Counsel Alberto Gonzales). ... She also sent copies to all the Deputies.”

30. I was unable to access the 2006 and 2009 NIE reports and have relied upon accounts of them.

31. Bush II’s Cheney “love” had faded by the end of his presidency (Calabresi and Weisskopf 2009).

32. Burke (2005), who evaluated Rice’s proficiency as NSA, judged that by reporting to Bush what he was disposed to hear, she failed to alert him of the dubious quality of the Iraq intelligence he was actually hearing.

33. There is debate over the degree to which the CIA warned the White House of 9/11. Tenet (2004: 151) contends he warned Rice at a 10 July 2001 meeting of the possibility of a “spectacular” al-Qaeda operation. Rice (2011: 67) has replied, “My recollection of the meeting is not very crisp.”

34. The exact history of the Bush administration’s instituting of torture remains unclear. Assistant Attorney General John Yoo in the Office of Legal Council (2001–2003) is identified as having written “torture memos” legitimating CIA and military torture of their captives. He

has been said to have had “strong working relationships” with White House and Pentagon officials (Golden 2005).

35. Gordon and Trainor (2006: 577)—Trainor being a retired general—judged Franks and Rumsfeld’s plans “unrealistic.” Ricks (2006: 3) called them “flawed.”

36. Powell seems disingenuous in this quotation. The State Department certainly knew that Cheney and the Defense Department were presenting suspicious evidence of Saddam’s WMDs.

37. Rice does not discuss the 5 August meeting in her memoirs. Neither Cheney nor Rumsfeld discusses in his memoirs, except *en passant*, the 5 August or any other meeting that led to the 7 September decision to go to the UN. However, Bob Woodward (2004) gives a full account of these meetings. Bush (2010: 238) mentions the 5 August meeting briefly and does not contradict Woodward’s version.

38. Powell reports that Pottery Barn stores did not have a so-called Pottery Barn rule and were angry that the attribution was bandied about in the press. He also claimed that neither he nor Armitage used the term and that it was the media that invented it (C. Powell 2012: 212).

39. In the year prior to World War I’s onset, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC), BP’s forerunner, negotiated with then First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, who sought to modernize Britain’s navy by replacing coal with oil as the British navy’s fuel. He also sought to free the UK from dependence upon foreign oil companies. In exchange for secure oil supplies for its ships, the British government injected new capital into APOC and in doing so acquired a controlling interest in it.

40. The 18–20-million-dollar figure for covert funding of anti-Iranian operations is probably low, as it does not take into account the US intelligence and military “black budget” for secret operations. The size of the black budget is never officially revealed. However, Edward Snowden released information that placed the 2012 US black budget at \$52.8 billion, with roughly \$14.7 billion going to the CIA (Gellman and Miller 2012). During the Clinton administration some CIA money was likely directed against Iran.

41. Gates (2014: 182) is clear that after he replaced Rumsfeld as defense secretary he attempted to keep the US out of overt, direct warring with Iran; Cheney, however, “talked openly” of using “military force” in Iran.

42. General James Cartwright appears to have overseen development of the Stuxnet virus. Problematically, it attacked more than just Iranian installations and as of 2010 had bedeviled over 100,000 computers in 115 countries (Cole 2013b).

43. Ironically, it was the US, during the Shah’s rule in the 1970s, that first suggested to Iran that it initiate a nuclear program (Kinzer 2008)

44. The nickname “fuzzhead” may have been a racial attack upon Gaddafi. A person with “fuzzy” hair is racially classified as “black” in Chad and Libya.

45. Chorin (2012: 2, 4), a former State Department employee, portrays Gaddafi as “a despot” who ran a government with the “markings of a totalitarian state.” “One thing that struck” him during his two year Libyan assignment, he tells readers, “was how many times people ... would take me aside and insist that the ‘US government should know’ what they are dealing with in Gaddafi” (ibid.: 5). According to his own estimates, Chorin worked “12 to 15 hour days” in a “5 star hotel” (ibid.: 5). Such a work environment and schedule would inhibit getting out to systematically discover what people actually believed. McKinney (2012) and Forte (2012) offer less Washington-centric discussions of the Libya revolution. Pargeter (2012) has a useful account.

46. There was only a single major case of human rights abuse during the Gaddafi years. This was a massacre at the Abu Salim prison, where perhaps 1,200 were executed in 1996 (Human Rights Watch 2009).

47. The east/west divide in Libya extends back to ancient times. Starting roughly in 600 BC, eastern Libya or Cyrenaica consisted of Greek cities, while the west, Tripolitania, consisted of Punic cities under Carthaginian domination.

48. The *Telegraph*, a centrist UK newspaper, reported that US and UK Special Ops were in Benghazi and Tobruk by 24 February 2011 (Iqbal 2011).

49. Forte (2012) has rebutted the propaganda claims of the Obama administration, including the claim that Gaddafi armed his soldiers with Viagra.

50. Keenan (2009) discusses AFRICOM's introduction into the Sahara. Maximilian Forte (2012) has analyzed the impact of Gaddafi's opposition to AFRICOM.

51. Hinnebusch and Schmidt (2009) discuss the political economy of Syria and its neoliberal reforms immediately prior to the onset of the rebellion. Landis (2012) has an account of Syrian politics through the beginning of the popular rebellion in 2011. Pipes (1990) provides a conservative background to modern Syrian history. Ajami (2012: 10), originally from Lebanon but currently at the Hoover Institution, offers an Orientalist understanding of government under the Al Assads, dismissing it as "a drab ... dictatorship." Seale (1990: 441) offers an understanding of Hafez al Assad as "an Arab de Gaulle." Assaf (2012) and Sustar and Khalil (2012) analyze the course of the rebellion against Assad. Landis operates a blog, *Syria Comment*, which provides an English-language account of Syrian events.

52. The local protests that began the Syria civil war did not originate in sectarian politics. They arose from a conjuncture of a deteriorating climate and an intensifying contradiction pitting a governing/business class against rural and urban poor. In the new millennium, Bashar and his regime had implemented a number of neoliberal policies "in the service of a new stratum of crony capitalists" (Hinnebusch and Schmidt 2009: 4). These policies impoverished the rural poor, many of whom migrated to cities where, unable to secure employment, they became urban poor. Drought, which was especially grave in 2008–2010, deepened the rural distress (Kelley et al. 2015). Bashar did nothing to address rural and urban impoverishment. Rebellion began among the rural and urban distressed (Assaf 2012).

53. Reports estimated that between early 2012 and the middle of 2013 the CIA had facilitated airlift of at least 3,500 tons of arms from Saudi Arabia and Qatar to the rebels (P. Scott 2013).

54. The *Financial Times* reported that as of mid 2013 Qatar had given Syrian rebels over \$3 billion (Khalaf and Smith 2013).

55. There are five imaginable perpetrators of the Ghouta attack: Syrian government forces, rebels, US military/intelligence units, Israeli military/intelligence units, and coordinated US/Israeli military/intelligence units. The Secretary of State Kerry did not appear to think evidence was necessary to back his assertion of Assad's evil. The document Kerry used to justify charging the Syrian government with Ghouta is a list of unsubstantiated assertions (White House 2013). The *Eurasia Review* reports that Turkish prosecutors have indicted Syrian rebels for seeking the components of chemical weapons (RT 2013). Seymour Hersh (2013: 1) published the news that "American intelligence agencies" knew before the Ghouta incident that the al-Qaeda-affiliated Al Nusra, "had mastered the mechanics of creating sarin and was capable of manufacturing it in quantity." Both the Americans and the Israelis have a penchant for false flag operations. Both have the technology, organization, and finances to perform gas attacks. Sepahpour-Ulrich (2013) explains how the US might have done it in collaboration with Israel. As of this writing, a dense propaganda fog obscures the perpetrators' identity.

56. Some suggest Obama has approached Syria with "extreme caution" (P. Scott 2013) and that the monsterization of Bashar in 2011 and 2012 was relatively restrained. Perhaps this was in part because Obama's officials sought to avoid the swaggering rhetoric of Bush II's security elites, and in part because they hoped, at least through June 2013, to resolve the Syrian problem covertly.

57. Syrian pipeline politics are discussed in Peter Scott (2013) and Dinucci (2013).

58. Dresch (1994) and Al Dawdari (2012) discuss tribe-government interactions in Yemen. The Harak Uprising, which is Sunni-dominated and found in southern Yemen, struggles to secede from the Republic of Yemen and reinstitute South Yemen. It began in 1994, turned to peaceful means to achieve its goal, and appears to be returning to violence. The Houthis

Rebellion, for the most part confined to the extreme northwest of Yemen, is a Shia movement that seeks overthrow of the Yemeni government.

59. Discussion of al-Qaeda in Yemen can be found in Johnsen (2012) and Hull (2011). The former provides a background that leads al-Qaeda from Afghanistan to Yemen. Hull, who was US ambassador to Yemen (2001–2004), provides detailed discussion of the weakening of al-Qaeda following the attack on the USS *Cole*.

60. I have Sephardic and Ashkenazi relatives. Partisans of the Israeli state, on the basis of the discussion of Israel in the text, may label me as either an anti-Semitic or a self-hating Jew. Hurling insults is an illegitimate form of argument.

61. Raviv and Melmen (2012) discuss covert operations in Iran from an Israeli perspective.

## WORLD WARRING 1990–2014

### *The Other Theaters*

“I believe America is exceptional.” (President Barack Obama, speech to the UN General Assembly, 2013)

This chapter continues the work of the last by investigating the US Leviathan’s exercise of violent force in four theaters—Central Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific—to complete the account of how global warring became world warring between 1990 and 2014. As in the previous chapter, the concern is to evaluate the role of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires* in the warring as well as to document the consequences of these hostilities. The chapter ends by contemplating those results; which indicate that the New American Empire is indeed exceptional, though in a way unsuspected by the president. Attention turns first to Central Asia.

#### The Central Asian Theater

Much of Central Asia was part of the USSR until its end in 1990. The region stretched from the Caspian Sea in the west to China in the east and from Afghanistan in the south to Russia in the north. The former Central Asian Soviet Republics were Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Oil had been produced around Baku in Azerbaijan since the 1890s. By the 1980s oil and gas had been discovered in other areas in Central Asia around the Caspian Sea, especially Kazakhstan. US oil company executives came to believe these deposits were considerable. Representative Doug

Bereuter, at a 1998 session of his House of Representatives subcommittee, gushed that “phenomenal resources of oil and natural gas” in Central Asia offered “significant new investment opportunities for a broad range of American companies” (Bereuter 1998: 6–7). So US energy and security elites came to see Central Asia as offering a way to reduce the empire’s energy vulnerabilities by diversifying its supply.

To achieve this goal, US oil companies organized a loose cartel, the Foreign Oil Companies Group (P. Scott 2005), whose members sought to wrest control of the region’s oil from the Russians. The companies—especially Amoco, Unocal, Chevron, and ExxonMobil—participated in a lively “scramble” to sign deals between 1995–1998 (Guan, 2001). Brzezinski, so important in the Carter administration, again became a player. He had participated in the 1950s in missions to the Caspian as a consultant for the Amoco oil company and, early on, had recognized the region’s petroleum resources. As earlier noted, he had mentored Madeleine Albright, and when she rose in Clinton’s foreign policy hierarchy, she took with her Brzezinski’s recognition that there was potential in Central Asian oil (Rutledge 2005: 105). Sandy Berger, who was first Clinton’s deputy NSA (1993–1997) and then his NSA (1997–2001), owned stock in Amoco Oil (Baer 2002: 243–244). He headed an inter-agency group that facilitated government support of US oil companies in their “scramble” for Caspian black gold. Specifically, one CIA officer remembered Berger’s NSC employee Shelia Heslin as working to “carry water” for the Foreign Oil Companies Group (in P. Scott 2005).

Another aspect of the Clinton administration’s Central Asian policy was military. By the mid 1990s the US recognized it needed to increase its violent force in the region (K. Butler 2001). Russian and Chinese firms were already competing for this oil (discussed in Fouskas and Gökay 2005: 147–165). In order to strengthen US military options in this competition, Clinton’s “department of defense established military ties” with Central Asian states, “and US aid began to flow to their armed forces. From there it was a short stop to the deployment of American military advisors, the sale of American arms, and the initiation of joint training operations” (Klare 2004: 1333). CENTCOM was given responsibility for the region.

What a difference a few years can make. As the 1990s wore on, and as oil geologists’ understanding of the Caspian area deepened, it became clear that its energy resources were hardly “phenomenal.” Estimates of oil reserves were whittled down from 200 billion barrels to 40 billion barrels, a pittance compared to the 674 billion barrels estimated in the Middle East. Sarah Emerson, an energy industry specialist, wrote in a report to the new Bush II administration, “The trouble with diversifying outside the Middle East,” for example into Central Asia, “is that it is not where the oil is. One

of the best things for our supply security would be to liberate Iraq” (in Rutledge 2005: 102). We saw in the previous chapter that Bush II’s Vulcans took Emerson’s advice to heart. Nevertheless, acquiring access to 40 billion barrels would still help the New American Empire diversify its oil supply.

A final geographic fact of significance to the global warring that follows: Central Asia was a landlocked area, so moving oil to market was challenging, making “exploitation” of Caspian oil resources “conditional on the timely construction of a network of pipelines” (Rutledge 2005: 103); it being understood that these pipelines had best not run through the US Leviathan’s opponents’ territories, especially Russia and Iran. This has meant that Central Asian wars have actually been fought outside the Caspian Basin in areas suitable for pipelines, which brings readers to global warring in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and then Kosovo.

### **Afghanistan II, 2001–2013: “Digging Bullets Out of the Women’s Bodies”**

Date: February 12, 2010

Place: Paktika Province

Circumstances: In a night raid, U.S. forces attacked a home where 25 people, 3 of them musicians, had gathered for a naming celebration. A newborn was being named that night. One of the musicians went outside to relieve himself. A flashlight shone in his face. Panicked, he ran inside and announced that the Taliban were outside. A police commander, Dawoud, the father of the newborn, ran outside with his weapon. U.S. forces opened fire, killing Officer Dawoud, a pregnant mother, an eighteen year old, Gulaila, and two others.

U.S. / NATO initial response: February 12, 2010—U.S. forces claimed that the women had been killed earlier, in an honor killing. Nato’s initial press release bore the headline: “Joint Force Operating in Gardez Makes Gruesome Discovery.” The release said that after “intelligence confirmed militant activity” in a compound near a village in Paktika province, an international security force entered the compound and engaged “several insurgents” in a firefight. Two “insurgents” were killed, the report said, and after the joint forces entered the compound, they “found the bodies of three women who had been tied up, gagged and killed.”

March 16, 2010—The UN issued a scathing report, stating that the U.S. had killed the women. Villagers told Jerome Starkey, reporting for the *Independent*, that U.S. troops tried to tamper with evidence by digging bullets out of the women’s bodies and out of the walls. (Fragment of narrative of US military operations, Afghanistan. Kelly and Pearson 2010)

The above account taken from reports of American military maneuvers in Afghanistan is laconic. Just the facts: JSOC ninjas on the evening of



12 February 2010 butchered a civilian family in Paktika province, on the border with Pakistan in southeastern Afghanistan. Those killed included a pregnant woman. In an attempt to hide their work, the ninjas dug the bullets out of the women's bodies. Jeremy Scahill, while investigating this incident, asked General Hugh Shelton, the former head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, whether there ought to be an internal review of the killings. The general responded, "I'm sorry that they got killed," but added, "our guys were doing what they thought they should do. . . . I don't think it ought to be investigated; I write it off as one of those damn acts of war" (in Scahill 2013: 347). Why "write it off"? Why not investigate Afghanistan II as a whole? The story begins after 9/11.

### *The Afghanistan War II*

Bush II vowed terrible vengeance on the perpetrators of 9/11. This meant the central questions immediately after 9/11 were who and where the terrorists were.<sup>1</sup> Rather quickly—even though Cheney and Wolfowitz *déliréd* Iraq—it became clear that the attack was the work of al-Qaeda. Equally clearly, al-Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden, were supported in Afghanistan by the Taliban, who were a largely Pashtun group formed in 1994 and led by Mullah Mohammed Omar to bring about an Islamic fundamentalist Caliphate.<sup>2</sup> Rumsfeld (2011: 367) is clear: when "President Bush decided to confront Afghanistan" the Vulcans "wanted to not only destroy al-Qaida in Afghanistan, but to cause al-Qaida and its affiliates everywhere to scramble."

Of course, to get the al-Qaeda in Afghanistan they had to get the Taliban. The Taliban were not one of the mujahideen groups armed and trained by the US during Afghanistan I, though they resembled them and had benefited in at least one way from US activities in Afghanistan I. During Afghanistan I, USAID had awarded a contract to the University of Nebraska at Omaha to produce propaganda books for distribution to *talibs* (students) in madrassas (Koranic schools) to encourage madrassa students to wage jihad against atheist Soviets. The Taliban largely recruited *talibs* out of madrassas, and they too employed the Nebraska textbooks. Lamentably, "once in power" they used them "as instruction manuals in militant Islam" that was directed against American *kuffar* (unbelievers) (Tremblay 2004: 50–51). However, we are getting ahead of the story. Let us return to the end of Afghanistan I.

Following Soviet withdrawal, the 1990s were a time of Afghan warlords competing for control of the state, a competition made bloodier by the CIA's funding and arming of the competitors during Afghanistan I. Eventually, the Taliban defeated its adversaries, with the exception of the

Northern Alliance.<sup>3</sup> Olivier Roy has argued that the Taliban seizure of power “was largely orchestrated by the Pakistani secret service (the ISI) and the oil company Unocal” (in P. Scott 2007: 166). UNOCAL, Union Oil of California (now merged with Chevron), and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), would be big players in events in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the Taliban were allied with the Haqqani Network and Hezb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, whom we met in the section on Afghanistan I. Hekmatyar was a “leading *mujahideen* drug trafficker” and the recipient of approximately a billion dollars in armaments from largely CIA sources (ibid.: 74, 75). The Haqqani Network was led by the Jalaluddin Haqqani and then his son, Sirjuddin Haqqani, who were from the Zadran Pushtun tribe. According to the Council on Foreign Relations, the Haqqani received “significant support from the CIA and from Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI)” (Council on Foreign Relations 2011a). There was a lethal irony in the CIA’s support of Jalaluddin, for it was he who recruited Osama bin Laden to fight in Afghanistan. In 1996, the Taliban and their allies created the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, which controlled 90 percent of Afghanistan, leaving the remaining 10 percent largely under the Northern Alliance’s influence.

A few days after 9/11, the Vulcans knew who had done it and where they were: al-Qaeda, in Afghanistan. An impatient Bush II demanded that the Taliban hand over bin Laden along with other al-Qaeda leaders. The Taliban acquiesced to the idea that bin Laden should leave the country voluntarily, but declined to extradite him in the absence of evidence of his involvement in the attacks. The US refused to provide evidence or even to negotiate. Instead it began Operation Enduring Freedom on 7 October 2001 in alliance with the UK, later joined by France, Australia, Canada, Poland, Germany, and others. This was the start of the global war against terrorism (GWOT). The aim, Wolfowitz said, would be “ending states who sponsor terrorism” (in Diamond 2001).

In response, Mullah Omar, leader of the Taliban at that time, advised that the Taliban, “would just retreat to the mountains” (in Frantz 2001). By the end of 2001 the empire and its allies, employing US airstrikes in support of Northern Alliance ground operations, had routed the Taliban and al-Qaeda; which both did what they had said they would do: they retreated. The US Leviathan’s forces captured all the country’s urban areas, and the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan appeared finished. The UN Security Council established the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in December 2001 to oversee security and train an Afghan National Army. This meant there had to be an Afghan government for the army to be part of.

At this point Hamid Karzai enters the story. A scion of an elite family in the Popalzai Pushtun tribe, he had opposed the Soviets during their

occupation of Afghanistan, during which time he became “a top contact for the CIA and maintained close relations with CIA Director William Casey, Vice President George Bush, and their Pakistani Inter Service Intelligence (ISI) interlocutors” (Madsen 2009: 1). At some point, “Karzai and a number of his brothers moved to the United States under the auspices of the CIA,” where they “continued to serve the agency’s interests, as well as those of the Bush family and their oil friends in negotiating the CentGas deal.” (ibid.). The entrepreneurially minded brothers also opened a string of three restaurants in the US, but it was the CentGas deal that appears crucial to Hamid Karzai’s future fortunes. This was a proposal (in the 1990s) that a dual oil/gas pipeline be built from Turkmenistan, on the Caspian Sea, south through Afghanistan to the Arabian Sea coast in Pakistan and eventually on to India. This pipeline was given the acronym TAPI (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India). UNOCAL sought to be the major mover in this project. If successful, the pipeline would enrich US oil interests and frustrate those of Iran and China. UNOCAL negotiated with the newly installed Taliban regime. Apparently, “according to Afghan, Iranian, and Turkish government sources, Hamid Karzai” during this time “was a top adviser to ... UNOCAL Corporation” (ibid.). Restaurateur, CIA asset, and oilman, Karzai was America’s man in Afghanistan.

At a conference in Bonn in December 2001, the US assured Karzai’s selection to head the Afghan Interim Administration. This was after a *loya jirga* (grand council or assembly) had been legitimated as the Afghan Transitional Administration in Kabul in June 2002. In the national elections of 2004, Karzai was elected president of the new permanent Afghan government, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. In 2003 NATO assumed leadership of ISAF and, at its height, included troops from forty-three countries, though the US supplied by far the most soldiers. At the end of 2002, many in Washington believed Bush II “had smashed the Taliban and al-Qaeda” (Isikoff and Corn 2006: 22), though they knew Osama bin Laden had slipped away in the mountains of Tora Bora.

“Smashed”? Hardly! Neither the Taliban nor al-Qaeda had been defeated. They were where they said they would be, in the mountains. (The location of these mountains is discussed in the following section on Pakistan.) By the spring of 2003, Mullah Omar, assisted by the ISI, had reorganized the Taliban movement and launched an insurgency against the Afghan government and NATO forces (Rashid 2012: 31). US strategy at this time might be termed “neo-feudal” because it was to rearm “the warlords who ruled the provinces like medieval barons” (ibid.: 95).

Though outnumbered and poorly armed, the Taliban and its allies instituted guerilla warfare against the “medieval barons” with their *amrikaayyi* (American) partners from 2003 through 2005, raiding and ambushing in

the countryside while concentrating suicide attacks upon urban areas. The “T-men” (or occasionally “sandniggers”), as they were called in American slang, were effective. At the same time that the Iraq was snowballing into fiasco in 2006 and 2007, this Taliban offensive enjoyed a major upswing (described in Rashid 2008: chap. 14), which succeeded in re-establishing the T-Men’s control over large swaths of rural southern and eastern Afghanistan.

NATO, under US direction, responded in 2006 by increasing troops and weaponry for operations, especially in southern and eastern regions. The fierce fighting that occurred between 2006 and 2009 did not go especially well for the US Leviathan. By 2008, the International Council on Security and Development, a Paris-based research group, estimated that 72 percent of Afghanistan was under Taliban control (Alexander 2008). Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Mike Mullen said the situation in Afghanistan was “precarious and urgent” (in DeYoung and Weisman 2008). When the eight years of the Bush II presidency finally ended on 20 January 2009, Afghanistan became Obama’s problem. The new president, soon to win the Nobel Peace prize, embraced it as “the war we must win” (Obama 2008).

Obama’s choice to lead the “must win” war was Stanley McChrystal, fresh from Iraq operations as JSOC head with a reputation, according to *Newsweek*, as “a snake eating rebel, a ‘Jedi’ commander” (Hastings 2010).<sup>5</sup> One of the “snake eating rebel’s” first tasks was bureaucratic: he was to write a report outlining the way forward in Afghanistan. He began this report, dated August 2009, by pronouncing the situation in Afghanistan “serious” and “deteriorating” (McChrystal 2009: 1-1), thereby generating a fine procedural hermeneutic puzzle for US commanders. Perceptually they recognized their position in Afghanistan to be “precarious and urgent” as well as serious and deteriorating.

In his report, McChrystal proceeded to procedurally solve the puzzle by offering what some military humorists call a “Self-Licking Ice-Cream Cone,” that is, a military strategy that exists to justify itself. America could triumph, McChrystal judged, with an “integrated civilian-military counter-insurgency campaign” that would require a surge of an additional 40,000 troops (ibid.). This was a reiteration of Petraeus’s COIN, which was unsurprising because McChrystal was Petraeus’s sponsor. McChrystal’s solution immediately ignited fierce hermeneutic politics among Obama’s new security elite team.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates—a holdover from the Bush II administration, where he had replaced Rumsfeld—provides the fullest account of the hermeneutic politics over the decision to surge in Afghanistan (2014: 335–387). Some in the Obama White House feared that the military was attempting to “jam” (gang up on and force) the new president to increase

global warring in Afghanistan. Vice President Biden, NSA James Jones, US Ambassador Karl Eikenberry in Kabul, and a fair number of the NSC and White House staff were against it. However, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who was “always siding with the generals” (Rashid 2012: 92) and General Petraeus, then head of CENTCOM, were for it. Eikenberry’s opposition to the counterinsurgency strategy was weighty. He had been a lieutenant general prior to becoming the ambassador to Afghanistan, where he had served two tours of duty, so he had a greater grasp of Afghan realities than did McChrystal. The Bush II administration holdover Gates favored a middle position, arguing for a 30,000-troop surge. Obama made what Gates called a “tough” decision and sided with his defense secretary (Gates 2014: 384).

Remember the two faces of the Petraeusian COIN: on the one hand, the nice-guy face tried to pacify civilians by helping them; on the other, there stared the creepy-guy face of kinetic killers. McChrystal, of course, had been the JSOC commander during much of Bush’s administration, and what JSOC had specialized in then, especially in Iraq, was targeted killings—kicking down doors, terrorizing families, and assassinating them. Gareth Porter, a historian who was in Afghanistan during much of McChrystal’s tenure, judged the general “was absolutely unqualified to do anything except carry out targeted killing. That’s all he had done for five years from 2003 to 2008” (in Scahill 2013: 331).

Consequently, Special Operations ninja teams increased from four to nineteen during his Afghanistan command. These teams, called “meat eaters” because they were used for the most violent operations, were conducting around twenty raids a month by May 2009, which increased to ninety a month by that November. A fair number of mid-level Taliban leaders were killed, as were some al-Qaeda. Murdering of innocent victims was common. In the first four months of 2010 civilian deaths rose 76 percent compared to the same months in 2009 (Hastings 2010). This was due in some measure to intelligence hitches. Meat eaters relied on Afghan informants who took the liberty of settling scores with their opponents, who might well not be Taliban. The JSOC team that dug the bullets out of the pregnant women’s bodies had probably been duped in such a manner. The head of the butchered family was a government police official.

Drones were introduced into the fight against the Taliban a bit earlier than the surge, during which their operation increased. One military expert said they were “incredibly helpful” in COIN operations, and McChrystal declared them “extraordinarily effective” in gathering the intelligence needed for COIN (Drew 2010). The US was reported to have some two hundred armed drones at that time, and over 1,200 drone strikes were recorded between 2008 and 2012 (Woods and Ross 2012). As in Yemen,

these were used for targeted assassinations of Taliban leaders. Just like JSOC's raids, they tended to harm civilians. US officials from the president on down have claimed that drone raids are precise and cause fewer civilian casualties. However, one study using classified military data between mid 2010 and mid 2011 found drone strikes to be ten times more deadly to Afghan civilians than strikes by fighter jets (Ackerman 2013).

Did the surge work? McChrystal was relieved of command 23 June 2010, ostensibly for naughty remarks he and his staff made about Obama's security elites, which were reported by Michael Hastings (2010) in *Rolling Stone* magazine.<sup>6</sup> He was replaced by Petraeus, who argued in the spring of 2011 that the surge was a success because, as he told the *New York Times*, "the momentum of the Taliban" was "halted in much of the country and reversed in some areas" (in Gall 2011). Incorrect!

During the surge, there was "a notable rise in support for the Taliban and a record number of US soldiers killed" (Scahill 2013: 331). There were more insurgent attacks in 2010 than in any other year since the Taliban insurgency had begun. By 2009–2010, according to Rashid (2012: 116), "many Afghans and Western diplomats realized that the U.S. military surge was not working, and that the Taliban were growing stronger and spreading into every corner of the country." Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Davis, who made an inspection tour in 2011, reported, "I heard many stories of how insurgents controlled virtually every piece of land beyond eyeshot of a US or ... ISAF base" (Davis 2012).<sup>7</sup> The problem became especially acute in and around Kabul, the capital: "Large areas (including towns) were under Taliban control, and development work had come to a standstill" (Rashid 2012: 107). At the time of the McChrystal debacle, Obama told his Defense secretary: "I don't have a sense it's going well in Afghanistan. He [McChrystal] doesn't seem to be making progress" (Gates 2014: 488). After a decade of war against the Taliban, the US was not "making progress."<sup>8</sup>

On 19 November 2010 at a NATO summit meeting in Lisbon, a decision was taken to withdraw NATO forces by 2014. The US military does not include the term "retreat" in its vocabulary but rather speaks of "tactical retrograde." In June 2011, the president announced US troop withdrawal was to begin in the next few months. Of course, Obama announced the drawdown would proceed from a "position of strength" (in CNN Wire Staff 2011), but the reality was different. After a decade of fighting against a far smaller, vastly less well-armed enemy, the New American Empire had failed to defeat its foe. Consequently, the Obama administration did what the Bush II administration had done earlier in Iraq: it began tactical retrograde, or more precisely, it once again cut and ran. Consider the role of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délirés* that put Obama's regime into this position.

*Anti-terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délires*: Immediately after 9/11, Bush II declared the GWOT, posing a hermeneutic puzzle: Who did it, and where were they? Very soon they perceived it was terrorists who had done it—Osama bin Laden’s al-Qaeda—and they were in Afghanistan. Bush II demanded to be given Osama, “dead or alive” (“Transcript of President Bush’s Address” 2001). When the Taliban refused to give bin Laden up either “dead or alive,” they too were perceived as enemy terrorists.

For Americans, 9/11 was a terrible shock. War had always been elsewhere. But now it was on Wall Street, the iconic heart of US global capitalism, and the towers crumbling in flames and smoke were metonyms of that capitalism’s vulnerability. That vulnerability was replayed over and over again as the world watched on television the towers fall repeatedly in each new news bulletin. Bush II and his senior advisors were Vulcans, tough guys dedicated to aggressively providing for the national security. They had failed, and to a handful of terrorists at that. Bush II is very clear about this, recalling in his memoirs that “we would fight the war on terror on the offense, and the first battlefield would be Afghanistan” (2010: 190). So procedurally, Shultzian Permission having been granted because the US homeland had been attacked, the Vulcans solved their hermeneutic puzzle by doing what the relevant anti-terrorism public *délire* instructed them to do: they took the offensive against Afghanistan. It mattered little that the Taliban had nothing to do with 9/11. Above all, then, Afghanistan II was a string of events that resulted from Security Elites 3.0’s implementation of the anti-terrorist iteration of the global domination public *délire*. But was Afghanistan II only about terrorism?

During the 1990s Afghanistan had become a player in the Central Asian pipeline competition, which pitted the Iranians, Russians, and Chinese against the Americans. An important component of this competition concerned how Turkmenistan’s abundant natural gas would be pumped to markets. Some of this gas flowed to Russia through old Soviet-era pipelines. The Chinese proposed a Central Asia–China pipeline that would pass through Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan to Xinjiang, China. Such a pipeline challenged Western predominance in the energy market. It will be recalled that the Clinton administration had proposed an alternative, the TAPI dual oil/gas line (Rashid 2010: chaps. 12 and 13). If successful it would enrich US petroleum interests, frustrating those of Russia, Iran, and China. Certain US officials who had helped the Taliban in the mid 1990s were now negotiating with them to support the pipeline. Unfortunately, “Unocal unsuccessfully tried to induce the Taliban as late as last summer into making a deal for a major oil pipeline across the country. When the talks broke off, there were rumblings in Washington that the Taliban would have to make way for a more pliable government” (Shor 2001).

Unable to secure Taliban backing for the pipeline, UNOCAL lobbied the US government to aid its search for a way to proceed with its project. The new Bush II administration—which, as earlier noted, was full of oilmen and an oil woman (Rice)—was sympathetic and in early 2001 discussed plans to convince “the Taliban in Afghanistan to accept construction of an American (Unocal) pipeline” (Phillips 2006: 83). The Taliban remained recalcitrant. Consequently, according to Chalmers Johnson (2005: 176), “Support for this [UNOCAL] enterprise appears to have been a major consideration in the Bush administration’s decision to attack Afghanistan.” In 2007, US Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher certainly supported Johnson’s claim when he said, “One of our goals is to stabilize Afghanistan, so it can become a conduit and a hub between South and Central Asia so that energy can flow to the south” (in Blum 2012).

It is unclear whether support for the TAPI pipeline was a “major consideration” in the decision to attack Afghanistan in 2001. As noted, 9/11 was a terrible shock to the (US imperial) system, and because it had happened on the Vulcans’ watch, they *had* to punish the terrorists. Thus understood, the fight against terrorism was clearly a key reason for attacking Afghanistan. Further, there were geopolitical considerations. Victory in Afghanistan could give the US a military presence on China’s western border; contributing to the surrounding of China with American military installations, a repetition of the Cold War strategy of militarily encircling the Soviet Union. Moreover, Afghanistan also shares a border with Russia, so establishment of US bases in Afghanistan could have the same effects vis-à-vis that country, aiding then Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld’s policy of re-surrounding Russia to prevent its re-emergence as a superpower.

Nevertheless, it is clear that had the TAPI pipeline been constructed, it would have helped the New American Empire control oil by establishing a power over the distribution of petroleum products to market. As the oil-control public *délire* instructs, if it is perceived that war is necessary to maintain, establish, or increase control over petroleum products, then proceed to war. The Bush II administration—particularly its many oilmen informed of the situation by Karzai and UNOCAL officials—perceived that if they went to war in Afghanistan, they could remove the Taliban obstacle to the TAPI pipeline and increase US control over petroleum. They went to war. Plausibly, implementation of the oil-control public *délire* was a “consideration” in the commencement of Afghanistan II. After all, it killed several birds with one stone—revenge on the terrorists and assistance in maintaining the empire’s “energy security” being two of those birds.

But it was a pipe(line) dream. The presence of global warring throughout Afghanistan made it impossible to construct a pipeline there. On 13



December 2009 President Hujin Tao of China opened the Central Asia–China pipeline (Lomov 2009), revealing how uncompetitive the US had become by being bogged down in a war it fought, at least in part, to secure its own pipeline.

The global warring of Afghanistan II occurred during the perfect storm of intensifying and coalescing contradiction, Shultzian Permission was granted immediately on discovery that 9/11 was authored from Afghanistan, and the ensuing hostilities were implementations of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*—evidence consistent with the global warring theory.

So, since 2001 the US has been involved in indirect and direct, overt global warring in Afghanistan. It has utilized the most sophisticated drone technology, together with COIN tactics, to advance this fighting, causing many civilian casualties, but all for naught. The Taliban were undefeated as of 2014. No pipeline was built. Recall that Rumsfeld had said that invasion of Afghanistan was supposed to “destroy” al-Qaeda there and elsewhere. Certainly there have been bad moments for al-Qaeda, including bin Laden’s assassination. But although al-Qaeda may have been weakened, it was far from destroyed. Today its affiliates flourish throughout the world. Perhaps this is because the COIN warfare increased the number of terrorists opposing the US and its allies. The JSOC ninjas flitting through Afghan nightscapes and cutting bullets out of pregnant corpses were a fine marketing tool for all varieties of terrorists. It is time to bring Pakistan into the narrative.

### **Pakistan, 2001–2013: The Ally That Was the Enemy**

Where did the Taliban and their allies go after the 2001 US offensive? Peter Dale Scott (2007: 135) reported that “in June 2002, Pakistani national police estimated” that some 10,000 Afghan Taliban cadres and followers and about 5,000 al Qaeda fighters were hiding in Pakistan, “with the full support of intelligence authorities, as well as religious and tribal groups.” This figure of 15,000 partisans probably represents a majority of Taliban and al-Qaeda soldiers. Most of the mujahideen were either in the mountains of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in Northwest Pakistan, in Baluchistan, or in Pakistan’s portion of Kashmir. During Afghanistan II, the FATA would become critical for the Taliban’s and its allies’ operations. This territory on Afghanistan’s eastern border consists of seven tribal areas—Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, North Waziristan, and South Waziristan—and the six frontier regions of Peshawar, Kohat, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Tank, and Dera Ismail Khan. For Taliban and al-Qaeda, it was a

safe area where US troops could not get at refugees. At the hostilities' onset, then, the US Leviathan was fighting in a country where, for the most part, the enemy was absent. The implications of the preceding for Pakistan are explored below.<sup>9</sup>

Since its independence in 1947, Pakistan had generally been a US government client, though the relationship had its ups and downs. The US paid strategic rent in military and economic assistance in exchange for support during the Cold War. Washington was grateful for this backing because India, Pakistan's powerful neighbor, expressed affection for the Soviets. Pakistan's assistance was especially important during Afghanistan I (1979–1988), when the US used it as what security elites termed a “support platform” from which to manage its indirect, covert global warring against the Bear.

Afterward, during the 1990s, relations between Pakistan and the US deteriorated. Islamabad developed nuclear weapons, and Washington began to warm up toward India, which after all was vastly more important than Pakistan and in need of new friends now that its Soviet ally was no more. By 2001, Pakistan was under US economic embargo and had stopped receiving American economic and military assistance.

Everything changed when Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda was recognized as the attacker of the Twin Towers. It was once again urgent that Pakistan serve as a support platform for American *délives*. So, according to the then President of Pakistan Pervez Musharraf, his country was told by Richard Armitage, Colin Powell's deputy secretary, that it must join the GWOT or be bombed “back to the Stone Age.” Musharraf thought it a “very rude remark” (in Schorn 2006: 1), he confided to his interviewer on the television program in which he revealed Armitage's ultimatum. But he got the message, and in exchange for billions of dollars largely allotted to the Pakistan military, the US has had Pakistan as an ally in its global warring against Afghanistan ever since.

### *The Friend That Was the “Greatest Threat”*

According to a Center for Strategic and International Studies report, there have been six elements of Pakistani assistance to the New American Empire during Afghanistan II:

First, Pakistan allowed the United States to fly sorties from the south over Pakistani airspace into Afghanistan—vital because of Iran's unwillingness to open its airspace to U.S. planes. Second, Islamabad granted U.S. troops access to a handful of its military bases, although insisting that the bases should not be used for offensive operations. Third, tens of thousands of Pakistani troops provided force protection for those bases and for U.S. ships in the Indian Ocean.

Fourth, Pakistan provided logistical support for the U.S. war effort in Afghanistan, including vast amounts of fuel for coalition aircraft and port access for the delivery of vital supplies. Fifth, the Pakistani military deployed 80,000 soldiers to its western border in a mostly unsuccessful effort to capture or kill Al Qaeda and Taliban leaders fleeing Afghanistan. And sixth, Islamabad provided Washington with access to Pakistani intelligence assets in Afghanistan and Pakistan. (C. Cohen 2007: 3)

However, maybe Armitage should have been more polite, because Pakistan turned out to have been the ally from Hell, as the following text makes clear.

The Pakistani military and its intelligence agency, the ISI, enjoy substantial autonomy vis-à-vis other government branches and since independence have staged five coups that led to the installation of military dictatorships. They have considerable control over foreign affairs, regardless of whether the government is civilian or military, as it is fixated upon thwarting its perceived enemy, India. Pakistani security elites further reckon that in order to frustrate Indian designs, it is vital that Pakistan have influence in Afghanistan so the latter can be used as a buffer against Indian hostile intentions. Critically, creation and maintenance of proxy pro-Pakistani military forces in Afghanistan has been the means the military and ISI use to achieve this influence.

The Afghan Taliban were a project of the ISI. Mullah Dadullah Akhund, a senior Taliban military commander under Mullah Omar, reorganized the insurgents in Pakistan after the debacle of 2001. The ISI assisted him with financial resources, equipment, and training; then helped insert the mujahideen back into Afghanistan in 2003; and thereafter helped Mullah Barador, who took over as Mullah Omar's deputy, find safe havens for his guerillas after operations against NATO forces. Those on the New American Empire's side knew of these safe havens. Karzai had warned the US and NATO that Pakistan was accommodating al-Qaeda and the Taliban, lamenting, "Year after year, day after day, we have said the fighting against terrorism is not in the villages of Afghanistan ... [but] is in the safe-havens" (in Rashid 2012: 10). Obama understood this, declaring on the campaign trail even before his election that "the greatest threat to our security" in Afghanistan "lies in the tribal regions of Pakistan," by which he meant the FATA (ibid.: 43). Pakistan, then, was an ally that was not only an enemy, but the enemy posing the "greatest threat."

*Global Warring in Pakistan, 2001–2013*: Engagement of the enemy lurking in the FATA led to the two major forms of global warring within Pakistan. The first of these is what journalists have come to call the "drone war." To address the "greatest threat," Obama choose to increase the use

of drones that were used to kill al-Qaeda and Taliban leadership largely in the FATA, seeking to eliminate it as a refuge and staging area. Further, the president allowed the CIA to use a “signature strike” policy to decide upon drone operations.

Under this policy it was *not* necessary to know that a target to be attacked actually consisted of “terrorists.” Rather, a target could be hit if it exhibited certain “signatures” of one containing terrorists. One such signature was that the target contained “military-aged males,” regardless of whether these were or were not terrorists (Scahill 2013: 249). Note that “the military slang for a man killed by a drone strike is ‘bug splat,’ since viewing the body through a grainy-green video image gives the sense of an insect being crushed” (Hastings 2012); which means that a signature of Obama’s Afghanistan policy was putting US soldiers in the business of making “bug splats” from “bugs” that might or might not be the enemy.

According to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism (Woods 2001), there were well over 300 drone strikes between 2004 and 2011, the majority of them ordered by Obama. They killed an estimated 2,300 people (*ibid.*). Initially the strikes were covert, but their secrecy was revealed because of their tendency to kill just one combatant for every ten civilians killed, according to a Brookings Institution account (Byman 2009).

These strikes provoked hermeneutic politics among US security elites and ordinary Americans. On one side were those who perceived them as immoral and illegal. On the other were a handful of security elites, who understood them to be a cost-effective, efficient way to make bug splats. Among the Pakistani—elite and otherwise—perceptions were more intimate, of kin pulped by Hellfire rockets. John O. Brennan, Obama’s chief counterterrorism adviser (2009–2013), insisted that in the year 2011 the drones had killed only terrorists, no civilians (Shane 2011). Such wrong claims “incensed” Pakistanis scraping up the splats of their loved ones (Rashid 2012: 173). Nevertheless, in the hermeneutic politics over drone use those Security Elites 3.0 who favored drone utilization won, in large measure because President Obama, the person with the authority force resource to approve them, did so. On 23 May 2013, during an address at the National Defense University, the president said he had authorized escalation of drone warfare because it was “efficient,” “legal,” and “moral” (Obama 2013). The Naval Post Graduate School in Monterrey, California, hired a philosopher to argue their morality (R. Carroll 2012).

A second form of US global warring in the FATA centered on what actually were three enemies of the New American Empire in this region—two we know of, al-Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban—and a third, the Pakistan Taliban, discussed below. After US forces drove al-Qaeda and the Afghan Taliban into the FATA, and as part of Islamabad’s earlier described

agreement with the US, Pakistan sent its army into the FATA to finish the refugee insurgents in July of 2002.

But once the military action started in South Waziristan a number of Waziri sub-tribes took it as an attempt to subjugate them. Attempts to persuade them into handing over the foreign militants failed, and with an apparently mishandling by the authorities, the security campaign against suspected Al Qaeda militants turned into an undeclared war between the Pakistani military and the rebel tribesmen. (Abbas 2004)

Out of these hostilities there emerged the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (i.e., the Pakistan Taliban) under Baitullah Mehsud. They were allied with the Afghan Taliban, with whom they nevertheless had their differences. The Pakistan Taliban sought to overturn the Pakistan state; the Afghan Taliban were indifferent to this goal. The Pakistan Taliban were more closely allied with al-Qaeda than the Afghan Taliban, who never took an oath of allegiance to al-Qaeda. The Pakistan Taliban shared with al-Qaeda a commitment to global jihad and were willing to train jihadis to attack the US. The Afghan Taliban were nationalists and indifferent to calls for global jihad. Pakistan Taliban expansion has been especially strong in Bajaur and South Waziristan in the FATA and in Swat, the “Switzerland” of Pakistan. Rashid (2012: 26) has said that by 2011 the Pakistan Taliban were “much more dangerous” than the Afghan Taliban.

Facing three enemies in the FATA, the US obliged Pakistan to live up to the terms of its agreement with the US and send its army to rid this area of these foes. In 2004, eighty thousand Pakistani troops invaded the FATA. Between 2004 and 2006 the Pakistani army invaded the FATA eight more times. During these invasions the Pakistani army did not fight especially hard to defeat the insurgents, who were often allowed to discreetly withdraw. The results of these incursions were inconclusive. The army invaded and the various Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters melted into the hills; then the army left, and everybody returned. The inability to root out opponents in the rugged FATA was an important reason for the use of drones; one of which killed Baitullah Mehsud. Nevertheless, neither drones nor invasions were able to “alter the balance of power in the FATA, where the Taliban and al-Qaeda still ruled” (Rashid 2012: 45).

In sum, the US warred in Pakistan in support of its Afghanistan global war. Its warring was intended to eliminate the FATA safe haven. On the one hand, the empire directly warred with drones, at first covertly and then overtly, seeking to decapitate their opponents’ organizations by killing their commanders. On the other hand, it warred indirectly by using the Pakistani army as its proxy to go in with boots on the ground and finish off these opponents. As in Afghanistan, both forms of warring failed. What role, if any, did the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires* have in these hostilities?

*The Anti-terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délires*: US warring in Pakistan and Afghanistan conjoined two countries in a single conflict. The Obama administration seemed to realize this in January 2009 when it appointed Richard Holbrooke its special envoy to both Afghanistan and Pakistan, charged with dealing comprehensively with both nations at the same time. Thereafter, Obama security elites would speak of the “AfPak” situation (Prados 2009). Another way to say it is that ultimately, the US Leviathan fought in Pakistan as part of its fighting in Afghanistan. Hence it fought in Pakistan to eliminate terrorists and to help make possible the TAPI pipeline that would run through both Afghanistan and Pakistan. So it makes sense to understand the two public *délires* as having the same relevance to the fighting in Pakistan as they had in Afghanistan.

The global warring in Pakistan occurred during the intensification and coalescence of the cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions. Shultzian Permission was granted because efforts to negotiate with insurgents in the FATA were unsuccessful—they were already engaged in anti-US hostilities. The fighting, as an extension of that in Afghanistan, involved implementation of the oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délires*—information consistent with the global warring theory.

What were the consequences of these hostilities? Three seem crucial. First, the warring, taking place in a context of Pakistan being both enemy and friend, strained US-Pakistan relations. The Pakistan military and ISI supported the Afghan Taliban, so they could not trust the US. Imperial Security Elites 3.0 could not trust Islamabad’s Pakistani counterparts for the same reason. Pakistanis of all stripes, like Afghans, were appalled at the drone campaign. Sometimes the ISI was informed of drone attacks; at other times it was not. At one point the ISI and the CIA were “fighting in public,” and by fall of 2011 relations between Pakistan and the US appeared to be “utterly breaking down” (Rashid 2012: 57, 160). At issue was whether the US’s global warring in Pakistan would cause it to lose a client, perhaps to a rapidly rising China. All this suggested another place was threatening the bonds of empire.

Second, the warring grew terrorists rather than diminishing them. Prior to the AfPak wars there was no Pakistan Taliban. By 2009 it was a powerful force conducting operations throughout Pakistan and Afghanistan, and plotting to conduct them in the US. Equally, the drone wars seem to have strengthened both the Pakistan and Afghan Taliban. The tactic of turning mid-level commanders into bug splats was never likely to win the AfPak wars. Rather, killing insurgents and civilians in ways that seemed cowardly and immoral to their kin created recruits for a Taliban motivated to seek revenge. To the degree that these tactics were part of a strategy of COIN warfare, they suggest the ineffectiveness of such tactics. After all,

operations that leave more enemies on the field after hostilities are not winners.

Third, the goal of doing something in a war is to help win it. But when Washington's operations in Pakistan failed to reverse the situation in Afghanistan, the empire went into tactical retrograde, leaving more "terrorists" in the field after 9/11 than there had been before it. All in all, US military operations in Pakistan in support of its Afghan adventures have been detrimental to the US Leviathan.

It is time to consider a final Central Asian war that occurred outside of the region, in the Balkans—that in Kosovo.

### Kosovo 1998–1999: "Breaking Up Is Hard to Do"?

The 1960s heartthrob Neil Sedaka had a hit song entitled "Breaking Up is Hard to Do." The discussion of the Kosovo War, which was part of the Balkan Wars of the 1990s, is in part an inquiry into whether the "breaking up" of Yugoslavia was "hard to do." The investigation begins by observing that between 1991 and 2001 in the territory of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, global warring was constant. Two different phases of conflict might be distinguished.

A first phase of warring involved conflicts to the north and west of Serbia: the Slovenian War (1991), the Croatian War (1991–1995), and the Bosnian Wars (1992–1995) that pitted Serbia, led by Slobodan Milošević, against the breakaway territories of Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia. These were over by 1995 and, in the cases of Croatia and Bosnia, ended in agreements reached at the Dayton Conference (November–December 1995). The result was that the rebellious provinces became independent states. Thereafter, the second phase of fighting escalated to the south, becoming the Kosovo War (1998–1999) that resulted in the NATO bombing of Serbia (1999), and finally the Macedonia conflict (2001). The New American Empire, together with its NATO allies, participated in both phases of warring, the US conducting extensive bombing operations against Serbia. These wars were a "re-balkanization" that broke the Socialist Federal Republic up into micro-polities. The following discussion covers different explanations of these Balkan Wars, especially Kosovo, leading to a verdict on whether breaking up was hard to do.<sup>10</sup>

#### *Explaining the Balkan Wars*

Explanations of the Balkan Wars seem to fall into two categories. Some find their causes *within* ex-Yugoslavia itself. For example, a number of au-

thors have stressed ethnic animosity. Robert Kaplan's *The Coming Anarchy* (2001) was important in this regard, arguing that in Yugoslavia and elsewhere, the fall of the Soviet Union, together with the weakening of strong socialist governments, led to a rekindling of pre-existing ethnic hatreds that in turn sparked ethnic civil war. Another such approach understood the wars primarily as a result of the rise of intense nationalisms within the different provinces of the former Yugoslavia. When the fall of the USSR ignited these nationalisms, Slovenes, Kosovars, Croatians, and Serbians demanded national sovereignty.

A second approach has emphasized factors that were *external* to the former Yugoslavia. The US and NATO were key external actors in the warring. This perspective has emphasized the geopolitical readjustments that were consequences of the USSR's fall. The Bear's demise meant that its Eastern European post-World War II acquisitions were "free" to choose their destiny. However, from the vantage of the West these newly "liberated" states needed to be un-liberated, that is, incorporated into the New American Empire. This was done in part by expanding NATO eastward, allowing former satellite states to join the European Union, and promoting private and public investment in Eastern European enterprise. Most of the former Soviet Eastern European client states quickly got with the program and joined the EU, became NATO members, and surrendered to neoliberalization. What the US Leviathan was doing to Eastern Europe in the 1990s, the Soviets had done to it in the late 1940s. The dominos were falling to the benefit of Washington, and Old Molotov must have been spinning in his grave.

Yugoslavia, and especially Serbia, proved to be the holdout—the domino that would not fall. Noam Chomsky's (2006: 1) account of the Balkan civil wars concluded that "the real purpose of the war" was to deal with Serbia, which "was not carrying out the required social and economic reforms, meaning it was the last corner of Europe which had not subordinated itself to the US-run neoliberal programs, so therefore it had to be eliminated." Chomsky's opinion might be dismissed as radical. However, Vjeran Pavlakovic (2005 1), a European liberal, supports Chomsky, asserting that Serbia after 1989 did not choose "democratization and economic liberalization," and this noncompliance in the geopolitics of post-Soviet Eastern Europe had to be eliminated.

The US, in concert with its Western European clients, practiced this elimination by using NGOs in what some have called "color revolutions" to whip up separatist, nationalist sentiments in Yugoslavia's different provinces (Johnstone 1998), and by using the IMF to wreak havoc in their economies, further fueling demands for independence.<sup>11</sup> In November 1990 the US Congress passed the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act,



cutting US aid to any province of Yugoslavia that did not declare independence within six months. Reacting to this assault on sovereignty, Milošević organized a new Communist Party in November 1990 to defend a unified Yugoslavia, thereby preparing for war. Washington answered Milošević with a total economic embargo, devastating the economy with 70 percent unemployment and hyperinflation. Unsurprisingly, under these conditions Slovenia (1991), Croatia (1991), and Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992) declared independence. Milošević tried militarily to reverse this, and ugly fighting followed—the siege of Sarajevo, the massacre at Srebrenica. In 1992 the UN sent troops in and the US bombed Serbia (30 August–20 September 1995). This led to the Dayton Peace Accords (1995) and occupation by sixty thousand NATO troops, crowning the success of the re-balkanization policy by guaranteeing the sovereignty of the new micro-states like Croatia, Bosnia, and Slovenia, making them virtual wards of the New American Empire. Sedaka seems to have had it wrong. Breaking up was a piece of cake—when the New American Empire, with a little help from its NATO clients, did the job.

A second external explanation of the Balkan Wars has to do with US and European security elites' solution of the hermeneutic puzzle of the ugliness of the fighting in these Balkan Wars. The solution of the puzzle turned upon a perceptual interpretation of Serbian leadership. Serb leaders—especially Slobodan Milošević, president of Serbia, and Radovan Karadžić, head of the Serbian portion of Bosnia—were constructed as monster-alterities, promoters of ethnic cleansing, genocide, and terrorism that grossly violated human rights. Liberal hawks demanded the “benign imperialism” (the phrase is Kaldor's [1999]) of military intervention against Serbia, whose leaders were so appalling. In this explanation, the US's and its clients' implementation of a liberal hawk iteration of the anti-terrorist hermeneutic was an external cause of the wars.

A problem with this explanation, at least *vis-à-vis* the attack on Kosovo, is raised by David Halberstam, who wrote so perceptively on the Vietnam War. Having also examined the Balkan Wars, he observed that “the last thing” Clinton wanted prior to the Kosovo conflict was further “military intervention in the Balkans” (Halberstam 2001: 397).<sup>12</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell was against it. William Cohen, Clinton's secretary of defense, was against it. His NATO clients were “unsure” about it (*ibid.*). What, then, were the hermeneutic politics that led to the conflict when such powerful security elites were inclined to forgo it?

At this juncture Kosovo enters the narrative. In 1998 the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was using guerilla tactics to vigorously attack Serbian interests in Kosovo, and the Serbs were responding with great energy. According to William Walker, the American head of the Kosovo Verification

Mission, organized by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the Serbians inflicted an “unspeakable atrocity” on Kosovars at Račak on 15 January 1999 (in Rowland 1999); in Walker’s interpretation it reached the level of “a crime against humanity” (Halberstam 2001: 410). The Račak incident led to a peace conference at Rambouillet in France (6 February 1999), which failed. General Wesley Clark, Supreme Allied Commander in Europe (SACEUR) of US forces, told Milošević that if he did not withdraw from Kosovo, NATO would “systematically attack, disrupt, degrade, and devastate” Serbia with bombing (in Norris 2005: 5). Peaceful measures had been taken to achieve US goals, but Milošević stood his ground.

Consequently, as the next section shows, Shultzian Permission was granted, and a month and a half after Rambouillet, the US and its allies were “systematically” bombing Serbia. This continued for seventy-eight days, after which Serb forces withdrew from Kosovo. Why did Clinton go to war in Kosovo when it was the “last thing” he wanted? I believe that the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délire*s, containing elements of the preceding four explanations, help answer this question. Let us now look more closely at the events leading up to implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire*, which will bring us to the oil-control public *délire*.

*The Anti-Terrorist Public Délire*: It was earlier suggested that US participation in the Kosovo War was a case of US application of the anti-terrorist public *délire*. Let us examine more closely the case for this understanding by examining the actors involved in it. Strobe Talbott, who was close to President Clinton and became, as deputy secretary of state, an important formulator of his foreign policy, recalled that the Kosovo War occurred because, “the West was reiterating a principle that had been taking shape for several years: the government of individual states is not absolute; a national government that systematically and massively abuses its own citizens loses its right to govern” (Talbott and Chanda, 2001: x). How did security elites like Talbott know this? They knew it because hermeneuts told them so. The influential British political commentator Mary Kaldor (1993: 96) told them the Balkan Wars were “grotesque” and “scarcely less horrific” than “Nazism.” Closer to home, the ex-State Department official Louis Sell revealed that Milošević used “brutal tactics of ethnic cleansing” that led to “hundreds of thousands dead” (2002: 5, 8). As already noted, William Walker found these “brutal tactics” in the Račak massacre. Madeleine Albright (1999) insisted Milošević was running a “campaign of terror in Kosovo.” The US Senate declared Serbia “a terrorist state” (K. Talbot 1999). As reported in chapter 9, Hillary Clinton “urged him [President Clinton] to bomb.”

President Clinton's security elites, hermeneuts, secretary of state, and wife hermetically sealed him into his view: perceptually, the Serb government was terrorist; procedurally, the proper course of action was to war against terrorists, so long as there was no peaceful alternative. "Clinton was adamant that Milošević had been given every opportunity, and that there was simply no alternative to bombing" (Norris 2005: 4), so Shultzian Permission was accorded and Serbia was systematically attacked, disrupted, degraded, and devastated. All this suggests that in some measure the US went to war to implement the anti-terrorism public *délire*. However, who Washington treated as an enemy in Kosovo and who it did not suggests that anti-terrorism may not have been the sole factor in its warring there.

In fact, the US also believed the KLA to be a terrorist group. Clinton's Special Envoy to the Balkans Robert Gelbard stated at a press conference in 1998 that "we are tremendously disturbed and also condemn very strongly the unacceptable violence done by terrorist groups in Kosovo and particularly ... the Kosovo Liberation Army. This is without any question a terrorist group" (in Katulis 2000: 15). A double standard is perceptible here: the US attacks one terrorism, yet by doing so it defends another terrorism. This suggests that making the world safe from terrorists was not the only consideration in the empire's Kosovo warring. The next argument shows that issues of oil control were in the pipeline.

*The Oil-Control Public Délire:* After the Balkan Wars ended, a literature emerged that explains this warring in terms of imperialism (Parenti 2002; Johnstone 2002; Collon 2007). Karen Talbot (1999: 18) has suggested that "perhaps above all, this U.S.-led NATO onslaught [against Serbia] is about oil. It is related to the drive to extend and protect the investments of the transnational corporations in the Caspian Sea region, especially the oil corporations."<sup>13</sup>

The years prior to the Dayton Peace Accords coincided with the earlier discussed US oil company investments in the Caspian Basin. Remember, Washington recognized that if these investments were to be realized, pipelines needed to be built westward to get the oil to its European allies. The now re-balkanized Yugoslavia was an excellent terminus for these westward pipelines. Bill Richardson, President Clinton's Energy secretary, expressed this realization in 1998 when he said,

This [US pipelines in the Balkans] is about America's energy security. ... It's also about preventing strategic inroads by those who don't share our values. We are trying to move these newly independent countries toward the West. We would like to see them reliant on western commercial and political interests. ... We've made a substantial political investment in the Caspian and it's important that both the pipeline map and the politics come out right. (In Rees 1999: 2)

Richardson was particularly interested in the Albanian Macedonian Bulgarian Oil Corporation (AMBO) Pipeline. It was to begin in Burgas, Bulgaria, on the Black Sea, where it would receive the Caspian oil; go through Macedonia; and terminate at the port of Vlorë in Albania on the Adriatic, to be sent to markets in Europe and beyond. AMBO, which was founded by Vuko Tashkoviki, an American originally from Macedonia, was to build and operate the pipeline. Its CEO and president was Edward Ferguson, a former director of oil and gas development at Brown and Root Services. The US Trade and Development Agency, (2000:2), believed the pipeline was needed because the oil coming from the Caspian Sea “will quickly surpass the safe capacity of the Bosphorus as a shipping lane.” The scheme, the agency notes, will “provide a consistent source of crude oil to American refineries,” “provide American companies with a key role in developing the vital east-west corridor,” “advance the privatization aspirations of the US government in the region,” and “facilitate rapid integration” of the Balkans “with western Europe.”

A White House spokesperson offered presidential support in 1998, insisting,

The United States, starting with the President, has made this a high object for U.S. foreign policy. As the President said the other day, these pipelines are not often in the U.S. headlines, but the impact that they can have for world energy markets, the impact that they will have for U.S. energy security, the impact that they can have for regional security and security on the eastern flank of NATO and Europe, it's a profound impact. (In Fisher 2002, 82.)

Of course, the pipeline the White House preferred was the AMBO.

Kosovo was located along the proposed route of the AMBO pipeline, and the US believed it needed to control Kosovo to protect the pipeline. For this to occur, Serbia had to be removed from Kosovo. The US acquired this control by supporting the KLA terrorists and attacking the Serbian ones with US-NATO aerial bombardment of Serbia, which, in the words of Strobe Talbott & Chanda (2001: xiii), left Kosovo “a virtual trusteeship, and ward of the UN and NATO.” After the Serb withdrawal from Kosovo, the Pentagon began construction of one of the largest US bases in the world, Camp Bond Steel in southeast Kosovo, to permanently house three thousand US soldiers and an airfield. This gave the US strategic control of the oil route from the Caspian to Europe.

Karen Talbot's suggestion that US fighting in Kosovo was “above all” about “oil corporations” “investments” may be too strong. However, the Clinton administration had made it clear that pipelines from the Caspian were “a high object for US foreign policy” because of their importance for “energy security.” If such security was provided by control over oil, and if it

was perceived that power over pipelines was a way of conferring such control; then procedurally, warring to achieve pipeline control was warranted once other, peaceful ways of achieving such control had failed. We have seen that Milošević's recalcitrance had led Clinton's Security Elites 3.0 to believe peaceful avenues of control in Kosovo were not possible. In sum, the New American Empire fought in the Balkans largely to eliminate one sort of terrorism (while advancing another) and, at the same time, advance its energy security. In this sense, the Kosovo portion of the Balkan Wars might be seen at least in part as an attempt to implement the oil-control public *délire*.

The AMBO pipeline was not built during the Clinton administration. The Bush II administration announced in 2007 that Bulgaria, Albania, and Macedonia had signed an agreement authorizing its construction, with an estimated completion date of 2011 ("AMBO Pipeline Deal" 2007). The Obama administration declared in 2011 that the AMBO pipeline was "still viable," even though it had not been constructed, financing for it had not been secured, and economic and ecological feasibility studies had not been performed (S. Elliott 2011). As of writing, it remains unbuilt.

Again, global warring in Kosovo and the rest of the former Yugoslavia was conducted at a time of intensifying and coalescing cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions. Shultzian Permission was granted after the Serbs refused to peacefully acquiesce to the US Leviathan's demands, and the global warring involved implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*. This evidence is all consistent with the global warring theory.

In hindsight, the degree to which global warring in Kosovo was about defending a never-built pipeline was the degree to which it was folly. The old Sedaka song about the difficulties of breaking up had it both right and wrong—wrong, because breaking up Yugoslavia was easy once the empire and its NATO clients exercised violent force to do it; and right in the sense that breaking up Yugoslavia caused well over a hundred thousand deaths while millions endured privation as refugees. For refugees and relatives of the dead, breaking up was hard to do.

Africa was another region where development of oil resources was believed timely for US energy companies' diversification. It is explored next.

## The African Theater

Bush II, during his presidential campaigning in 2000, was asked about Africa's role in US foreign policy. He responded that it did not "fit in the national strategic interests as far as I can see" (in Servant 2003). Wrong.

Within two years, his own officials would be explaining why Africa counted. Let us see why.

Sub-Saharan Africa was a latecomer to the discovery of oil reserves, but since the 1950s there have been numerous finds. In the 1960s, Gabon and Nigeria went online as producers, and others soon followed. Currently, eight producers can be classified as “major”: Gabon, Nigeria, Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Sudan, Congo-Brazzaville, and Equatorial Guinea. African oil production enjoyed a twenty-fold increase between 1960 and 1971, and then doubled between 1981 and 2008 (Fikreyesus 2012). The US imported 15.3 percent of its oil from Africa in 2002, a figure that rose to 22 percent in 2006 and a projected 25 percent by 2015 (*ibid.*). At the turn of the century, Africa’s proven reserves of over thirty billion barrels of oil were still dwarfed by Persian Gulf reserves. However, given that only Nigeria is a member of OPEC of the African producers, oil stoppages due to embargo are less likely. Moreover, much of Africa’s oil is produced near its west coast, which is closer to US markets than the Middle East is. By the 1990s it was clear that African oil represented another way of diversifying the empire’s oil supply and reducing America’s dependence on the “rough neighborhood.” Finally, at the beginning of the new millennium oil began to be discovered in East Africa, in Uganda and Tanzania. African oil was a new prize for the US oil industry and Security Elites 3.0 to win.

Accordingly, as had been the case in Central Asia, an oil industry promotion group was formed—the African Oil Policy Initiative Group (AOPIG)—to lobby for the Bush administration’s recognition that African oil was a “priority” for the New American Empire’s “national security” (Wihbey and Schutz 2002). AOPIG, in turn, began another lobbying group, the US-Africa Energy Association. Walter Kansteiner III, Bush II’s Under Secretary of State for African Affairs, was important in both the US the government and the lobbying groups.<sup>14</sup> He appears to have been central in getting the Bush II administration to grasp the significance of African oil, announcing only two years after Bush II had said Africa was irrelevant to the US that African oil was “a priority” for US National Security.

The growing importance of African oil was associated with an increase in US military involvement on the continent, justified in terms of terrorism. Terrorists had killed the American Special Ops in Somalia and been responsible for the destruction of embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. An African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) was launched in 1996 to deal with such matters. ACRI, consistent with the Clinton administration’s emphasis on humanitarian intervention, trained African troops destined for peace-keeping missions. Under Bush II, the Trans-Saharan Counter Terrorism Initiative (TSCT) and the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) became operational in 2002 in 2004. ACRI,

TSCT, and ACOTA were largely training programs. Under the Old Empires colonial soldiers were trained and organized to fight in their respective empires: the British had their Gurkhas, the French their *tireilleurs senegalais*. The specific goal of the New American Empire was to have, by the early twenty-first century, twenty African battalions trained to fight in support of its *délires*.

Due to the increasing significance of oil, AOPIG and US-Africa Energy Association officials believed that US military forces would eventually be needed to defend the empire's interests in Africa. Consequently, the associations successfully lobbied for a new military command for the sub-continent. AFRICOM, created in 2008, was originally headquartered in a Nazi-era barracks in Stuttgart, Germany. According to its home page, AFRICOM “protects and defends the national security interests of the United States by strengthening the defense capabilities of African states and regional organizations and, when directed, conducts military operations, in order to deter and defeat transnational threats and to provide a security environment conducive to good governance and development” (U.S. AFRICOM Office of Public Affairs 2013: 2).

In sum, as the years after the 1960s wore on, African oil became increasingly important to the US. By the 1990s prominent Security Elites 3.0 recognized Africa as a priority for the empire's well-being, a priority they took pains to address militarily. There were numerous wars in Africa during the period under consideration. Those in Chad, Sudan, Somalia, and Uganda appear to have involved the US with its GWOT and quest for oil. Let us begin with the Chadian case.

### **Chad: Fighting Terrorism (For the Terrorists) to Get the Oil**

In 1987 President Reagan reassured Chadian President Hissen Habré, “Chad knows it can count on its friends” (in Coll 2012: 159). Reagan was thanking Chad for aiding his administration in its war against Gaddafi. Habré, it will be recalled, became a despot and was indicted for crimes against humanity. He was overthrown in 1990 in a coup by his former general, Idriss Déby—who, certain Chadians bitterly recall, had commanded the operations that inflicted the atrocities that led to the Habré indictment. This section takes up the Chadian story after 1990. It argues that US Leviathan remained a “friend” and did so by helping N'Djamena fight those Deby's government labelled as terrorists -to help get the oil. All of which, it will be clear, has to do with the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*. The narrative begins by explaining why Chad had a friend in the New American Empire.

### *Why Friendship?*

There is a one-word answer to this question: oil. By the 1980s, reserves sufficient to make the country an oil producer had been discovered in southern Chad at Komé, between the small cities of Doba and Moundou. Chad signed an unfavorable production sharing agreement with ExxonMobil in 1988 (see Coll 2012: 159). Nevertheless, ExxonMobil (hereafter Exxon, in a consortium with Chevron and Petronas), supported by a World Bank plan to alleviate poverty, developed the oil fields through the 1990s and early 2000s. Production began in 2003. Three years later 368 wells were in production. During the previous year, Exxon had recouped its investments through oil sales from Chad, and “the project was now profitable” (ibid.: 351). The following year it was judged that the poverty alleviation component of the project had failed (Reyna 2007a, 2007 b; Coll 2012: 367). Meanwhile, China has indicated an interest in Chadian oil and begun operations in the Bongor Basin (Behrends 2011: 92).<sup>15</sup> So Exxon finds itself in a situation of increasing competition.

Exxon made it clear to Security Elites 3.0 that its Chad venture was a good deal for the empire,

Statisticians at ExxonMobil’s ... headquarters ... prepared Power Point slides that emphasized the outsize benefits of the corporation’s activities in Chad ... one thousand American jobs per year ... two hundred expatriate jobs for Americans in the country generating about \$70 million in total revenues; a projected 24 million barrels of direct oil exports to American refineries annually; and more than \$1 billion in profits to American shareholders over about six years. (Coll 2012: 353)

The point here is that Exxon had secured access to Chadian oil. It was bringing in a tidy profit. But there was worrisome competition from the Chinese. US security elites got the message. As Chris Goldthwaite, US ambassador to Chad at the time, expressed it, “the U.S. has one specific interest in Chad, the oil project ...” (ibid.: 175). Chad had a friend in Washington because the US wanted its oil. Friendship, however, imposed a burden on the US due to the nature of the Chadian state, discussed next.

### *A Repressive State*

A recent anonymous, brief piece in the Chadian online journal *Tchad Actuel* ended with the sentence “And dictatorship still has beautiful days” (Anon. 2013a); an ironic ending because the note had been about the repression of Idriss Déby’s dictatorship. Elsewhere I have discussed the nature of Chad’s government (2003b). Nominally, Chad has a republican



form of government. Actually, democracy is extremely restricted. Governance tends toward a dictatorial patrimonialism in which the head of state seeks to remain so, less by winning elections than by organizing networks of patrimonial followers—rent seekers who have been rewarded with force resources drawn from the state. These rewards have been either governmental positions or favors in the private sector that can be awarded by the state. Patrimonial followers, then, are typically officials or private persons awarded government contracts to do something for the state (e.g., building roads or sports stadiums).

Consequently Chad, which is among the world's poorest countries, has had a dual opportunity structure: either you are a beneficiary of the government's patrimony, or you are not. This means the vast bulk of Chadians have really only two possibilities in life. Either they somehow get onto the government's payroll; or they are desperately poor, terribly underemployed urban laborers or rural peasants subject to hunger with each new drought. On becoming a patrimonial follower of the state, one enters a world of villas, automobiles, servants, large bank accounts, and other pleasurable things. The exact population of Chad is unknown. Probably there are between nine and eleven million persons, of whom perhaps only a few thousand are patrimonial followers of any significance.

This means there is fierce competition to become and remain an important patrimonial follower. The competition has been violent. Chadian governments have typically changed in violent coups that usually pit government forces against paramilitary organizations styling themselves liberation armies, often organized by former followers. Chad has had three presidents. The first, François Tombalbaye, was killed in a violent coup (1974). The second, Hissen Habré, was removed by his former follower Idriss Déby (1990). Since that time, some fifteen national liberation armies have formed and operated in southern, northern, eastern and western Chad, all seeking to do unto Déby what he did unto Habré. To be clear, between 1990 and 2014 there was continual conflict in Chad as Déby fought to remain president, just as between 1963 and 1990 he had waged continual conflict to become president. Since independence, the presidency has been awarded by violence.

Repression has been a response to violent attempts to remove heads of state. It has taken two major forms: either the army is deployed in operations to eliminate rebel paramilitary organizations; or security services are used to intimidate rebellious individuals, often by torture or death. During Habré's presidency such repression became extreme. His especially infamous security service, which was known colloquially as "the vultures" and officially as the Documentation and Security Directorate, tortured and executed large numbers of its victims.<sup>16</sup> Déby's repressive measures have

been less spectacular than those of his predecessor but more effective, as he has governed for over two decades.

Recently, an article in *Tchad Actuel* informed readers that “for some time, M. Idris Déby Itno has drummed ... alerting international opinion of a possible menace to Chad from the jihadists, seeking in consequence exterior assistance, above all from the West, which is very sensitive to all that bears on Islamist movements, and their corollary, jihad-terrorism” (Al-Abassy 2013). If “the West” is understood to be the US and its allies, then what the journal was reporting is that Déby was charging his imperial “friend” a strategic rent. Payment of the rent would come in the form of defense of the dictator against those he labeled adherents of “jihad terrorism,” though others might claim that those labeled terrorists were merely those resisting repression. All this allowed Déby to continue enjoying his “beautiful days,” and the US Leviathan to continue controlling Chad’s oil.

### *“Beautiful Days”: The Empire Pays Its Rent to the Dictator*

There have been two sets of rebellions against the Déby regime. The first, during the 1990s in the south, directly threatened oil production. The second was largely in the 2000s, mainly in the north and east along the Chad/Sudan border. The narrative moves south.

*Southern Rebellion:* As noted earlier, the non-Muslim south had controlled the central government until 1979, when Muslim rebels from the north, ultimately led by Habré, seized the state. Denied their share of the state’s patrimony, former southern politicians and military rebelled against it throughout Habré’s regime. They were brutally suppressed by troops directed by Déby, who then was commander-in-chief of the Chadian army. Two southern rebellions followed Déby’s seizure of the presidency.

The first was that of the Comité de Sursaut National pour la Paix et le Démocratie (CSNPD), active between 1991 and 1994. The second rebellion, by the Forces Armées pour le République Fédérale (FARF), lasted from 1994 through 1998. The CSNPD was formed by Moïse Ketté, who had served in Habré’s security forces. Operating in the extreme southeast of Chad, he explicitly made oil part of his military strategy, warning that “oil would not flow from Doba’ unless his conditions were met” (Buijtenhuijs 1998: 39). In 1992 and 1993 Déby responded by invading the south with the Garde Républicaine of the Armée Nationale Tchadienne. They “roamed the land in Toyota pick-ups holding six or seven, seeking victims” (Verschave 2000: 165) in “an uninterrupted series of massacres, rapes, and village burnings” (ibid: 152). The CSNPD responded to this campaign by threatening to “sabotage government-supported oil exploration” (MAR

2004: 10). Déby urgently needed tranquility because the “oil giants” were “all investigating oil resources” (ibid.: 11). So in August 1994, the government and the CSNPD signed a final peace agreement. Ketté ended his resistance, and the government agreed to remove its troops from the south.

Some in the CSNPD regarded Ketté’s final peace accord with Déby as a sellout and formed FARF under the leadership of Laokin Bardé in 1994. FARF made no secret of its fighting for oil—as one leader put it, “I’m ready to die for oil” (Petry and Bambé 2005: 101). Government troops and FARF engaged in sporadic fighting from the end of 1994 through 1995. In the spring of 1996, the intensity of the fighting increased into what one observer labeled a “regime of terror” (Verschave 2000: 166). On 30 October 1997 Bardé’s headquarters were attacked in Moundou in yet another round of fighting there, and many FARF leaders were killed. One account of this fighting reported: “They killed local personalities passing by, they molested a bishop, kidnapped children, killed their parents. Forbid burial, throwing bodies to the pigs” (in Verschave 2000: 166). Thereafter, security forces numbering an estimated five thousand “spread the terror” in an offensive throughout southwestern Chad (ibid.: 167): Fighting lasted until 1998. Peace accords were signed in May. Bardé chose exile but was betrayed by his own kin and killed, after which FARF effectively ceased to exist. Armée Nationale Tchadienne troops remained in the south, which became effectively an occupied territory. Déby had defended Exxon, assuring his control over the oil-producing region of Chad and of any wealth it might provide to his government. There would be future fighting, but it would be over who got the oil spoils.

*Northern Rebellion:* Almost immediately after the defeat of the south, a number of rebel movements formed and began operating in the north and east of Chad. Their acronyms were a changing, confusing alphabet soup as they formed, died, and/or combined with others. All relied upon partisans from Muslim ethnic groups, all were opposed to Déby, and all had leaders who came from or wanted into the Chadian central government with its growing oil revenues. Among the more important of these groups was the *Front Uni pour le Changement* (FUC), founded in 2005 as an alliance of eight different movements and led by Mohammed Nour Abdelkerim. There was also the Union of Forces for Democracy and Development (UFDD), founded a year after the FUC. Though it was headed by Mahamat Nouri, a former ambassador to Saudi Arabia, it was unlikely to flourish in Déby’s administration because Nouri was an Anakazza Gorane, the same ethnic group as Habré. There was also the Rally of Democratic Forces (RDF), which was headed by Tom and Timan Erdimi. Either cousins or nephews of Déby, they had held posts in his government but broke

with him to occupy higher positions. At times the Sudanese government has supported some of these movements.

Since 2005 these groups have been especially active against Déby's government. By and large their operations have been in the extreme east, where the town of Adré has been attacked twice. There have been two extraordinary campaigns against N'Djamena, Chad's capital in the extreme west. In April of 2006, the FUC set out in Toyota pickups loaded with soldiers, weapons, food, and water, and drove 1,000 kilometers from the Sudanese border to N'Djamena, which they attacked on 13 April. They were quickly driven off. This came to be known as the First Battle of N'Djamena. Thereafter, the FUC signed a peace treaty and Mohammed Nour Abdelkerim achieved his dream of becoming Chad's defense minister, a post he held for only seven months before slipping back into opposition. Then in 2008, UFDD and RFC forces did it again, attacking N'Djamena on 2 February. This time the fighting was more intense. For a while it was touch and go. France offered Déby asylum if he wanted it. By 4 February the battle had swayed to the government's side, and the rebels drove back to the Sudanese borderlands.

In 2009, Chad and Sudan signed a peace accord. Since that time Déby has successfully eliminated Sudanese support for the rebels. They have weakened, divided, and signed peace treaties. In 2013 Chad's Communications minister announced, "There is no Chadian rebellion. . . . In Chad there is calm, peace, and stability" (AFP 2013a). On 21 May 2013, Timan Erdimi, now a leader in the United Resistance Forces, announced from Qatar that hostilities against Déby had recommenced.

One may ask why the civil wars in Chad are being discussed, as they appear to have nothing to do with the US and everything to do with the violent politics of African patrimonial states. This is partially, but not entirely correct. Déby and his foes *are* fighting for control over state-derived force resources. But the New American Empire is a participant conducting covert global warring in ways that are consistent with the oil-control and the anti-terrorist public *délires*. This assertion is justified next.

*The Anti-terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délires:* Consider first the oil-control public *délire*. The US Leviathan, through the good offices of Exxon and its PSA with the Chadian government, largely controls Chadian oil. Déby, in turn, has made it clear he defends Exxon. However, the continual civil war makes it equally essential that Déby be defended. The US Leviathan does this, projecting violent force into Chad in two ways: either directly or indirectly, through a proxy.

There are both CIA and JSOC Special Ops in Chad. Their exact numbers are unclear. At some point General Stanley McChrystal was in Chad,

presumably to either initiate or strengthen JSOC there. He is said to have run some missions with Mel Gamble, the CIA head of the Africa Division, Directorate of Operations (Coll 2012: 173). The full range of US Chadian operations is unknown. It was reported in 2003 that the Americans were building an airstrip in the desert just north of N'Djamena. The US conducts training, especially in COIN tactics.<sup>17</sup> It equally provides military equipment and intelligence. Under some conditions it provides logistical support, as well as certain types of operational assistance. By 2007, according to a diplomatic cable from the American embassy in N'Djamena, Déby's military had two battalions of US-trained troops, twenty of whom were killed that year in fighting in the east (N'Djamena 933 2012: 2). These battalions were the neo-colonial iteration of the colonial *tirailleurs senegalaises*.

The US is also supported by a proxy, one the most powerful client states in its empire. This is France, the former colonial power in Chad. Upon Chadian independence, France and Chad signed a defense accord to defend the government in power. France has not always honored this agreement but has continually used the accord to project military force into Chad. Paris has two permanent bases in the country: a larger one in N'Djamena, next to the airport; and a smaller one in Abeché in the east near the Sudanese border. Each base has a complement of air force personnel and commandos (sometimes the Foreign Legion).

France militarily participated in both the southern and northern rebellions during Déby's rule. The same French units that are held to have trained the militias that conducted the massacres in Rwanda are reported to have trained the Garde Républicaine. Chadian police and soldiers in the south, "trained by French instructors, continued the assassinations: local officials, high school students, peasants ... torture was made banal" (Verschave 2000: 167). Certain scholars of French politics might scoff at the idea that France has acted as a US proxy in Chad. Such skepticism is unwarranted. France and the US do coordinate security concerns. After all, what is good for Washington is good for Paris. So Chad provided the soldiers, and the US and France trained them, armed them, provided them with intelligence, and helped out when the situation required.

The oil-control public *délire* is one where US security elites perceptually identify a threat to US oil control, and procedurally act to eliminate that threat. In the 1990s and early 2000s, US Security Elites 3.0 perceptually interpreted the Chad case as one where armed rebels were seeking to destroy Déby, who was defending the US's control of oil there. This meant it was procedurally appropriate to expend violent force in support of Déby, that is, in support of the empire's control of oil. US exercise of violent force, understood in this context, appears consistent with application of the oil-control public *délire*. What about the anti-terrorist public *délire*?

A paragraph concerning Chad in the 2013 State Department document “Country Reports on Terrorism” provides some insight into this topic. The document announced that for the year 2012,

Countering terrorism threats in Chad was a priority at the highest levels of Chad’s government, with a particular focus on countering potential terrorist threats from across the Sahel region. Special Operations Command Africa, through the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Trans-Sahara, maintained a Special Operations Forces Liaison Element in Chad to support Chadian counterterrorism forces with training and logistical support. (State Department 2013)

By the second decade of the new millennium, this quotation indicates, *both* Déby’s government and that of the US had come to perceive Chad’s enemies as terrorists. Procedurally, then, Chad had come to have a “particular focus on countering” this menace, which the US military, in the form of the Special Operations Forces Liaison Element, supported. In other words, the US Leviathan’s military force projection into Chad was to combat terrorism.

How this came to be can be speculated upon: Chad has had a friend in Washington since the Reagan administration, and N’Djamena had had a CIA presence since well before Reagan. In the earlier days of national liberation movements’ rebellions against N’Djamena, the Chadian government largely called its opponents *bandi* (bandits). However, in the days following 9/11 and the onset of the GWOT, the US recognized that Africa was ripe for terrorist activity, especially in more rugged areas like the Sahara. Thus the CIA and JSOC “charged into African capitals long neglected” (Coll 2012: 173). Recall that AFRICOM was created in 2008 to address concerns over terrorism. Half of Chad is in the Sahara, where US anti-terrorist military programs and personnel began to be increased so as to include the JSOC. US anti-terrorist officials like Stanley McChrystal would have informed Chadian officials that the enemy were no mere *bandi* but something far more sinister—terrorists—but that their “friend” was there to help them. In this sense, US military operations in Chad were an implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire*.

In Chad as in other countries, the US Leviathan conducted its covert indirect and direct global warring at a time of a perfect storm of the three coalescing and intensifying contradictions. Shultzian Permission had been granted because the Chadian government was already experiencing violent insurgency, and Déby could only be helped with violence. The global warring involved implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*. These facts are supportive of the global warring theory.

Finally, consider the actuality of US military operations in Chad. First, the US Leviathan is Déby’s “friend” because Déby supports Washington’s control over N’Djamena’s oil. Second, Déby’s rule—his “beautiful days”—

proceeded via terrorization of his people, especially in the southern portion of the country. Thus, by fighting to support Déby, the New American Empire has fought terrorism to support the beautiful days of an undemocratic, authoritarian terrorist. The narrative now turns to the Sudan, a country that is not a friend of the Security Elites 3.0.

### Sudan: The Humanitarians' Blunder

Good afternoon. Today I ordered our armed forces to strike at terrorist-related facilities in Afghanistan and Sudan because of the imminent threat they presented to our national security. (President Bill Clinton, 1998a)

In a televised 1998 presidential speech to the whole country, President Clinton looked his fellow citizens in the eye and, in the middle of the Monica Lewinsky scandal, announced that the US had attacked “terrorist-related facilities in ... Sudan” because they threatened “national security,” an assertion that strained credulity. Sudan, after all, was an impoverished African country, often derided as a failed state and a humanitarian disaster, whose military lacked any ability to strike America.

Some interpreted the president’s announcement as a ploy to divert attention from his sexual indiscretions. Others were concerned that the Sudanese government had given refuge to Osama bin Laden, even though Khartoum had expelled him three years prior to Clinton’s attack and had offered to deliver him to the US (Baer 2002). Whatever else it was, the Sudanese situation was consequently the reverse of that in Chad: it was an enemy of Washington and by the 1990s a declared terrorist state. Clinton’s liberal hawks’ bungling in Sudan would allow its anti-terrorism *délire* to wreck its oil-control *délire*.

#### *The Blunder*

Sudan is a bigger oil producer than Chad, producing 514,300 barrels per day in 2010, and may actually hold Africa’s greatest unexploited oil reserves (Hennig 2007: 1).<sup>18</sup> Oil was found in the non-Muslim, southern region of Sudan, and it was further possible that it might also be found to the northwest in southern Darfur. Muslim northerners dominated the central government; meanwhile, southerners, largely from the Dinka and Nuer tribes, violently contested the central government’s authority in the south, as they have done since the mid 1950s.<sup>19</sup> There were two periods of war in the south—the First (1955–1972) and the Second (1983–2005) Sudanese Civil Wars. Led by John Garang, the south won the Second Civil War and became the independent Republic of South Sudan in 2011.

The New American Empire was not indifferent to the control of the oil, as it was a way of diversifying the American oil dependence beyond the Persian Gulf. Originally, US oil companies flourished in Sudan. Chevron was granted an oil concession in 1974 and began prospecting. By the late 1970s and early 1980s it had discovered considerable deposits in the Muglad and Melut Rift basins in the south. Chevron was pumping by the late 1990s; hence, a US oil company effectively controlled much of Sudanese oil production at this time.

Then, according to Don Petterson (2003: 225), US ambassador to Sudan in the 1990s, “To help forestall legislation pending in the Congress that would have applied sanctions against Sudan in a way that would have limited the executive branch’s options ... the administration issued an executive order curtailing U.S.-Sudanese commerce and trade.” So, due to legislative and executive branch haggling over their authorities, in 1997 Clinton signed Executive Order 13067, effectively embargoing trade with Sudan. This angered President Bashir, who denounced the US “as a thief plundering and robbing Sudan’s wealth” and threatened “holy war” (ibid.: 225). Now that it was illegal for US oil companies to operate in Sudan, Chevron left. Currently, Sudanese oil is produced largely by the China National Petroleum Corporation, as well as by certain Malaysian and Indian companies.

Thus, during the Clinton administration the US Leviathan largely lost control over Sudanese oil, and Clinton’s security elites did it to themselves with Executive Order 13067. This blunder is the focus of the following analysis, which pays attention to the role of the oil-control and anti-terrorist public *délires*. While attempting to implement an anti-terrorist agenda, a group of liberal hawk humanitarians that called themselves “the Council” interpreted what was happening in the 1990s Sudan, and in so doing were in large part responsible for the blunder. Documentation of this assertion begins with an exploration of the fluctuations in relations between Khartoum and Washington since President Reagan.

President Carter, whose Carter Center has worked in the Sudan since 1986, remarked that “the U.S. government has a policy of trying to overthrow the government in the Sudan” (in Shillinger 1999). The problems began during the Clinton administration, when the empire’s relations with the Sudanese government deteriorated precipitously. Earlier relations had been better. Gafaar Nimeiry, a military officer, seized control of the country in a 1969 coup. For a portion of his rule, Nimeiry was an “important ... client” of the US, who during the Reagan years allowed the US Leviathan to use Sudan as a base for its operations against Libya (Schmidt 2013: 204). Sudan went so far as to allow a CIA outpost to operate in Darfur.

However, Nimeiry was overthrown in 1986 and replaced by Sadiq al-Mahdi, the great-grandson of the Mahdi who had led the Mahdist Revolt



(1881–1899) against Anglo-Egyptian rule. In 1989 he was replaced in another coup by Omar al-Bashir, a military leader who was strongly supported by Hassan al-Turabi, head of the National Islamic Front. Bashir and Turabi were both Islamists from the Sudanese branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, and their Islamism alarmed Washington: it seemed tainted with terrorism because Turabi had invited Osama bin Laden to reside and conduct his affairs in Sudan. He came in 1991. More ominously, the *9/11 Commission Report*, the official government account of why 9/11 occurred, claimed that

Turabi sought to persuade Shiites and Sunnis to put aside their divisions and join against the common enemy. In late 1991 or 1992, discussions in Sudan between al-Qaeda and Iranian operatives led to an informal agreement to cooperate in providing support—even if only training—for actions carried out primarily against Israel and the United States. (Kean and Hamilton 2004: 61)<sup>20</sup>

Doubtless, the new Clinton administration was privy to this intelligence, which provoked a hermeneutic puzzle: how to deal with a Sudan apparently turning toward the dark side of terrorism? It is at this juncture that the Council enters the story.

### *The Council*

The African bureau was the primary locus of policymaking for Sudan. (Pettersson 2003)

Don Pettersson, the US ambassador to Sudan during the early 1990s, had it wrong in the above quotation. The “primary locus” for policymaking vis-à-vis Sudan during those years was an Italian restaurant near Washington’s Dupont Circle. Here “the Council”—a cabal of six men and a woman—met and deliberated the fate of Sudan.<sup>21</sup> They regarded themselves as good folk and righteous humanitarians, and they—not the ambassador roasting out in the backwater of Khartoum—were the ones with disproportionate influence on US Sudanese operations during the Clinton administration.

The first Council member was Brian D’Silva. He had met with John Gaurang in 1978 when the two were graduate students in agricultural economics. Charismatic to many who met him, Gaurang would lead the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army (SPLA), the military arm of the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM). Gaurang was a hybrid elite who attended Iowa’s Grinnell College and then Iowa State University, as well as Advanced Officers Training in Fort Benning, Georgia. D’Silva became Gaurang’s champion in the United States. Francis Deng, a Dinka from southern Sudan, Sudanese diplomat, and scholar who had lived for a long while in the US, was a second member of the Council. He offered other Council members connections to southern Sudan.<sup>22</sup>

Two other members, Roger Winter and John Prendergast, came from humanitarian work, especially in the Sudan. Winter, whom one admirer called “a Saint” (E. Griswold 2008), had worked in the Carter administration but “vowed never to work in the government again, preferring the less bureaucratic non-government sector” (R. Hamilton 2012: 4). So in 1981 he became the executive director of the US Committee for Refugees. One document described Prendergast as a “rockstar” (Bealy 2013). He was identified by his speakers’ bureau as a “human rights activist” and a “friend” of George Clooney (APB 2013).

Ted Dagne was another Council member. He was an Ethiopian refugee who had worked in a variety of positions in the US Congress, and established an “intense friendship” with Garang (R. Hamilton 2012: 2). At some point in the mid 1990s, Susan Rice, who then was rapidly rising within the State Department ranks, became an occasional member of the Council; as did Eric Reeves, an English professor at Smith College, an elite women’s school. Rice would turn out to be the most powerful member of the group. Reeves, a Shakespeare and Milton expert, would turn out to be its puritanical scold. Playfully, the group had nicknames for each other. Dagne was the “Emperor,” Reeves was “Deputy Emperor,” Winter the “Spear Carrier,” Prendergast the “Councilor in Waiting,” and Deng the “Diplomat.” Rice and D’Silva do not seem to have had nicknames. The nicknames had an imperial ring—Emperor, Deputy Emperor, Spear Carrier. These humanitarians were not play-acting during their restaurant trysts. They were plotting imperial outcomes.

“*Too Deformed to Be Reformed*”: A way of grasping the nature of their intrigues is to reveal the hermeneutic the Emperor and his Council brought to their interpretations. First and foremost it was a narrow one. Though different members of the Council operated in other African countries—especially Rice, Winter, and Prendergast—the reality the Council members focused on when acting as Council members was the hermeneutic puzzle of the Sudan. Specifically, they perceptually understood Sudan as a place with a civil war pitting Muslim north against Christian south. As Winter put it, according to *New York Times* correspondent Eliza Griswold (2008), in Sudan “there’s a good guy and a bad guy.” The “bad guy” was the Sudanese government in Khartoum that terrorized its own populations. The “good guy” was the SPLA, and its political arm the SPLM, in the south (who also terrorized their own populations). Perhaps the affection for the SPLA/M existed because the Council “was united by its respect for Garang” (R. Hamilton 2012: 4). Winter put the good guy/bad guy matter as follows: “You have these well-trained guys in Khartoum who are murderers and never keep an agreement” (in *ibid.*: 4). Of course, members of

the Council acknowledged that SPLA “fighters committed horrific crimes during the war” (ibid.: 4). Different factions within the SPLA battled each other. Perhaps the most enduring strife pitted Riek Machar against first Garang and then his successor Salva Kiir.<sup>23</sup> Additionally, there were southern factions outside the SPLA that fought each other and the SPLA. All this conflict tended to utilize terrorist tactics. Prendergast’s own book, *Crisis Response: Humanitarian Band-AIDS in Sudan and Somalia* (1997), explicitly announced that the SPLA/M “terrorized the southern population” (in Hoile 1999: 50). So the Council’s perceptual interpretation of Sudan as divided into good and bad guys was a misinterpretation. Both sides in the civil warring terrorized, so the country was actually divided into bad guys and bad guys.

Just how bad did the Emperor and his followers think the Khartoum bad guys were? Prendergast was expressing the Council’s views when he told Rice that Bashir’s government was “too deformed to be reformed” (in R. Hamilton 2012: 3). Reeves (2004) went further, labeling Bashir’s government “a serially genocidal regime”—strong words implying either that Khartoum should undergo regime change or that Sudan should be dismembered by providing backing to SPLA “good guys” to do the job. When Bush II was implementing violent regime change in Iraq, Reeves jumped at the idea of doing the same in Sudan; but most Council members supported the latter possibility. Backing the south, they believed, should come in many forms, ranging from propaganda monsterizing the “Arab” north to assisting the SPLA in its fighting. Council members believed that Shultzian Permission should be granted for US Sudan operations because the US was facing a government that was “serially genocidal.”

Thus, the Council’s hermeneutic was perceptually that Sudan was divided into good guys and bad guys; and procedurally that support, up to and including military intervention, should be accorded to the good guys but covertly, so the US could be viewed as humanitarian good guys (Autesserre 2002). There was nothing especially humanitarian here. It was a clique of Washington security elites pursuing an imperial goal of controlling a world region.

It might be asked who the Council members *really* were—humanitarian bons vivants chowing down at a DC watering hole, or something more ominous? Keith Harmon Snow, a progressive war correspondent who covers Africa, thought he saw something darker. He notes that Rice, Winter, Prendergast, and Dagne operated in other areas of Africa too, especially the Horn and Great Lakes, “supporting and covering up” Western low-intensity military operations (K. Snow 2012). He identifies them as “intelligence operatives” (ibid.), quoting Jean Marie Higiroy, an erstwhile official in the Rwanda government, as saying, “Roger Winter is an intelligence op-

erative” (in *ibid.*). Spain’s Juan Carrero Saralegui, a human rights activist with expertise in Rwanda, has also identified Winter as an intelligence officer (in *ibid.*: 9). It is not unusual for the CIA to covertly insert personnel into private institutions and NGOs functioning in areas where the intelligence community has an interest. Winter’s position as executive director of the US Committee for Refugees would be just such a position. Alan Boswell (2012), reporting for McClatchy, observed that in 2012 Dagne, while working in the new Republic of South Sudan, was “an embedded go-between, and source of intelligence.” If he was an intelligence “source” in 2012, it is not improbable that he carried out the same function during the 1990s.

The Council members’ power derived from the positions they held in the Clinton administration, and it is time to discuss these. The most powerful person, that is, the one with the biggest window of authority, was Susan Rice. As was said of her in chapter 8, she “grew up with ... privilege and ... connections.” During the 1990s those “connections” paid off. Rice received her doctorate in 1990. Three years later she joined the NSC. In 1995 she became the NSC director for Africa, a post she held for two years. Then, in 1997, she switched to the state department—nine months after her lifelong family friend, Madeleine Albright, became secretary of state—and was appointed Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, the highest US government position dealing with African affairs. Privilege has its plunder: seven years from her doctorate, Susan Rice, age 33, was the security elite who ran Africa for the US government. Some State Department professionals, according to a *Washington Post* article, charged she was “not truly an ‘Africanist’” (Parker 1998). Another source reported that “the poverty of her knowledge of Africa ... shocked the Africa diplomatic corps in Washington” (EIR Investigative Team 1998).

No matter the extent of her ignorance, Rice had her advisers, among whom John Prendergast, her council compatriot, was key. In 1996 she brought him into the NSC, and when she left he replaced her as the Africa director. Roger Winter remained with the US Committee for Refugees at this time but was believed to be her “closest advisor on Africa” (*ibid.*). Rice, Prendergast, and Winter were a “team,” Winter said in September of 1997, “to lead the United States into support of a war against the government of Sudan” (in A. Hassan 2009). They would, we shall see, lead the US not only to support a war against Khartoum, but to conduct it covertly.

D’Silva and Dagne played supporting roles on the Council “team.” D’Silva went on to a career in USAID, specializing in the Sudan, from which position he argued the case for southern Sudan. Dagne worked for the US Congress, where for much of that time he was employed by the Congressional Research Service, an institution whose function is to

provide Congress with the “objective” information it needs to legislate. Dagne wrote reports on Sudan, several of which were notorious for their bias in favor of the SPLA (see Dagne 1997, 2002). He went on to work for the House of Representatives Sub-Committee on Africa, where, with the assistance of Representative Donald Payne, he created a network of pro-southern Sudan representatives.

The Emperor also had something of an intelligence role within the Council. This was because, as Herman Cohen (2000: 83), Bush I’s assistant secretary of state for Africa, remembered, Dagne was a “good friend” of SPLA leader John Garang and hosted meetings for him in his Washington home. Rebecca Hamilton (2012: 2–3) describes “an intense friendship” between Garang and Dagne; in the course of which “they spoke on the phone every day.” These phone calls clearly provided considerable SPLA/M intelligence, which was certainly shared with other Council members and allowed them to coordinate their southern Sudanese politics.

By the mid 1990s, Rice and Prendergast occupied the two highest positions concerning Africa in the NSC and the State Department. Their superiors—first Anthony Lake and then Sandy Berger in the NSA, and first Warren Christopher and then Madeleine Albright in Foggy Bottom—were not Africanists and were distracted by more pressing events, especially in the Balkans. D’Silva and Dagne gave the Council strong representation in USAID and Congress. Dagne gave them the best, latest inside information on what was happening in Sudan from the perspective of the SPLA leader. Therefore, if the Council did not hermetically seal off all but their own understandings during the hermeneutic politics of Sudan in the 1990s, they certainly tried to do so. It was hard to be pro-Khartoum when the Council told everybody, as Prendergast had, that Bashir’s government was “too deformed to be reformed.” What was the consequence of the Council’s near hermetic seal on Sudanese politics?<sup>24</sup>

*Losing the Oil:* Washington’s relations with Khartoum remained relatively strong through the end of Bush I’s administration (H. Cohen 2000). However, as we have seen, concerns began to arise about Khartoum’s Islamist terrorist connections.<sup>25</sup> The Clinton era began on 21 January 1993. A month later (26 February 1993) the first bombing of the World Trade Center occurred. On 12 August 1993 Sudan was placed on the list of countries that supported terrorism. Of the Council members, only Susan Rice was at this time in a position to have had any role in this decision. What her role was is unclear. However, as the ex-president Jimmy Carter recalled, “In fact, when I later asked an assistant secretary of state” what evidence they possessed to place Sudan on the list, “he said they did not have any proof, but there were strong allegations” (in Hoile 1999: 9). Certainly Susan Rice

was in a position to make “strong allegations” of the terrorist nature of the Khartoum government.

The years 1996 and 1997 would be the most important for the Council’s influence on Sudanese affairs. In 1996 the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act went into effect. This congressional legislation was not directly aimed at the Sudan, but it affected Sudan because it barred US individuals and companies from dealing with terror-sanctioning countries. Sudan was on the list of terror-supporting countries, so US companies were forbidden to operate there.

At this point oil enters the picture, and with it some hanky-panky. Occidental Petroleum, founded by Armand Hammer, was one of the larger US oil and gas multinationals. Ray R. Irani was Occidental’s chairman in 1996. Both Hammer and Irani had been friends of Senator Albert Gore Sr., whose son Albert Gore Jr, was the US Vice President in 1996. Occidental’s chairman slept in the Lincoln Room of the White House on 27 March 1996. Two days later Occidental’s PAC gave \$100,000 to the Democratic National Committee. Five months further on, the Antiterrorism Act (23 August 1996) took effect. On the very same day the Treasury Department created an exception to the act and allowed Occidental Petroleum to pursue an oil deal with the Sudan (“More Information on Sudan” 2013).

The year 1996 was also important because by this time “the Clinton administration” had embarked on “a policy of assisting the SPLA militarily” (Hoile 1999: 7). Specifically, the administration “openly and unambiguously encouraged the governments of Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda not only to afford the SPLA safe rear bases, but also to spearhead and support rebel incursions into the Sudan” (ibid.: 8). Further, in order to encourage these countries, which the US called the “front line,” Washington decided in 1996 “to send over \$20 million of military equipment” to them “to help the Sudanese opposition overthrow the Khartoum regime” (A. Hassan 2009a). Clearly, the US was fighting in the Sudan through its proxies, especially Uganda and Eritrea, though there appear to have been “several Operational Detachments—Alpha teams (also called A-Teams) of the US army ... operating in support of the SPLA” (Hassan 2009a).

Who was responsible for this violent turn? By 1996 both Rice and Prendergast were in place in the NSC. Both desired support of the SPLA. Prendergast, as we have just seen, was in direct contact with rebel leaders. Anthony Lake, who at the time was the NSA and their boss, was involved in a failed bid to secure nomination as the CIA head. Lake needed NSC members’ backing to lend credibility to his CIA bid, so it is likely that he acceded to Rice and Prendergast’s desires. Of course, Sudan’s government was not oblivious to the fact that it was involved in a proxy war with Washington, and it did a number of things. Most significantly, in November

1996 it barred Occidental from any oil deal in Sudan. Chevron stayed, but Occidental was out. The US suspended embassy operations in Khartoum.

In 1997, Rice was promoted to assistant secretary of state for Africa. Prendergast was in charge of Africa in the NSC. Khartoum was trying to reconcile with the US, but Prendergast and Rice were arguing against reconciliation (D. Rose 2002). Late in 1997, Prendergast announced that the US government viewed the Bashir regime as “the principle threat to US security interests on the Continent of Africa today” (in Hoile 1999: 8). On 5 November 1997, Clinton issued Executive Order 13067, which echoed, and upped, the rhetorical level of Prendergast’s words. Khartoum was said to “constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States” (Executive Order 13067: 1). Transactions between US businesses and Sudan were prohibited. There were no exceptions. Chevron left. This was the blunder: in fighting one terrorism (that of Khartoum) in support of another (that of the SPLA), they had lost the oil.

*What Happened Next?* If the US Leviathan wanted Sudan’s oil, the foregoing events put it in the position of having to fight on to defeat Khartoum, thereby winning independence for the south. Only then, because the oil was in the south, might US oil companies be allowed to return. This was exactly what occurred, and as Julie Flint (2009) has remarked, “the war for oil was terrible.”

Bush II became president in 2001. Prendergast and Rice lost their positions, but the Bush administration continued support of the SPLA/M. There is evidence that the Vulcans sought to further militarily weaken the Khartoum government by exacerbating rebellion in Darfur, where anti-Bashir guerilla movements (the Sudanese Liberation Army [SLA] and Justice and Equality Movement [JEM]) emerged and in 2003 began attacking government military installations in Darfur (Reyna 2010). Khartoum, already militarily occupied with the situation in the south, responded by encouraging an Arab militia, the *janjaweed*, to attack the SLA and JEM. One reason the Khartoum government may have been so eager to assert control in Darfur was the prospect of oil there.

There had been rumors of oil since the 1990s. Julie Flint (2009) reports, “In April 2005, Energy Minister Awad al-Jaz grabbed headlines by announcing discovery of a giant oilfield in southern Darfur that he said was expected to produce 500,000 b/d within months. . . . But announcements of success were premature and proved illusory.” The reality of oil in Darfur is unknown. What is real, however, is its possibility, in the minds of both the Khartoum government and American officials. The US military’s hand in the fighting that ensued in Darfur was covert. However, “it is . . . well

documented that the US through its closest African allies, helped train the SLA and JEM Darfuri rebels that initiated Khartoum's violent reaction" (Hennig 2007: 1). Information gathered during fieldwork bears upon two aspects of US intervention in Darfur. First, the Israelis were involved in preparing SLA members for combat, and some of them were taken to Israel for training. The Israelis are unlikely to have operated without US collusion. Second, one account I obtained insists that US training of Darfuri militias—which seems to have been performed by US proxies—occurred *prior* to their attacks on the Khartoum government's military installation. It was these attacks that provoked the government to organize the *jan-jaweed* counterattack, and it was the ferocity of this counteroffensive that allowed propagandists like Reeves to proclaim Khartoum's Darfur policies to be "genocidal." If my sources are correct, then US global warring in Darfur helped incite Reeves's "genocide."

The Second Sudanese war was grim. An estimated 2 million persons died. By 2003 both sides were exhausted. Peace talks were begun and advanced so that in 2005 a Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed, whose terms were for six years of southern autonomy, followed by a referendum on the question of whether the south would become independent. Garang was killed in a plane crash in 2005 and did not see the fruits of his leadership.<sup>26</sup> The referendum vote went for independence, and in 2011 the Republic of Southern Sudan was born. In 2013, Barnaba Marial Benjamin, South Sudan's Information minister, announced, "We need your [the US's] technology and financial support to boost our private sector," further clarifying that "the US stood with us during the difficult period of our liberation war. Now we need American support to develop that new nation" (UPI 2013). High on the minister's development wish list was "support" for the petroleum sector. It is time to tie the US Leviathan's conduct during the Second Sudanese War to the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*.

*The Anti-terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délires:* Usually, the two *délires* have worked hand in hand to help the US pursue imperial designs. In the instance of Sudan, however, they got in each other's way. The Council sought to implement its hermeneutic, and in doing so it was implementing the anti-terrorist *délire*. At the same time, private US oil firms, especially Chevron, had quite successfully acquired control in the southern oil fields and in so doing were peacefully implementing the oil-control *délire*. But then the security elites in the political system floundered. In trying to fight the state terrorism of Khartoum, they initiated indirect, covert warfare against Sudan, warfare that was *not* covert to Bashir. President Clinton, acting as an agent of the anti-terrorist *délire*, forbid all US business in Su-



dan, obliging Chevron and Occidental to cede the Sudanese oil to the Chinese. The New American Empire did it to itself.

A good question to ask at this point is, why did operations to support the anti-terrorist *délire* get in the way of those to support the oil-control *délire*? Three reasons come to mind. The first is the existence of the Council. In no other case of global warring at this time was there an institution like the Council. It predisposed the executive-branch hermeneutic politics concerning Sudanese affairs during the Clinton years, and its predispositions were to destroy the monsters in Khartoum, no matter what.

Second, at the same time that the Council flourished, fundamentalist Christians who ran missionary operations in southern Sudan began a monsterization campaign against the North. Khartoum was full of “Arabs” with “heathen” practices like Islam, who even enslaved good Christian southerners. Groups like Christian Solidarity International (CSI) set out to “redeem” the slaves. Little matter that, as Declan Walsh (2002) reported, CSI was pretty much a “scam.” Some southern villagers said to have been enslaved lined up to have their freedom purchased—again and again. Conservative US media outlets like Fox News trumpeted CSI’s and other Christian groups’ good work in the anti-slavery campaign (Espinoza 2011). Together missionaries and media advanced the Council’s interpretation of the Khartoum government as a lair of monsters, thereby strengthening the Council’s hand.

Third, there was the question of fear. The rumor was out: Sudan’s terrorists were gunning for US security elites. At one point, US intelligence indicated that Sudanese terrorists intended to assassinate NSA Anthony Lake (Gay 2013), who then was spirited away and hidden for a while. I knew of a Foreign Service officer, nominated for a high position in the US embassy in Khartoum, who had heard that the terrorists were going to go after Americans. She had a family with young children and turned down the nomination, fearing for her family. The Council’s operations, then, reinforced by those of the Christian missionaries and by fears of becoming targets of terror, pushed Clinton’s liberal hawks to fixate upon the anti-terrorist *délire* at the expense of its oil-control counterpart.

So it was a war between good and evil. “Good guy” Council humanitarians fought the “bad guy” Sudanese terrorists; and after killing the US oil business in Sudan they had to fight longer to try to make a new country in which oil was found so that the US might again win Sudanese oil. Of course, money, weapons, training, and A-team operatives provided by the humanitarians intensified the warring.<sup>27</sup>

The covert indirect and direct US global warring in Sudan occurred during intensifying and coalescing cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions. Shultzian Permission was granted because the

Council was convinced that Khartoum was perpetrating genocide, and that violence was the only way to deal with such monster terrorists. The security elites' global warring was a way of implementing the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*—information that is consistent with the global warring theory. Lamentably, from the perspective of Washington, operations to implement the anti-terrorist public *délire* blocked those to implement the other *délire*.

What were the consequences of this US intervention in the Second Sudan Civil War? Sudan has suffered the same fate as Yugoslavia—it is Balkanized. Now there are the old Sudan, still with an authoritarian government, and the new Republic of South Sudan, with an authoritarian government that just might help US oil giants regain control over Sudanese oil. By 2014, however, oil production looked compromised: not only was the Republic of South Sudan authoritarian, but it had also begun a civil war with troops of Riek Machar, who was now the vice president, fighting those of Salva Kiir, now president. John Prendergast, now co-founder of Enough, a human rights NGO, told the *New York Times*, “This was a fire waiting to be ignited” (Kulish 2014: 1). What he neglected to tell the *Times* was that he and his Council compatriots, inasmuch as they helped create South Sudan, were responsible for piling up the combustibles burnt in the fire.<sup>28</sup>

A final point, it turns out, is that the “terrorist-related” facility that President Clinton attacked in 1998 was a pharmaceutical factory that produced half of Sudan’s medicines (Scahill 2013: 126). The focus now turns to the Horn of Africa.

### **Somalia: Growing Terrorism the CIA and JSOC Way**

Siad Barre was the longtime (1969–1991) president of Somalia, which had been a place of complex civil war long before the 1991 rebellion that overthrew him.<sup>29</sup> The UN intervened in the fighting after Barre’s downfall in response to the ensuing insecurity and famine. Bush I elected to allow the US Leviathan to lead the intervention and then, within weeks of this decision, left office, to be replaced by Clinton. On 3 October 1993, a helicopter carrying JSOC Special Ops in pursuit of Mohamed Farah Aidid, a rebel leader, was shot down. Thus began the Black Hawk Down incident. The commandos were killed; the dead body of one was dragged through the streets of Mogadishu, Somalia’s capital; and the Clinton administration withdrew its troops, recognizing that Somalia was the very model of a modern major “collapsed” state. The question was what the US Leviathan would do next, and why. I will argue that *délires* about oil and terrorism led

to military operations—spearheaded by the CIA and JSOP after 2001—that helped grow terrorism in Somalia not once but twice. The argument begins with Siad Barre, the collapse of the Somali state, and fighting for oil that had not yet been found.

### *Fighting for Oil They Had Not Yet Found*

Siad Barre came to power in 1969, the same year as Gaddafi, in a military coup. Like Gaddafi, Barre was influenced by socialist ideas. Comrade Siad (“Jaalle Siyaad”) declared that he would rule through a Supreme Revolutionary Council, adjusting scientific socialism to Somalian realities with a touch of the Koran and a strong dose of Somali nationalism. Assisted by the Soviet Union, Barre sought to modernize the economy on socialist lines. Private enterprise was nationalized, attempts to stimulate industry followed, and considerable effort was put into export banana cultivation. The nationalism took the form of an invasion of the Ogaden (1976) in Ethiopia, an attempt to wrest this Somali-populated region away from the Ethiopians.

By the end of the 1970s, however, nothing had worked. Economic performance was poor. By 1978, manufactured goods exports were almost nonexistent. Earnings from livestock exports were insufficient to prevent foreign debt from increasing rapidly. The Ogaden War (1977–1978) collapsed after the Russians switched sides and backed the new Communist government of the Derg in Ethiopia, and high military spending was already further constraining development. This obliged the Barre regime to negotiate with the IMF, which ended in Somalia being obligated to implement structural adjustment during the 1980s. This further harmed the economy, so much so that by 1989 and 1990 Somalis were suffering nationwide commodity shortages (Abdi 2011).

Comrade Siad governed not only as a modern socialist, but equally as an African patrimonialist. Order in his regime was maintained, in part, because public and private persons were rewarded in different ways with portions of the state’s patrimonial pie. Worsening economic conditions meant that this already meager patrimony became even scarcer. Further, suspicions generated by the defeat in the Ogaden led to onetime patrimonial allies being dismissed or worse. These conditions led certain officials to form paramilitaries that sought Barre’s ouster by force. At the end of the 1980s, the Derg aggravated this situation by supporting certain rebel movements. Siad fought to curb these rebellion but failed, and in 1991 he was driven from power.

Then, the state collapsed. Together, different rebel paramilitaries had exercised enough military force to oust Barre, but now that the hated des-

pot was gone, they turned on each other. Some called it anarchy, but the fighting followed a logic in which warlords fought other warlords to capture control over the central government, none having sufficient violent force to defeat all the others. Added to this was the fact that by the early 1990s, Somalia was beset by drought and famine. It was a humanitarian quandary.

The UN acted to ameliorate the situation: UNSC Resolutions 733 and 746 (1992) authorized United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM) to deliver humanitarian assistance and help reinstate the state. UNSC Resolution 794, also passed in 1992, provided the military muscle, the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), to allow UNOSOM to do its job. Bush I, as we have seen, decided that the US would lead UNITAF, whose mission was called “Operation Restore Hope.” Bush I explained his rationale for intervention to the American people in a televised address on 4 December 1992:

I want to talk to you today about the tragedy in Somalia and about a mission that can ease suffering and save lives. Every American has seen the shocking images from Somalia. The scope of suffering there is hard to imagine. Already, over a quarter of a million people—as many people as live in Buffalo, New York—have died in the Somali famine. (In Yearman [2007] 2011)

So Bush I saw to it that the US took command of UNITAF and contributed roughly 25,000 soldiers to it, including JSOC ninjas.

Bush I was a successful oilman, and at the time, according to Keith Yearman ([2007] 2011), “Nearly two-thirds of Somalia was allocated to the American oil giants Conoco, Amoco, Chevron and Phillips.” These “giants” were prospecting for oil because Somalia’s geomorphology was promising, though none had yet been found in sufficient quantities to pump. Bush’s security elites were well aware of the US oil exploration. Conoco in particular had been courting the State Department, helping it out and supplying information about the prospecting. Arrangements were made for President Bush I to send a letter of appreciation to the head of Conoco, thanking the company for all its assistance. There is no direct proof that Bush I committed US troops to UNITAF in order to better protect the empire’s oil interests. Still, it is plausible that that idea of securing oil interests while earning humanitarian merit played a role in his decision to send the 25,000 troops, which is what suggests that the empire was at least partly fighting for oil, even though it had not yet found any.

Unfortunately, fiasco loomed. Bush I exited the presidency in 1993, leaving the US soldiers sweltering in Somalia, where gradually their mission evolved from purely assisting humanitarian operations to taking sides in the warlord wars. Mohamed Farrah Aidid, the most formidable of the warlords, challenged the UN and found himself opposed by UNISOM. JSOC meat eaters were sent to capture him. As we already know, this

provoked the Black Hawk Down incident, precipitating withdrawal from Somalia. The Clinton administration formally ended its mission to Somalia in 1994. The UNISOM mission likewise ended in failure the next year.

Humanitarian intervention had ended with the humanitarians bolting for the exit from Somalia. The following years witnessed further proliferation of clan-based militias, each holding allegiance to a particular warlord. Operation Restore Hope might more aptly have been termed Operation Continue Hopelessness. No one warlord or combination of warlords possessed sufficient force to form a national government. As a former Somali foreign minister recalled, “It was as if the Somali state was over and everybody wanted to create his little turf to collect money and to become powerful just for personal gains, not for national gains” (in Scahill 2013: 127). However, the Americans were to return with the new decade.

With the start of the GWOT after 9/11, Bush II’s people began to worry about terrorism in Somalia. As Paul Wolfowitz, then Rumsfeld’s Deputy Defense Secretary, put it in late 2001: “People mention Somalia for obvious reasons. It’s a country virtually without a government, a country that has a certain al-Qaeda presence already” (in Scahill 2013: 123). Rumsfeld himself said, as reported by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, “Somalia has been a place that has harbored al-Qaeda and, to my knowledge, still is” (Drones Team: 2012b). Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz oversimplified a more complex situation.

It was true that there was an al-Qaeda presence in Somalia throughout the 1990s. But they had not been especially successful. They tried to ally with the homegrown Islamist group al-Ittihad al-Islami, but the alliance went sour. Al-Qaeda’s success was so limited that, as one experienced observer concluded, “U.S. intelligence officials came up with a verdict that Somalia was actually inoculated from foreign terrorist groups, that it’s just fundamentally inhospitable, that the clan system is so closed to foreigners that there’s just no way that these groups can operate” (in Cohn 2010: 3). The Vulcans did not get this message.

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism has revealed that “the US has been carrying out extensive covert military operations inside Somali since 2001,” executed by the JSOC and CIA, the latter possessing a “secret” base at the Mogadishu airport (Drones Team 2012b: 2). These soldiers were “routinely” used “for surveillance, reconnaissance, and assault and capture operations.” They were supported by “helicopters, airstrikes, AC-130 gunships,” and, during the Obama regime, by drones (ibid.: 2). Thus, starting in 2001 the empire was back, with boots on the ground in direct global warring.

One of Washington’s strategies was to seek alliances with warlords, paying them and providing them with weapons to attack Islamists—any Is-

lamists, including al-Qaeda. Regarding this strategy, the previously quoted Somali foreign minister commented that Washington “thought that the warlords were strong enough to chase away the Islamists or get rid of them. But it did completely the opposite. Completely the opposite. It was folly” (in Scahill 2013: 129). This was so because Somalis resisted both the warlords and their Yankee overlords by creating institutional alternatives to the warlords. Al-Qaeda assisted them in this process.

One of these alternatives was the Islamic Courts Union (ICU), a coalition of eleven courts that was forged to provide judicial order in different regions of Somalia. The law they used was Islamic (*sharia*), so they came to be called sharia courts. Because ICU used Islamic law, the Americans saw them as Islamists allied with al-Qaeda, and therefore as the enemy. The US supported the ICU’s rivals, the CIA-backed Transitional Federal Government (TFG). The ICU was popular throughout much of Somalia, as it returned a semblance of law and order. It also had its own militias. These were largely victorious, and in June 2006 the ICU moved into Mogadishu and began to govern.

Somalis look back on this time as one of peacefulness and honest rule. Tranquility was fleeting, in part because even though the TFG was “feeble, faction-ridden, corrupt, and incompetent” (Prendergast in Hanson and Kaplan 2008), the Vulcans judged the ICU to be an Islamist regime supportive of terrorists. So in 2006–2007 Bush II’s security elites did the TFG a favor by enlisting Ethiopian troops, who attacked the ICU. There was debate as to whether the Ethiopians would have attacked regardless of US support. Carl Bloise (2007) has written, “Forget about all that stuff about Ethiopia having a ‘tacit’ o.k. from Washington to invade Somalia. The decision was made at the White House and the attack had military support from the Pentagon. The governments are too much in sync and the Ethiopians too dependent on the U.S. to think otherwise.” The Americans provided JSOC ninjas, CIA operatives, intelligence, and air support to their Ethiopian proxies. The ICU was routed.

Thereafter, the US and the Ethiopians stayed on as an occupying force. A spirited violent resistance to the occupiers was mounted, and continues. Al-Qaeda helped support the opposition to the TFG and their imperial helpers. By the end of 2008, humbled by paramilitaries like al-Shabaab, the Ethiopians had had enough. They withdrew, turning over defense of the TFG to African Union Mission in Somalia forces (AMISOM) consisting largely of Ugandan and Kenyan troops trained and armed by the US.

Al-Qaeda, which overall had been something of a failure in Somalia during the 1990s, became “resurgent” during this period (Cohn 2010: 3). This upswing was due its support for al-Shabaab (literally “the Boys” in

Somali), the ICU's youth militia. Al-Shabaab had been relatively insignificant prior to the attack by the Ethiopians.<sup>30</sup> But after this attack, tutored and supplied by al-Qaeda and responding to the US-Ethiopian occupation, it conquered large portions of Somalia between 2007 and 2009. Consequently, Scahill says, "US policy had backfired spectacularly, transforming a ragtag group of relative nobodies in Somalia in just a few short years, into the new heroes of al-Qaeda's global struggle," so that the US Leviathan was strengthening "the very threat it was intended to crush" (2013: 229, 494).

In the years following 2009, the JSOC and AMISOM mounted a counter-offensive. Al-Shabaab was driven from Mogadishu in 2011 and forced to return to rural guerrilla tactics. That same year Obama began a policy of targeted assassinations by drones. However, al-Shabaab has survived. In 2012 Obama's security elites offered a bounty of many millions of dollars for information concerning al-Shabaab leaders. Al-Shabaab, for its part, offered a twelve-camel reward to anyone who could provide information on President Obama's whereabouts, and a two-camel reward for information about the secretary of state (CNN Wire Staff 2009). Al-Shabaab attacked a crowd watching a soccer match in July 2010 in Kampala, Uganda's capital, killing seventy-four. In September 2013 it attacked an elite Nairobi shopping mall, killing at least sixty-seven. It struck again in February 2014 with a suicide bombing back in Mogadishu, suggesting, according to one diplomat, that it could "strike at will" (Sheikh and Omar 2014). Whether this is correct is unclear, as the JSOC and AMISOM offensive has been extensive. Nevertheless, some fret that al-Shabaab is a threat to the US homeland (Samatar 2013). Consider the implications of what has happened in Somalia since 1991 as they relate to the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délire*s.

*The Anti-Terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délire*s: To Bush II's Security Elites 3.0 after 9/11, Somalia looked like a failed state awash in terrorists including al-Qaeda, presenting the risk that when the state returned it would be governed by those terrorists. So starting in 2001, the Vulcans elected to fight al-Qaeda there, even though their intelligence told them that it had not flourished in Somalia. They granted themselves Shultzian Permission because ever since the fiasco of the Black Hawk Down incident, Washington had believed peaceful interactions with terrorists were not possible. This, then, was implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire*.

The situation with oil was more complex. Two reasons for the empire's warring in Somalia pertained to oil. Recall that prior to Siad Barre's ouster, nearly two-thirds of the country's territory had been granted as oil con-

cessions to US oil companies and prospecting was actively pursued. This meant that, among other matters, when Bush I sent in US troops he was providing military protection to US oil firms. This protection, if successful, would have permitted Conoco and other US oil companies to control Somalia's oil production. Unfortunately, the global warring Somalia experienced after 1993 ended oil exploration. In 2013, though, exploration was set to begin anew (Manson 2013).

The second reason for the US's military interest in Somalia concerns the fact that the country juts into the sea lanes by which Persian Gulf oil travels from producers to markets. A hostile regime in Somalia exposes those sea lanes and could play havoc with the transportation of oil, jeopardizing its distribution and the realization of its profits with nasty consequences for both the US and the global economy. So, in waging global war on Somalia, the empire fought to control distribution of Persian Gulf oil. Thus, global warring in Somalia aided the empire's global control of oil in two different ways and as such was an implementation of the of the oil-control public *délire*.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asserted before a Congressional committee in 2013 that Somalia was “a success story” (McCarthy 2013). Really? US global warring began with the butchering of America's elite troops; led on to CIA and JSOC operations supporting warlordism and growing the ranks of two terrorist organizations, al-Qaeda and al-Shabaab, all the while contributing to many, many innocent civilians deaths. It seems inappropriate to claim operations designed to fight terrorism were a “success” when what they did was increase terrorism. Now, however, attention turns to Uganda.

### Uganda: “Beacon of Hope”?

Winston Churchill once called Uganda “the pearl of Africa” (Sseppuuya 2012). The “pearl”—a small (91,136 square miles), landlocked county—is in many areas a high, lush, tropical place of haunting natural beauty. Its major advantage lies in the fertility of its soils, which produce subsistence crops and some coffee. Compared to African goliaths like Nigeria and South Africa, Uganda appears an unimportant place. Nevertheless, during a 1997 African tour Secretary of State Albright found it “a beacon of hope” (in Lischer 2006: 88). Perhaps this was because by the 1990s, Uganda had become the little proxy that could. How this transpired, and how it relates to the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*, are explored next in a reconnaissance that begins with a discussion of Uganda's checkered post-independence political history.



## *Two Despots and a Lot of People Dead*

Independence was achieved in 1962, when Milton Obote became the first president. Seven years later he suffered an assassination attempt, and thereafter his regime tended toward repression. Opposition political parties were banned. A state of emergency was declared and remained in place for much of his rule. A secret police, led by Obote's cousin, oppressed a large number of people. Idi Amin, then commander of Uganda's army, appeared to have saved the day in 1971 when he overthrew Obote in a coup.

But there was a problem: Amin was an even more forbidding despot. A *Time* magazine article depicted him as a “killer and clown, big-hearted buffoon and strutting martinet” (“Amin” 1977). According to one estimate, this “big hearted” guy, with the help of his secret police, killed 500,000 of his fellow citizens (Keatley 2003). Eventually the US grew weary of Amin. The US ambassador to Uganda in 1973 described Amin's government as “racist ... brutal, inept, bellicose, irrational, ridiculous, and militaristic,” not to mention “xenophobic” (Melady 1973) and shut its embassy.

In 1979 the Tanzanian army invaded Uganda after Uganda threatened to invade Tanzania. Amin was driven from power. In the subsequent scramble to control the presidency, Obote once again became president, directing a repressive policy against Amin's supporters. This provoked a civil war that eventually led to Obote's defeat in 1985, though not before his regime was accused of having killed up to 300,000 people (Amnesty International 1985). The first twenty-three years of Ugandan independence can be summarized a two despots and a lot of people dead—and then there was Yoweri Museveni.

## *The US Leviathan Finds Its “Beacon of Hope”*

Museveni, like Déby in Chad, has been a consummate military leader. He had led a rebel movement against Amin, and when Obote took power Museveni created a new rebel movement against him, the National Resistance Army, which eventually was successful. Additionally, Museveni is a born-again Christian—one of the few such fundamentalists to have embraced Marxism, which he did while studying at the University of Dar es Salaam with, among others, Walter Rodney.

However, once in the presidency, Museveni disremembered and disrespected Marx, and got along just fine with the neoliberal structural adjustment programs that the US was foisting on developing nations at the time. This included IMF loans. Initially, the influx of IMF capital appeared to help the economy. His government appeared to have successfully fought the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Further, he turned the Uganda People's Dem-

ocratic Force (UPDF) into an efficient institution of counterinsurgency. Museveni represented, and favored, peoples from the southern part of Uganda. He harassed peoples in the north, especially the Teso, Kakwa, Lugbara, Acholi, and Lango. Unsurprisingly, a number of rebel movements developed there, including the Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA) and the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM) led by Alice Lakwena.

By the 1990s the UPDF was suppressing these insurgencies, and by 1996 it had begun forcing northern peoples into camps resembling concentration camps. The UPDA and the HSM were crushed, but out of the latter rebellion came the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) led by Joseph Kony. It was at this time in 1997 that Secretary Albright celebrated Museveni as her "beacon of hope." Howard French (1997), the *New York Times* reporter who covered this story, noted she did so "largely for security reasons"—US security, that is, not the security of occupied northern Ugandans. Museveni might have been a onetime Marxist, a born-again Christian, and a failed structural adjuster; but above all else, from the perspective of Security Elites 3.0, the man could do COIN.

*They Made Him into a Cheap Proxy:* Accordingly, Washington security elites have courted Museveni's military prowess, beginning in the Clinton administration. He obliged, and the State Department has designated Uganda a "key US partner" and "a leader advancing efforts to resolve conflicts throughout the region" ("US Military Involvement in Uganda" 2012). Richard Vokes (2013), using data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, documents the magnitude of military funding, finding,

that between the periods 2002–2006 and 2007–2011, Uganda's arms imports increased by 300 percent. During 2006–11, Kampala imported 38,000 small arms and light weapons (nearly 20 percent of the total across Africa), whilst in 2011, Uganda's total defense expenditure exceeded US\$1 billion—by far the highest in the region.

It was US financial backing that enabled Uganda to indulge in this arms buildup. Baldor (2012) reports that Uganda received \$41 million in 2012. These figures probably underestimate US military support for Uganda. They do not include funds coming from the CIA or those supporting UPDF's contingent in the UN's AMISOM operations in Somalia, where Uganda's has been the largest, on the order of about 6,000 soldiers at any one time.

According to Remigius Kintu (2011), writing from Goma in the Great Lakes region, this imperial support has made "Uganda ... the headquarters of a sinister U.S. and British military conspiracy to plunder the region." Certainly, UPDF soldiers have been active. Since the beginning of

the US alliance they have been in Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, the Central African Republic, what is now the Republic of South Sudan, Liberia, the Darfur region of Sudan, the Ivory Coast, and as far away as East Timor. The Ugandan government has embraced its anti-terrorist role. A major Ugandan newspaper expressed this in a headline announcing “U.S. boosts Uganda’s fight against terrorism” (Candia 2012). Moreover, Uganda sees itself as having a regional role in eliminating terrorism. For example, as reported in 2013, a Rwandan newspaper announced that “Uganda’s Minister of Internal Affairs,” Hillary Onek, “called for collaboration of East African nations to fight terrorism” (“Ugandan Minister Calls for Joint Efforts” 2013).

Here it should be clarified that the amounts of money the US has invested in paying a strategic rent to Uganda to provide military service are trifling, compared to the amounts invested in other world areas (which run from the billions to the trillions). The Security Elites 3.0 got a good deal. Museveni and his soldiers are a cheap proxy. UPDF soldiers die so that US ninjas do not. The next section will illuminate certain consequences of this by considering US policy toward Uganda in the context of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*.

*The Anti-terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délires*: First, the fact that Washington has paid Uganda to hunt its terrorists since the 1990s is yet another instance of the implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire*. But what about oil? For a long time there was no oil. Uganda produced coffee, bananas, and proxies. Then, between 2002 and 2007, commercially exploitable reserves of oil were located along the Albertine Rift on the shores of Lake Albert close to the Democratic Republic of Congo (“Uganda’s Oil” 2010). An estimated 2.5 billion barrels of reserves have been found, enough to make Uganda a mid-level producer (EIA 2013). In 2012, Uganda signed PSAs with a consortium of Anglo-Irish (Tullow), French (Total), and Chinese (China National Offshore Oil Corporation) companies. The oil-control public *délire* predicts that the US Leviathan will move to facilitate establishing some control over this oil. In 2011, in one of the first direct interventions by AFRICOM, one hundred JSOC ninjas were sent to Uganda. They were there to help hunt down the LRA head Joseph Kony, even though the LRA, having been reduced to a few hundred followers, was not a credible terrorist threat and certainly not a terrorist threat in Uganda, because it was no longer there.

However, the Americans knew, and the Museveni government was aware, that oil provokes conflict. An oil geologist and a Congolese soldier were killed in clashes along the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2007. Two years later, the *New York Times* reported that “con-

flicts between rebel militia operating in the region and Congolese, Ugandan and United Nations forces are common” (Browne 2009). Here, then, was a reason for the presence of US Special Ops: they were there to help ensure that any violent altercations that arose could be attended to by US soldiers in the interest of the empire. In other words, they were preparing the battlefield for implementation of the oil-control public *délire*.

The use of Uganda in support of imperial *délires* has had consequences for Ugandan governance. Over the years Museveni has become something of a despot. According to Charles Okwir (2011), he is a slightly more sophisticated version of Idi Amin. His regime indulges in “the harassment of ... political opponents, detention without trial, torture, extra-judicial killings, suppression of protests and homophobic witch-hunts” (Tatchell 2009). The same 2005 law under which Uganda returned to multiparty politics also removed presidential term limits, and as Museveni rigs elections, it effectively grants him the authority to rule for life, undermining democratic processes. This will give him time to continue his most successful development intervention: growing his personal wealth. A Ugandan source identified Museveni as the sixth richest world leader, worth \$11 billion (“Museveni Is No. 6” 2008).

More generally, Paul Omach, a professor of security studies at Makerere University in Kampala, has said, “The paradox of external military assistance in authoritarian states is that it ends up supporting authoritarianism” (in “US Military Involvement in Uganda” 2012). There is an irony here. The US opposes Sudan’s Omer al-Bashir, an authoritarian gentleman, but supports such rulers as Museveni in Uganda and Déby in Chad. The only difference between the former ruler and the latter two is that Museveni and Déby, with their neo-colonial iterations of colonial *tirailleurs senegalais*, enthusiastically help the Security Elites 3.0 implement the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*. Let us move from Africa to Latin America, so as to consider the circumstances concerning energy resources in the New American Empire’s “backyard.”

## The Latin American Theater

The “backyard” of course was the Caribbean, Central America, and South America, where there is a considerable history of resistance to *Yanqui imperialismo*, sometimes with socialist alternatives. These were everywhere violently repressed by *Yanqui imperialistas*, so much so that by the end of the Cold War the US Leviathan “had executed a reign of bloody terror” through indirect, often covert global warring “in the name of containing

Communism” (Grandin 2006: 4; see also Gill 2004; Brands 2010; Grow 2008).

With regard to petroleum energy, Latin America was estimated in the year 2000 to hold 20 percent of the world’s known oil reserves. Latin American oil was easy to transport, closer to North American markets, and hence less expensive, which made Latin America a significant oil and gas supplier to the empire beginning in the early twentieth century. By 2010 it provided the US with roughly a quarter of its oil (“Latin American Oil Exports” 2010). Through much of the 1990s Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia were major suppliers of oil imports to the US. Additionally, Bolivia was an oil and gas producer and Ecuador, a gas producer. Brazil, with recently discovered oil fields off Rio de Janeiro, is an emerging oil and gas giant. Mexico in the 1990s turned to neoliberalism and, through the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), integrated itself more closely with the US economy. However, by the end of the Cold War—lamentably, from the perspective of Security Elites 3.0 and their Latin American clients—leftist politics had re-emerged. This happened in Venezuela and Colombia, with strikingly different results. Consider the situation in each country, beginning with Venezuela and concentrating upon Hugo Chávez.

Chávez, born in 1954, led Venezuela from 1999 until his death in 2013. Instead of coming from a *casa grande* (upper-class family), Hugo, descended from Native American and black ancestors, was born in a hut with a mud floor to a poor family from the *llaneros* (plains). Not a hybrid imperial elite, he nevertheless was fascinated by one *Yanqui* thing: the boy from the outback grew up a lover of *béisbol*, dreamed of playing in Yankee Stadium, and joined the military to be able to play the game. Eventually he became a paratroop officer and a player in his country’s *politica*, which consisted of the Social Democrats and the Christian Democrats governing in alternation (from 1958 through 1998). Regardless of which party was in power, governance was done in corrupt ways that favored the capitalist *clase dominante*.

Chávez developed an antipathy for Venezuelan elites and a desire to lead social revolution. He helped organize the Fifth Republic Movement, founded in 1997, and led it to victory in the 1998 national elections. As president he introduced Bolivarianism, a political ideology that emphasized participatory democratic councils, the nationalization of key industries, and poverty reduction policies, including those that increased government subsidizing of health and education. Once elected, among other matters, Chávez leveled a fierce attack upon Yankee imperialism that culminated in his 2006 speech to the UN General Assembly in which he labeled Bush II

“the Devil.” Many around the world agreed, though to US Security Elites 3.0 Chávez was not only an impertinent demagogue but also the fourth largest supplier of oil to the devil’s empire.<sup>31</sup>

After the Soviet Union’s collapse and China’s enchantment with capitalism, Venezuela, like Cuba, remained one of the few apparently successful leftist experiments. Hermeneuts in both the US and Venezuela spent an enormous amount of energy deriding both Chávez and his socialist project. Just how far this derision went is explored below, after a brief consideration of Colombia.

Bogotá was a major oil exporter to the US by the 1990s. It was also the home of long-standing leftist insurgencies. The first of these was led by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, Peoples’ Army (FARC-EP), founded as the military wing of the Colombian Communist Party in 1964. At its height it had perhaps eighteen thousand soldiers struggling for the welfare of rural peasants. As of 2013 FARC-EP had suffered setbacks but ultimately remained undefeatable. A second major Colombian insurgency was that of the National Liberation Army (ELN), founded in the same year as FARC-EP; but a smaller organization, with perhaps four thousand soldiers at its height. The ELN, whose leaders were directly inspired by the Cuban revolution, has espoused an ideology that mixes Marxism with Liberation theology.<sup>32</sup>

Both FARC-EP and the ELN view Yankee imperialists as the enemy and US oil companies in Colombia as agents of this imperialism. At their height in the early 1990s, FARC-EP and the ELN controlled an estimated 30 to 35 percent of Colombia’s territory. Attacks on oil installations featured prominently in their tactics.<sup>33</sup> US Security Elites 3.0 were aware of the danger of Colombian insurgency. Marc Grossman (2002: 36), Bush II’s Under Secretary of State for political affairs, told Congress in 2000 that “FARC and ELN also represent a danger to the \$4.3 billion in direct U.S. investment in Colombia”—much of which was investment in petroleum resources, he might have added.

However, the Security Elites 3.0 did not worry excessively over this anti-imperialism. As we have seen, the Americas were the region where the US had successfully waged indirect, covert global wars. Client militaries through the region were well armed and well trained. Between 1950 and 1979 the US gave \$2,252.6 million to militaries south of the border, providing another \$5,071.5 millions from 1980 to 1993 (Klare and Andersen 1996: 29–30). Some sixty thousand soldiers had been trained at the School of the Americas “in combat skills and counter-insurgency doctrine” (Gill 2004: 6). So the apparatus of indirect global warring was securely in place throughout Central and South America. Consider its operation in Colombia and its possible inception in Venezuela.

## Colombia: A War on Drugs to Get Terrorists to Protect the Oil

In 2014 the US was involved in global warring in Colombia, and had been for a long time. In principle, this involvement was part of the US war on drugs. As in Uganda, Chad, Sudan, and Somalia, in Colombia there was civil war between the governing regime and private militias. The US entered this war on the side of the government. Bush II explicitly linked US assistance to terrorism in his 2002 National Security Strategy, asserting, “In Colombia, we recognize the link between terrorist and extremist groups that challenges the security of the state and drug trafficking activities that help finance the operations of such groups” (in Marcella 2008: 1).

“Plan Colombia,” originally conceived by Colombia’s President Andrés Pastrano in the late 1990s and funded in part by the Clinton administration in 2000, was developed to fight this war on terrorists who in part financed their operations through profits from drug sales.<sup>34</sup> After 9/11, the Bush II administration proposed “an integrated counterinsurgency campaign,” in Secretary Rumsfeld’s words (Rumsfeld 2011: 629), that increased US support to Plan Colombia. Between 2000 and 2005 the Plan, supplemented by other forms of U.S. foreign assistance, provided \$4.5 billion to Colombia (Veillette 2005: 1), of which some 78 percent goes to the Colombian military and police. Why has American assistance been so generous?

Doug Stokes (2005) and Francisco Ramirez Cuellar (2005) have both criticized Plan Colombia, arguing that it is less a war on drugs than a war against leftist guerrillas, and that as such it exhibits a continuity with Cold War imperial *délires*. Colombia’s two most important Marxist movements, the FARC and the ELN, were both classified as terrorist organizations in 1997. Certainly, in part, imperial munificence to Colombia pertains to the fight against communists now interpreted as narco-terrorists. However, recall that there is oil in country.

In fact, Bogotá was the eighth largest supplier of oil to the US in the first decade of the new millennium (Energy Global 2010). Occidental Petroleum—the same company that had hoped to expand into Sudan—was, and is, the major US oil company in Colombia, where it has operated since 1983 in Arauca Province. The FARC and ELN threatened Occidental’s operations there. Between 1986 and 1997, one account has it, around 79 million barrels of crude oil were spilled as a result of terrorist attacks on pipelines, and attacks on pipelines totaled 619 between 2001 and 2004 (Marcella 2003). Clearly, such “armed conflict ... led to production decreases” (Veillette 2005: 10).

The Colombian state had fought FARC and the ELN for decades before implementation of Plan Colombia. However, when the plan went into effect it instituted a major increase in the violent force at Bogotá’s disposal.

Between 2000 and 2008, according to the US Government Accountability Office (GAO), funds went to

- An *Army Aviation Brigade*, to equip and train helicopter army unit with on the order 55 helicopters;
- The *National Police Service*, to provide support for the order of 90 police aircraft; The *National Eradication Program*, whose function was to eradicate coca and opium crops;
- An elite *National Police Commando Brigade*, known as Junglas (Jenzen-Jones 2011), to train and equip them;
- A *Counter-narcotics Brigade* to train, equip, and construct a base for about 1,800 soldiers;
- A *Joint Special Forces Command*, to train and equip about 2,000 soldiers;
- A *Police Presence in Conflict Zones Program* to train and equip 68 squadrons of police, with each squadron composed of 120 police;
- A *Coastal and River Interdiction Program* to train and equip navy and marine units that included 8 coastal interdiction and 95 river patrol boats;
- An *Air Interdiction Program* that included provision of surveillance planes and radar installations;
- An *Infrastructure Security Program* that provided Special Ops training and equipment for approximately 1 brigade to guard oil infrastructure. (GAO 2008)

Of course, this latter brigade has protected the Arauca/Caribbean pipeline vital to Occidental. Arauca itself “hosts the greatest concentration of U.S. military advisors and has Colombia’s worst human rights situation” (Weinberg 2004: 1).

Not only were the Colombian armed forces strengthened by US military support in the war against FARC and the ELN, but they were further aided in their warring by reactionary paramilitaries. These did not originate as a Colombian idea; rather, they were Washington’s suggestion. A US Special Warfare team headed by General William Yarborough recommended in 1962 that private militias be created to operate in support of the state (Livingstone 2004). Colombia accepted the recommendation, and paramilitaries were in operation throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Then, in 1991, the Colombian Defense Ministry issued the Armed Forces Directive 200-05/91 based on CIA and US Southern Command advice, which specified the techniques for the dirty war that characterized the 1990s and early 2000s (Human Rights Watch 1996). Clandestinely, US Special Ops taught these techniques.



Equally covertly, the paramilitaries were aided by certain US businesses in Colombia, including Chiquita Brands, Drummond Coal, and Coca-Cola (Chomsky and Cuellar 2005). A process of demobilizing the paramilitaries supposedly began in 2003. According to Human Rights Watch (2010), it was unsuccessful. Through the years, Colombian paramilitaries—whether Muerte a Secuestradores, Servicios Especiales de Vigilancia y Seguridad Privada, or Autodefensas Forces de Colombia—have practiced especially brutal counterinsurgency.<sup>35</sup>

*Anti-terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délires:* US military operations in Colombia have been substantial. They are sometimes overt, mostly furtive, and normally indirect. The Clinton administration's embrace of Plan Colombia was an implementation of the anti-terrorist public *délire* insofar as it was directed at the FARC and ELN, which had been designated terrorist. However, Plan Colombia also directly helped Occidental Petroleum and its subcontractors maintain capital accumulation by literally riding shotgun on their pipeline. Thus it helped Occidental maintain its control over its portion of Colombian oil and is an implementation of the oil-control public *délire*.

What is the logic of US global warring in Colombia? Security Elites 3.0 have interpreted Colombia as a “weak state” (Marcella 2003: ix). They understand Bogotá as resembling the African central governments whose force resources were not powerful enough to eliminate violent competitors for state resources. In such a situation, granting of Shultzian Permission was advisable because Colombia was already at war with its rebels. Consequently, US security elites adopted the solution applied in Chad, Somalia, and Uganda, bolstering Colombia's violent force. The result was indirect warring in Colombia that contributed to grim human rights abuses (Livingstone 2004; Dudley 2004; Hristov 2009; R. Kirk 2003; P. Scott 2003). So in Colombia, the US has been fighting a war on drugs, to get the terrorists, to protect oil—a string of events whose logic leads toward “state terror” (Stokes 2005: 57–84). Attention turns now to seven new US military bases planned for Colombia with implications for Venezuela.

### Venezuela: “All Contingencies Are in Place”

Washington was wary of Venezuela once Chávez took to hurling invectives at its security elites—notably calling out in the UN that Bush II was “the Devil.” Worse than throwing verbal abuse, Chávez helped raise world oil prices, weakened the control and profits of the majors, and introduced innovative plans to use wealth from oil to assist the poor rather than affluent

elites. For example, in January 2012, the US Congress cut funding to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program by 25 percent just as the winter cold was beginning and heating oil prices were exceptionally high. In that same year, Chavez provided free heating oil to 100,000 poor American families through CITGO, a subsidiary of the Venezuelan national oil company (Wilkins 2013).

Of course the Devil was in the details. The US needed Venezuela, which in 2012 was the world's fourth largest exporter of crude oil to the US. It had the largest proven reserves in the western hemisphere and perhaps the world (Rowling 2012). Oil prices rose in the US when supplies were disrupted in late 2002 and early 2003 by a strike at *Petróleos de Venezuela*, the state-owned oil company. Further, the US has been in competition with China over Venezuelan oil. Senator Richard Lugar, chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (2003–2007), said in a letter to the GAO that “we must make sure that all contingencies are in place to mitigate the effects of a significant shortfall of Venezuelan oil production, as this could have serious consequences for our nation's security and for the consumer at the pump” (Webb-Vidal and Cameron 2005). This section documents certain of the Security Elites 3.0's “contingencies” to defend against a “shortfall” of Venezuelan oil.

First, consider a coup attempt against Chávez, who on 13 November 2001 passed a package of forty-nine laws crucial to instituting the Bolivarian revolution. Two of these especially incensed the Venezuelan *clase dominante*. The first was a law aimed at *Petróleos de Venezuela* requiring that more oil revenues be distributed to the poor. The second, a land reform law, provided for expropriation of unused land on large estates, the better to equitably distribute land resources. On learning of these laws, the bombastic *Daily Beast*, a US Internet journal, wondered, “Is Hugo Chávez Insane?” (Gunson 2001).

Thereafter, certain Venezuelan economic and military elites plotted to remove the “insane” guy from office. First there were anti-government protests; then, on 11 April 2002, a coup was initiated. It may have been the world's fastest failed coup. Chávez was expelled from his presidency on 11 April but was then restored on 13 April by massive public support and a military loyal to him. He was initially detained by members of the military and pro-business elites affiliated with the Venezuelan Federation of Chambers of Commerce (Fedecámaras). Pedro Carmona, manager of several petrochemical companies and head of Fedecámaras, was declared the interim president. He immediately voided the country's 1999 Constitution and dissolved the Venezuelan National Assembly and the Supreme Court. However, the coup provoked an immediate, popular, pro-Chávez uprising that the Metropolitan Police failed to suppress. Moreover, significant ele-

ments of both the military and the anti-Chávez movement were unwilling to support Carmona. The pro-Chávez Presidential Guard eventually recaptured the Miraflores presidential palace, prompting the collapse of the Carmona government and Chávez's return.

What was the Bush II regime's role in the coup? Unsurprisingly, it denied everything. After all, the Vulcans had their hands full, given that they were attacking Afghanistan and plotting the same against Iraq at the time. Nonetheless, the evidence, argued vigorously by Eva Golinger (2006, 2007), suggests that Security Elites 3.0, between other wars and plots, managed to squeeze in some clandestine complicity in the failed coup. Golinger—who is openly a revolutionary who supported Chávez—has her critics (see “El Código Chávez” 2005). Yet in 2009 ex-President Carter told a Venezuelan newspaper, “I think there is no doubt that in 2002, the United States had at the very least full knowledge about the coup, and could even have been directly involved” (in “US ‘Likely Behind’ Chavez Coup” 2009). Meanwhile, on the Venezuelan side Admiral Carlos Molina, a major coup leader, has said, “We felt we were acting with US support” (in Avilés 2009; for information asserting a US role in the coup attempt see Taglieri 2002 and Fuentes 2002).

Golinger (2006) asserted that the CIA used the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and USAID as a cover for its activities related to the coup. Perhaps the most compelling evidence of Washington's involvement in the coup comes from a document of its own that ostensibly downplays this possibility. Senator Christopher Dodd, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, requested a study of the US role in the 2002 failed coup that was conducted by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). The report judged,

While it is clear that NED, Department of Defense (DOD), and other U.S. assistance programs provided training, institution building, and other support to individuals and organizations understood to be actively involved in the brief ouster of the Chávez government, we found no evidence that this support directly contributed, or was intended to contribute, to that event. (OIG 2002: 3).

The NED was previously discussed regarding its involvement in the Balkans. In principle, it is a NGO; in reality, it is funded by the US Congress. In principle, its goal is to strengthen democratic institutions; in practice, it has been associated with the “color revolutions” in which existing regimes are subverted by agents with NED training, organization, and financial support (Chaulia 2006). The string of events involved in such subversions is, as Meyssan (2012) explains, to “exacerbate all underlying frustrations, blame the political apparatus for all the problems, manipulate the youth according to the Freudian ‘patricidal’ scenario, organize a coup, and then

propagandize that the government was brought down by the ‘street.’” This is precisely what the DOD and NED officials tried to do in Venezuela; which suggests US indirect and covert involvement in the attempt to overthrow Chávez, an attempt that involved exercise of violence force on the part of the coup plotters. Unfortunately, from their perspective, they failed. What has been the US response to the Bolivarian revolution since 2002?

In its remaining years, the Bush II administration, preoccupied elsewhere, largely restricted itself to verbal sparring with Venezuela. Initially, the Obama administration’s security elites made comments suggesting they would follow Bush II’s lead. Then, seven months after assuming office, the Obama administration deviated from the Vulcan policy of verbal scolding and announced that it planned to increase military operations in Colombia by “constructing 7 new US military bases” and providing additional US troops for those bases (Briss 2009). What did these bases have to do with Venezuela?

The Obama regime has publicly stated that the bases are for counter-narcotics operations. John Lindsay-Poland, co-director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation’s Task Force on Latin America and the Caribbean, has suggested another answer to this question. He queries the bases’ proposed location, observing that

none of them are on the coast of the Pacific Ocean, where aircraft from the Manta base patrolled for drug traffic—supposedly with great success. ... Three of the bases are clustered near each other on the Caribbean coast, not far from existing U.S. military sites in Aruba and Curacao—and closer to Venezuela than to the Pacific Ocean. Why are U.S. negotiators apparently forgoing Pacific sites, if counternarcotics is still part of the U.S. military mission? (In Briss 2009)

The bases would be on the Pacific coast if they were to be used to interdict narcotics. But none are on the coast, and three are “closer to Venezuela than the Pacific Ocean.” Perhaps the new bases are about a new “lily-pad” military strategy vis-à-vis Venezuela, discussed further below.

The border area of Columbia and Venezuela, especially where the Colombian department of Arauca borders the Venezuelan state of Apure, has become tumultuous. On the Venezuelan side, the “terrorist” FARC and the ELN sometimes take refuge. Colombian paramilitaries sometimes go after them and stay as enemies of the Venezuelan government. Concerning these Colombia infiltrations of the borderlands, Eva Golinger (2010 reported that in 2009,

the Venezuelan government captured three spies from the Colombian intelligence agency, DAS, and discovered several active destabilization and espionage operations against Cuba, Ecuador and Venezuela. The operations—Fénix, Sa-

lomón and Falcón, respectively, were revealed in documents found with the captured DAS agents. Approximately two weeks ago, 10 bodies were found in Táchira, a border zone with Colombia. After completing the relevant investigations, the Venezuelan government discovered that the bodies belonged to Colombian paramilitaries infiltrated inside Venezuelan territory. This dangerous paramilitary infiltration from Colombia forms part of a destabilization plan against Venezuela that seeks to create a paramilitary state inside Venezuelan territory in order to breakdown President Chávez's government.

Luis Tascon, a member of the Venezuelan parliament and a Chávez supporter, describes the nature of this “paramilitary state”: “The paramilitaries were created to fight Colombia’s left-wing guerrillas. But right now, what is happening are incursions into Venezuela. The paramilitaries have bought large farms; they have relations with figures from the opposition, with large landowners who pay for the service of providing security.” Additionally, Tascon says, they “control the business, principally in Cucuta—with the support of the Armed Forces of Colombia [FAC], and the assistance of the Venezuelan opposition” (in McIlroy and Wynter 2006: 1). What seemed to be developing in the Venezuelan borderlands in the first decade of the new millennium was implantation of Colombian paramilitaries, creating a space of counterrevolutionary forces aimed at the Bolivarian revolution. Whether this was done with Washington’s connivance remains unclear. Of course, the US has long used reactionary paramilitaries as its proxies in Latin and Central America, an infamous example being the Contras in Nicaragua.

The positioning of the proposed bases “closer” to Venezuela may be part of a strategy to assist borderland subversion. David Vine (2012), writing of the Pentagon’s evolving tactics and strategies following 9/11, observes that “Washington’s garrisoning of the planet is on the rise, thanks to a new generation of bases the military calls ‘lily pads’ (as in a frog jumping across a pond toward its prey). These are small, secretive, inaccessible facilities with limited numbers of troops, Spartan amenities, and prepositioned weaponry and supplies.” Obama’s proposed Colombian bases would make splendid “lily pads.” JSOC ninjas could spring toward their prey, giving support to operations by contra paramilitaries in Venezuela.

At present, the fate of Washington’s lily pads is unclear. According to Lindsay-Poland (2011), the US military signed contracts to construct the Colombian bases in 2010, even though

Colombia’s Constitutional Court struck down the agreement that would give the United States military use of seven bases. ... Yet, even after the agreement was declared “non-existent” by Colombia’s highest court, the Pentagon initiated unprecedented amounts of new construction on bases in Colombia. The contracts place in serious doubt the Pentagon’s respect for Colombian sovereignty.

What they do not place in doubt is the Pentagon's adoption of lily pad tactics as an iteration of preliminary global warring to choreograph sabotage of the Bolivarian Revolution.

Even as the US prepares for military operations against Venezuela, it continues its support of subversion. Golinger (2010) reports that "the FRIDE Institute, a Spanish think tank, prepared with funding from the World Movement for Democracy (a project of the National Endowment for Democracy, or NED), has disclosed that international agencies are funding the Venezuelan opposition with a whopping \$40–50 million USD annually." This money is received from the US and its European clients and "given to the right wing opposition political parties, Primero Justicia (First Justice), Un Nuevo Tiempo (A New Time) and COPEI (Christian Democrat ultra-conservative party), as well as to a dozen or so NGOs, student groups and media organizations" (ibid.).

*The Anti-terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délire*: Possibly, the US imagines Colombia as a Latin American iteration of its Pakistani operations; that is, as a platform for military operations in a bordering country. Whether the empire will use Colombian lily pads to attack terrorists in Venezuela remains to be seen. If it did, it would be implementing the anti-terrorist public *délire*. The potential prize in this struggle is great. Should the US prevail and install a client regime in Caracas, US oil companies would benefit.

Further, returning Venezuela to client status would give the US government an advantage over China in the competition over Venezuelan petroleum products. Moreover, if it turns out that Venezuela does have the largest oil reserves in the world, then it is a major "prize" to be won in the struggle to control hydrocarbons. For the moment, the US might be said to be preparing the battlefield in Venezuela, first by weakening the central government by assisting its opposition, and second by setting up lily pads to support the portion of the Colombia-Venezuela border where counter-revolutionaries are being developed. The focus now turns to the Pacific.

## The Pacific Theater

In the first half of the twentieth century, the vast Pacific region stretching from the Americas to Asia was where oil was not, or at least was not very much. After World War II, the only significant Pacific oil producer was Indonesia. During the 1970s, however, US oil production was in decline, sources of oil and gas were becoming hard to find, and the possibility of global peak oil surfaced, all of which prompted the realization that there

was an energy “crisis.” It was time to begin prospecting for oil in challenging places.

Previously, as earlier reported, exploration for oil in difficult places like the seas had been limited for financial and technological reasons. However, the conjuncture of improved prospecting and drilling technologies and higher petroleum prices stimulated offshore exploration in the late 1970s and 1980s, triggering a veritable black gold rush in the 1990s. Oil and gas were found in the Gulf of Mexico, in the North Sea, offshore on the west coast of Africa, and off the coast of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. By the 1990s offshore oil exploration had moved to the Pacific Basin, involving China, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Australia, and the Philippines, often in areas over which there were competing sovereignty claims. The prospecting went well. By the early 2000s, at least one source estimated reserves in the South China Sea (stretching from the Strait of Malacca to the Strait of Taiwan) of about 213 billion barrels, approximately 80 percent of Saudi Arabia’s reserves (Kashi and Wang 2013). In at least one country, the Philippines, oil was discovered in a region where there was an anti-government insurgency. This situation is investigated next.

### **The Philippines: Always There, Always Ready**

The history of US imperialism in the Philippines begins in 1898. Following the Spanish-American War, the different islands of the Philippines passed from Spain to the US and became a formal US colony. Filipinos resisted, and from 1899 until 1913 there was brutal insurrection against Washington. Formal imperialism continued until 1946, when the US granted independence but nonetheless retained two large naval and air force bases at Subic Bay and the former Clark Field. These bases were a significant part of the military underpinning of US informal imperialism in Asia. The Philippines requested that the US remove the bases in 1991–1992. The request was respected, but the US continued to station large numbers of troops in the Philippines, with 30,000 to 50,000 reported in 2008 (Flounders 2008). At least some of these soldiers were JSOC, specifically the Joint Special Operations Task-Force Philippines (JSOTF-P), which operates with units of the Philippines military to conduct “humanitarian missions” that are “are really military operations” (*ibid.*).

Oil and gas deposits were found in 2005 on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao, which the US considers a “breeding ground” for terrorism (Bhattacharji 2009). Rebellion against the Philippine government on this and other southern, isolated islands has dragged on for forty years, in large part because a large, impoverished Muslim population is struggling for

land and political control in their homeland. Unsurprisingly, “the U.S. State Department has considered the southern Philippines a ‘terrorist safe haven’ since the classification was created in 2006” (ibid.). The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has been a major militia struggling against Manila.

With the discovery of oil, these struggles became even more significant, now that enormous potential oil revenues were at issue. Unsurprisingly, fighting flared between MILF and the government. Most of the combat has been in central Mindanao, which is rich in oil and gas reserves. The fighting has been heavy, resulting in approximately 150,000 fatalities since the late 1960s and almost three million people displaced since 2000 (McLeary 2013). Have US troops been involved in this fighting?

No Washington spokesperson has announced the sending of US troops to the Philippines, so if imperial participation is occurring, it is covert. Nevertheless, it is occurring. A Rand Corporation report describes “...a 14-year effort to address transnational terrorist threats in the historically restive southern Philippines...” (Robinson et.al. 2016: xi). The U.S. ‘area of operations’ in the Philippines presently covers 8,000 square miles, including the entire island of Mindanao” (Flounders 2008). Further, Miriam Santiago, an influential member of the Legislative Oversight Committee on the Visiting Forces Agreement of the Philippines Senate, has claimed that US troops are in combat in Mindanao, asserting that a Colonel David Maxwell, commander of the JSOTF-P, acknowledged this to be the case (Calica 2009).

What can be said about other US interventions in the Philippines? Subic Bay on the northwest coast of Luzon, the largest Philippine island, was the biggest American naval base outside the continental US until it was closed in 1992 and replaced by Subic Bay Freeport Zone. By 2013 increased US Navy ship visits, especially to Subic Bay, were attended by increased joint Philippine-US naval exercises. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta has said that 60 percent of US naval assets will be based in the Pacific by 2020 (Kashi and Wang 2013). These activities were part of a major shift in the US’s military resources, a change President Obama announced to the Australian Parliament in November 2011, when he said, “As we end today’s wars, I have directed my national security team to make our presence and mission in the Asia Pacific a top priority” (Obama 2011). This shift has been called the “Asian Pivot.” The Philippines, with its superb naval facilities at Subic Bay halfway across the Pacific, is an important element of that pivot.

US Security Elites 3.0 realize China is expanding its military power in the region, and the pivot is a way of protecting US security interests in the Pacific. Obviously, a key security interest is control over hydrocarbons. Importantly, as Mikkal Herberg (2013) puts it, summarizing the findings of a 2012 energy security workshop, “Asia has become ‘ground zero’ for



growth in global energy and commodity markets. The region's rapid economic growth is driving an enormous rise in the consumption of oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) to fuel booming motorization and industrial growth. This energy boom has been centered in China." China itself has begun extensive exploration for oil and gas in the South China Sea. It is in this light that the increase in naval activity in the Philippines should be understood, for as Kashi and Wang (2013) point out, "in Subic Bay ... the U.S. military is trying to protect a vast store of largely untapped energy reserves from being monopolized by China or any other country" by defending "energy shipping routes." In critical structural realist terms, this means that the Asian Pivot has made the Philippines a key place of preliminary global warring. What does such information imply for the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires*?

*The Anti-terrorist and Oil-Control Public Délires*: A striking point concerning the Philippines case is how quickly the US Leviathan was on the job. In 2005 oil and gas were found in Mindanao. A year later, the State Department declared it a "terrorist safe haven." In 2009 Colonel Maxwell admitted his JSOC ninjas were used "in battle in Mindanao." Within four years, that is, the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires* had been implemented in a new area where terrorists needed killing and oil needed controlling. Two years later, in 2011, it was time to take on the Chinese. The US naval presence expanded in and about Subic Bay as part of the Asian Pivot to better control oil by controlling sea lanes, with the objective of either denying hydrocarbons to China or keeping China from denying oil to the empire's clients. The US military, in the Philippines as elsewhere, was always there, always ready.

So the empire's Asian Pivot relies on naval force to control hydrocarbons in the Pacific. Here it is helpful to call attention to the fact that surface naval vessels are vulnerable to technologically astute foes, and the Chinese are technologically astute and militarily powerful.<sup>36</sup> Deployed against a potent foe, the Asian Pivot's force utilization strategy thus seems a problematic choreographing of the US Leviathan's violence. This ends the journey to the US Leviathan's warring in the years since 1990, a time when its masters and commanders elevated global to world warring. Now it remains to clarify what has been discovered on this journey.

## Conclusion

I begin with consideration of the present chapter, then take note of a ghost from the past, and conclude by discussing general findings from both this

chapter and the prior one. First, the anti-terrorism and oil-control public *délires* played roles in imperial global warring in *all* the ten countries analyzed in this chapter. Sometimes the anti-terrorist public *délire* seems to have played the more dominant role, as appears to be the case in Afghanistan and Kosovo; but in all the cases there was some form of oil control to be potentially won. Usually, the two *délires* operated jointly, so that implementation of the anti-terrorist *délire* facilitated implementation of its oil control counterpart. The sole exception to this was in the case of the Sudan, where implementation of the anti-terrorist *délire* hindered that of the oil-control public *délire*.

The consequences of US global warring varied from theater to theater and from country to country within theaters. Nevertheless, by 2013 two general consequences are striking. Generally, and especially in the Central Asian theatre, the warring increased the force resources of terrorism by creating new terrorists. Similarly, in none of the theatres did the fighting conspicuously increase imperial control over petroleum resources. Thus, the fighting largely failed to achieve the implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délires* that were the reason for fighting.

In March 2014, a ghost from the past reappeared. Vladimir Putin took umbrage at the regime change in the Ukraine that had led to the ousting of President Viktor Yanukovich (22 February 2014), who favored closer ties with Russia. A number of observers believed that the events in the Ukraine were due to the country's "destabilization" (Roberts 2014), organized in considerable measure by Washington and its EU clients. After all, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Victoria Nuland admitted that since 1991 the US had spent \$5 billion to influence Ukrainian affairs (Johnstone 2014).<sup>37</sup> From the Russians' vantage, this was an intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction on their western border. President Vladimir Putin responded by militarily detaching the province of Crimea from the rest of the Ukraine. On 18 March 2014, while the Russian national anthem played, Putin and Crimean leaders signed a treaty to make Ukraine's region part of the Russian Federation. The Bear was back.

The import of the "Asian Pivot" and the return of the Bear is unclear. *Deadly Contradictions* has voyaged through a medium time frame—that of the New American Empire. Perhaps in 2014 a new time frame was emerging, with China and Russia the targets of the US Leviathan. Regardless of what was to come, it is time to draw general conclusions about what happened as the New American Empire fought its way through the sea of human being from 1990 through 2014.

*Six Findings:* There are six common findings. First and foremost, imperial global warring has spanned the world. The US has been conducting a world

war, but of a new type. There is no single set of enemies like the Germans in World War I or the Axis powers in World War II. In the current world warring, the foe can be any political entity, from a particular organization (like al-Qaeda) to a particular country (like Iraq), so long as Washington's imperial hermeneutic politics have targeted that entity as violating the anti-terrorist and oil-control public *délirés* and Shultzian Permission has been granted. This has happened at least sixteen times since 1990.

Second, the empire has not won the “prize.” If neoliberalism was not working, security elites understood, then acquiring power over the world's oil would facilitate the New American Empire's domination of the global economy. But its military operations have not resulted in any clear increase in its control over oil. Iraq is running its oil sector with considerable autonomy. The empire may have limited the amount of oil Iran sells, but it in no way does it govern Iranian oil. Imperial attempts at pipeline politics have been something of a pipe dream. If any country has substantially improved its control over oil since 1990, it has been the Chinese. It did so nonviolently, by purchasing oil assets.

Third, imperial global warring has been good for terrorism, perpetrated by both resistance terrorists seeking to frustrate the US's *délirés* and state terrorists. Of course, the greatest state terrorist is the New American Empire itself, with its ninja Special Ops tromping about the world making bug splats, blowing unborn children from some mothers' bodies, and carving bullets out of other women's corpses. Consequently, these US ninjas or their proxies—and especially their Israeli proxies—have enraged peoples throughout the world and turned them in the direction of terrorism. Ironically, what the empire does inflames terrorism, the very thing it seeks to rid itself of.

Fourth, as some have claimed, the US is an empire by invitation. If that is the case, then the invitation has begun to wear thin due to global warring. US warring in Iraq caused several of its close European clients, especially France and Germany, to worry about its operations. Saudi Arabia is angered by US policies in Syria. US sanctions against Iran have likewise strained the bonds of amity with European and Asian clients. Pakistan has been turned into a friendly enemy. Even the English “poodle” rebelled at US plans to attack Syria. Global warring appears to be fraying the bonds of empire.

Fifth, imperial global warring has often left the states it visits less stable. From its very earliest days the empire has trumpeted its exceptionalism as the “city on the hill”, divinely chosen to bring good things like democracy and liberty to humanity. More recently, though, in the name of democracy and liberty it has brought more authoritarian regimes. The US is exceptional, but its elites are oblivious to the nature of its exceptionalism. It is

indeed incomparable in having brought to the world an empire whose invitation is wearing thin—an empire that generates terror, instability, and undemocratic governance, all of which is disorder in the sea of human being.

Sixth and finally, chapter 8 showed how events after 1990 led to a perfect storm of intensifying and coalescing contradictions, producing reproductive vulnerabilities and the need for fixes. Economic elites tried the fix of neoliberalism. The fix was unsuccessful. Economic elites then froze in uncertainty. Fixating upon these same events, Security Elites 3.0 created new liberal hawk and Vulcan hermeneutics that strengthened the oil control and anti-terrorist iterations of the global domination public *délire*. Crucially, these provided guidance as to how to interpret perceptions concerning when to proceed to war. Chapters 9 and 10 have examined the import of these *délires* by reviewing sixteen hostilities, some small, some major. They showed that in each of these events, Security Elites 3.0 arrived at perceptions that required they progress to violent operations to control oil and/or combat terrorists. The result has been global warring throughout the world. President Obama, like many presidents before him, believes the US to be “exceptional.” For many people in the world, as the New American Empire sought to fix its contradictions by conducting World War III between 1990 and 2014, what was coming to a theater near them was global disorder. This was exceptional indeed!

## Notes

1. Discussion of the US’s problems in Afghanistan, the Taliban, and the interconnection of the Taliban and Pakistan are in Rashid (2008, 2010), Seth Jones (2009), and Bergen and Tiedemann (2013). Hastings (2012), instrumental in the downfall of General Stanley McChrystal, takes the conflict through 2011. McChrystal (2013) has a memoir telling his side of the story.

2. The Pushtun (often called the Pathan by the British) are described in Barth (1965) and Ahmed (1980).

3. The Northern Alliance was just that, an alliance of northern Afghani, mostly Tajiks, with some Uzbeks and Hazaras. Its two original leaders were Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ahmad Massoud.

4. The ISI provided the Taliban with weapons and ammunition, paid wounded fighters’ medical bills, financed and assisted in training camps, and provided intelligence (O. Jones 2003).

5. Actually, Hastings (2010) made clear that the “snake eater” McChrystal preferred more mainstream American cuisine.

6. On 18 June 2013 Hastings died in a fiery car crash at only thirty-three. The web “went wild” over his death (Stebner 2013), as the circumstances of his accident were suspicious. He was reported to have received death threats from the military because of his *Rolling Stone* article (A. Newman 2013).

7. According to Rashid (2012: 18), by the end of 2010 “none” of Obama’s White House or State Department security elites believed “the war could be won.”

8. Gates offers a more sympathetic account of the surge in Afghanistan than that presented in the text (2014: 474–501). However, he offers no evidence that it was a success, nor evidence refuting those who said it was not a success.

9. Rashid (2008, 2010, 2012) is most useful concerning Pakistan, the Taliban, and their entanglement with the US starting in the 1980s. Owen Jones (2003) and Butt and Schofield (2007) also offer useful accounts of Pakistan's geopolitics. Brown and Rassler (2013) and the Council on Foreign Relations (2011a) analyze the Haqqani Network. Ahmed (2013: 43–96) writes of the fighting in Waziristan, which he calls “the most dangerous place in the world.”

10. Accounts of the Balkan Wars can be found in Glenny (1996), Susan Woodward (1995), and Silber and Allan (1997).

11. Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, color revolutions occurred in the post-socialist world and the Middle East. They tended to be organized at least in part by American NGOs. Perhaps the most important of these was the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), tasked to bring about capitalism and democracy in targeted countries. The NED granted US government funds to NGOs such as the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs, International Republican Institute, International Foundation for Electoral Systems, International Research and Exchanges Board, and Freedom House. These then used the monies to help organize civil resistance. The color revolutions were reactionary insofar as they sought to create clients for the New American Empire. Slovakia (1998), Croatia (2000), and Serbia (2000) experienced color revolutions. Chossudovsky (1997) is useful concerning the IMF's role in Yugoslavia's re-balkanization.

12. Useful concerning the Kosovo War is the memoir of Wesley Clark (2002), the commanding US general. Daalder and O'Hanlon (2001) provide the perspective of US security elites. Judah (2002) has an excellent account.

13. Others arguing for the importance of oil in US decisions to war in Kosovo include Pilger (1999), Fisher (2002), Ghazali (2008).

14. Kansteiner appears somewhat “shady.” He was an executive chairman of Sierra Rutile Limited, a mining enterprise compromised in the Sierra Leone Civil War. Sierra Rutile was at one time owned by Max and Jean-Raymond Boule and Robert Friedland, alleged to be linked to clandestine networks of offshore holdings and front companies involved in weapons trafficking, money laundering, and human rights atrocities. Kansteiner's involvement with Sierra Rutile during the time of Boule and Friedland is unclear (K. Snow 2008).

15. Schareika (forthcoming) offers an interesting accounting of Chinese oil enterprise in Chad, suggesting that it is a strong competitor of Exxon.

16. There was considerable US support for Habré's Documentation and Security Directorate, which is thought to have killed up to forty thousand people.

17. In a 2007 article in *National Geographic* about Chad's Zakouma National Park, J. Michael Fay wrote, “I saw a large helicopter to the southeast,” adding that it “made straight for our truck. We could run, but we couldn't hide. It was a Russian-made Mi-17 with a missile launcher, the same type that had mistakenly fired the day before on a column of Chadian and American soldiers north of the park” (in K. Snow 2012: 7). Fay clearly indicates US troops were operating with their Chadian counterparts. What the helicopter was up to is unclear.

18. The best account of Sudan's civil wars is Douglas Johnson (2003). Jok (2007) is also useful. Natsios (2012), head of USAID during the Bush II administration, and Petterson (1999), who was US ambassador to Sudan in the early 1990s, write from US officials' perspective. Reyna (2010), Flint and de Waal (2008), and Mamdani (2010) analyze the Darfur warring. Morrison and Cooke (2006) discuss the Clinton administration's Africa policy.

19. The tendency to divide Sudan existed prior to its balkanization into an Arab, Muslim north and a black African, Christian south—which is an oversimplification, as there is no “racial” divide even though at times different Sudanese political actors have attempted to construct one. Nevertheless, most Arabs tend to be black, as do most non-Arabs. There are numerous non-Arab ethnic groups in the north. Many in the south are not Christian, and

many of those claiming to be Christian adhere to practices and beliefs that originated in southern Sudanese religions.

20. The accuracy of the *9/11 Commission Report's* claim that Turabi was attempting to organize terrorists for war against the US is unconfirmed. A fair amount of early 1990s US intelligence about the Sudan has turned out to be unreliable.

21. Literature on the Council is limited. Rebecca Hamilton (2012), Gay (2013), David Rose (2002), Hoile (1999), and Keith Snow (2012) fill in parts of the picture.

22. Francis Deng wrote the epilogue of a book edited by Professor R. E. Downs and myself (1988). He was not contacted for this section of *Deadly Contradictions*.

23. In the early 1990s the SPLA split into rival factions—the SPLA-Mainstream, led by Garang, and the SPLA-United, led by Riek Machar. The factions warred with each other, provoking mayhem and terror among their opponents.

24. The Council did not have a complete hermetic seal over US-Sudanese affairs. In an originally secret interview, Donald Petterson (2003: 5) indicated he “believed” that the “policy espoused” by Rice and Prendergast “was not achieving its goals.”

25. Petterson (2003) documented Washington’s concern with Sudan’s support for terrorism in 1992–1993. It is now acknowledged that US intelligence on Sudan at that period was defective. It would be important to know how much of it derived from the Council.

26. The circumstances of Garang’s death in an airplane crash seem suspicious to some. Garang was more disposed to a unified Sudan than other South Sudan leaders, especially Salva Kiir, who benefited from the plane crash by becoming the undisputed leader of the SPLA/M. Garang’s ex-wife and son supported Machar in the 2013–2014 political hostilities between Machar and Kiir (Ouga and Baguma 2013).

27. Some have questioned how significant US support of the SPLA was to Khartoum’s defeat. Autesserre (2002: 1), writing prior to the termination of the Second Sudanese War, asserted that American assistance was “not enough to enable them to win the war.” Washington’s backing was largely covert, so its magnitude is unknown. Two main forms of violent force resources were supplied. The first was “humanitarian” aid that came in the form of food, which was a weapon in two ways. First, the SPLA took a fair portion of it to feed its own personnel. If, as Frederick the Great quipped, “an army marches on its stomach,” the US was responsible for filling SPLA stomachs. The second way food served as a weapon had to do with Khartoum’s strategy against the South: to starve it into submission. The provision of food to southerners weakened this strategy. The second sort of violent force resources provided by Washington was more conventional; it included weapons and training. How important was US assistance to South Sudan’s secession? Secessionist movements have usually failed in post-colonial Africa, implying that US help was substantial.

28. The Sudanese Civil Wars were already ongoing when the US intervened. Permit some speculation on their “root causes” (D. Johnson 2003). These, according to Douglas Johnson (ibid.: xvi), were the result of “patterns of violence developed in Sudanic states before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, establishing an exploitative relationship between the centralizing power of the state and its hinterland.” Additionally, two structural features in the African postcolonial state are relevant to understanding Sudan’s, and other African states’, descent into civil conflict. The first of these features is the frailty of institutional means for addressing intra-elite competition. African states try to use patrimonial practices, as described in the section on Chad, to moderate conflict by building elite alliances. However, such practices often increase competition because of jealousy at not being a patrimonial ally, anger at being a discarded patrimonial ally, or desire to be a more important patrimonial ally. The second structural feature is the weakness of the central governments’ violent force resources. Militaries are small, poorly trained, and poorly armed. Weapons are widely possessed by civilian populations. This means that states do not control the means of violence in any Weberian sense, which makes it easy for disaffected patrimonial elites to begin hostilities and difficult for central governments to terminate them.

29. Harper (2012), Elmi (2010), Marchal (2007), and Hagmann and Hoehne (2009) analyze the intricacies of Somali conflict. Seahill (2013) provides the most complete account of US operations.

30. The best current account of al-Shabaab is Stig Jarle Hansen (2013).

31. Kozloff (2007) has written of Chávez and the political economy of his time.

32. Liberation theology, which began in the 1950s and 1960s in Latin America, is both a Catholic theological and revolutionary political movement. One advocate terms it “an interpretation of Christian faith through the poor’s suffering, their struggle and hope, and a critique of society and the Catholic faith and Christianity through the eyes of the poor” (Beryman 1987).

33. Brittain (2010) and Stokes (2005) have written about FARC-EP. Little work has been done on the ELN, but Craig-Best (2000) allows the ELN leader Antonio Garcia to speak for it.

34. Veillette (2005: 8) reports that “the United Nations estimates that the FARC’s average annual income is \$342 million of which \$204 million comes from the drug trade.”

35. A covert CIA-JSOC program discovered by the *Washington Post* sought to decapitate FARC and the ELN by assassinating their leaders using precision-guided munitions (Priest 2013). The program appears to have begun early in the Bush II administration and been continued by Obama. It is a variation, and perhaps something of a forerunner, of the drone warfare practiced in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Africa.

36. The Chinese have formulated a strategy, called Assassin’s Mace, to destroy multiple US aircraft carrier groups at one time (Corpus 2006).

37. One source explains the regime change as follows: “It seems as if Washington and Brussels played in Ukraine ... all the techniques for Regime Change the Anglo-Saxons practised in Third World countries since Napoleonic times. First, the banks got Ukraine in debt for 138 billions ... which limits independent policies and is always a source of corruption. Second, there was financial support for very different political parties in order to convey them toward a common political goal. Third, a press campaign to discredit the government and demonize its leaders. Fourth, the financing and training of groups to foment violent unrest. Fifth, the use of snipers to fire against the police and the protesters to create rage and violence. ... Sixth, the same trick practised ... [of] Parliamentary Coup” (Mazzei and Zigon 2014).

## JOURNEY'S END

It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end. (Hemingway, in Khalid 2016)

Readers of this volume were promised a high-class, intellectual journey, a peregrination from a theoretical highland down to the empirical sea in search of the solution to two mysteries, exploring a theory and its validation. Now the trip is over. We are back at the highlands and, like any traveler arriving home from a journey, we must unpack our (intellectual) baggage and contemplate what Hemingway thought “matters”: the journey. It has exposed two mysteries: that of why the US has killed so many in war; and underlying this first mystery, a second, the enigma of human being—what it is and how it works, or does not.

### Mystery 1

Jarrett Leplin, a respected scientific realist, has presented a list of “claims” that characterize an inquiry as realist. The first is that “the best scientific theories are at least approximately true” (1984:). Whether global warring is a “best” theory is not the focus here; it is rather its approximate truth that is our concern. Mystery 1 is solved if, during the journey, evidence was found indicating global warring theory is approximately true. If it is, it accounts for the New American Empire’s prodigious killing. The theory was formally presented in chapters 1 and 2. In it, three macro-region concepts—contradiction, reproduction, and global warring—account for the power dynamics of empire. Contradictions intensify and coalesce, leading to reproductive vulnerability. Vulnerability sets actors into operations in meso-regions. One category of actors who respond to contradictions are



elites, the tips of the Spear in class warfare. *Deadly Contradictions* paid especial attention to security elites, those with authority over imperial exercise of violence. Under conditions of vulnerability, elites exhibit social reflexivity and conduct hermeneutic politics to solve the hermeneutic puzzle of the vulnerability, which leads to the instituting of public *délires*. If peaceful fixes of vulnerabilities go unsolved, Shultzian Permission is granted, leading to implementation of violent public *délires*. Hell is unleashed, and global warring occurs.

Thereafter, the peregrination descended to the empirical realm and the sea of modernity. Chapters 3 and 4 revealed that the US has been a shape-shifting empire since its very beginning: how from 1783 through the late 1860s it was a rapidly expanding territorial empire; and how from the 1870s until World War II it developed beyond the territorial limits of North America, alternating between a more formal empire, like those of Europe, to a more informal one, like the UK in parts of Latin America during the nineteenth century. Then it was shown how after World War II, the “old boy” Security Elites 1.0, “present at the creation,” organized the US into a three-tiered rental empire, the New American Empire. Here in very late modernity was a social being driven by a global domination public *délire* that fixated its security elites upon achieving world empire—peacefully if possible, violently if not.

Once it was established that the US is an empire, it was important to discover whether it is subject to contradictions. Chapter 5 covered two general sorts of economic and political contradictions that bothered the empire. The US economic system since 1945 has experienced cyclical and systemic economic contradictions. The former manifests itself as a cycle of boom and bust, argued to be the result of overproduction/overaccumulation brought about by an inter-capitalist contradiction. Systemic economic vulnerabilities derive from a land/capital contradiction that involves the pushing of energy force resources toward their limits, as manifested in the emergence of global warming and peak oil. The systemic contradiction has the potential to cause enormous harm, up to and including human being's not being. Likewise, the US political system has exhibited political vulnerabilities brought about in some measure by an inter-imperial contradiction expressing itself largely in competition with the Soviet Union; and a dominator/dominated contradiction manifesting itself in dominated peoples' resistance to the US Leviathan.

Chapters 6 through 10 went to war. They examined a total of twenty-four global wars pursued over three moments, each moment corresponding to different concatenations of contradictions. The first moment, from 1950 through 1974, was a period when the inter-imperial contradiction was more intense and the various economic contradictions were more re-

laxed. The Korean and Vietnam Wars, the Iranian and Guatemalan coups, and the Cuban fiasco were analyzed. For each of these global warrings, it was shown that the inter-imperial contradiction somehow intensified; and that US Security Elites 1.0, through their hermeneutic politics, interpreted the contradictions in terms of the global domination public *délire*, granted themselves Shultzian Permission, implemented the *délire*, and as a result engaged in a global war.

The second moment of global warring was between 1975 and 1989, a time Bob Dylan sensed was “a-changin’.” The change was that the concatenation of contradictions was reversing. The inter-imperial contradiction had not disappeared but was relaxing and would, by the end of the period, collapse upon the Soviet Union’s demise. Meanwhile, the economic contradictions were beginning to be more threatening as cyclical recessions started to gain strength. The land/capital contradiction was also intensifying. Global warming became noticeable as CO<sub>2</sub> levels climbed. Peak oil was recognizable as the US began to import more oil from overseas. And the dominator/dominated contradiction began to intensify too, as people in the dominated world realized who the dominator was in the post–World War II era. It was the New American Empire and, just as anarchists in the time of the old empires threw bombs at ruling elites, “terrorists” in the post-1974 years resisted the US Security Elites 2.0 by using themselves, among other things, as bombs.

Chapter 8 demonstrated how the Security Elites 2.0 instituted new *délires* in response to the new contradictory concatenation. These were the oil-control and the anti-terrorist *délires*. These were actually iterations of the earlier global domination public *délire* that were sensitive to the new vulnerabilities of the changing times. The oil-control iteration was responsive to the worsening economic vulnerabilities and sought to make the best of a bad situation by seizing control of the key force resource, oil, to insure domination by having what everybody else (economically) needed. The anti-terrorist iteration addressed the worsening political vulnerabilities caused by the intensifying dominator/dominated contradiction. It tried to relax the “terrorist” problem by killing terrorists.

Three global wars were analyzed during this second moment: Afghanistan I, the Iran-Iraq War, and Libya I. Afghanistan I, the war the Soviets fought with the Afghans, was a throwback, a final intensification of the inter-imperial contradiction. The Security Elites 2.0 responded by granting themselves Shultzian Permission and implementing the Islamic card iteration of the global domination public *délire*, which led to US global warring on the side of Afghans rebelling against the Soviets. US participation in the Iran-Iraq War followed intensification of the land/capital contradictions. Shultzian Permission was granted, and the subsequent in-

stitution and implementation of the oil-control public *délire* resulted in US global warring in Afghanistan. Libya I followed upon intensification of the dominator/dominated contradiction, whereupon Shultzian Permission was granted and the anti-terrorist iteration of the global domination public *délire* was instituted.

The third moment of global warring analyzed lasted from 1990 to 2014. This was a time of severe contradictory vulnerability. Economic contradictions were at their most intense for the time frame visited in this volume. The 2007 recession was the most serious since the Great Depression. Deaths due to climate change, an indicator of the severity of the land/capital contradiction, rose from an estimated 300,000 annually in 2009 to 5 million in 2012 (Levi 2012). The dominator/dominated contradiction coalesced with the economic contradictions and came to a head in 9/11. The intensified, coalesced cyclical, land/capital, and dominator/dominated contradictions were a “perfect storm” for the US Leviathan, posing a hermeneutic puzzle for imperial elites: What to do?

Economic elites tried neoliberalism. It failed. Thereafter, averse to fixing vulnerabilities produced by global warming and the approach of peak oil, they froze into uncertainty. Security Elites 3.0, for their part, engaged in a hermeneutic politics to find a security fix to the vulnerabilities. Their politics did not range far. Two solutions were found in the realm of violent force. Both had initially been instituted during the second moment: they were the anti-terrorist and oil-control iterations of the original global domination public *délire*. In each of the global or incipient global wars examined—Iraq, Iran, Libya II, Syria, Yemen, Israel, Afghanistan II, Pakistan, Kosovo, Chad, Sudan, Somalia, Uganda, Colombia, Venezuela, and the Philippines—conflict emerged out of the perfect storm of contradictions, followed by the granting of Shultzian Permission, which led in turn to implementation of the anti-terrorist and oil-control public iterations of the global domination public *délire*.

The spatial dimensions of the perfect storm of contradictions between 1990 and 2014 were so great that global warring became world warring. This evidence supports the sixth proposition of global warring theory, which states that if the spatial dimensions of contradictions grow, then the geographic distribution of global warring increases. World warring has left millions dead. This suggests that the peregrination in this text has been a postmortem examination through the human being found at the sites of warring: “this one died here, due to global warring; that one died there, due to global warring; they died next, due to global warring; followed by other deaths, due to global warring,” and on and on. Contemplate four further conclusions.

*Further Conclusions:* First, it is clear the US Leviathan engaged in two varieties of global wars. Initially (1950–1974) its hostilities were largely in response to the inter-imperial contradiction; later (1990–2014) they were over the perfect storm of economic and political contradictions; and in between (1975–1989) there were nineteen years when the New American Empire fought for both sorts of contradictory concatenations.

A second conclusion is that the US exercises of global warring violence caused considerable unintended powers. The US actually did not win, or lost, three of the five global wars analyzed between 1950 and 1974. Korea was at best a draw. The Vietnam and the Cuban interventions were fiascos. The US was successful in the 1953 anti-Mossedegh coup, which US security elites *délired*. But this success produced anti-US animosity among Iranians, who came to regard America as the Great Satan, something security elites did not *délire*. US security elites got their *délires* in the 1953 Guatemalan coup but created a brutal, repressive, dictatorial state, also something they had not intended.

Considering the global wars of the moment of changing contradictions, remember that US security elites in Libya I dearly *délired* to eliminate Gaddafi, which they failed to do. These same security elites appeared to have better luck in Afghanistan I, which they celebrated as a great victory. After all, they had triumphed over the Soviet monster-alterity, a really big Washington *délire*. However, in so doing they created, in the CIA's terminology, blowback. They, with Pakistan's assistance, had armed and trained Muslim rebels, some of whom would go on to join al-Qaeda or the Taliban, becoming terrorists who would fight the US Leviathan tooth and nail, something *undélired*. The Iran-Iraq War deepened Iran's enmity toward the US and created the new, Saddamite monster-alterity in Iraq, which later the security elites would have to destroy.

The wars between 1990 and 2014 have similarly produced unintended powers. Notably, the US Leviathan lost the two biggest global wars. In Iraq, a conflict that, judged in terms of international law, was a “supreme” war crime, the US cut and ran. In Afghanistan II, the end appears essentially the same. In both Iraq and Afghanistan the Security Elites 3.0 sought to enhance oil control but did not. In both countries they wanted to reduce terrorism but did not; in fact they increased it. Both Iraq and Afghanistan have been left profoundly unstable and violent after decades of global warring.

Global warring in Iran was supposed to achieve regime change. It did not. Rather, the covert warring created the unintended powers of increasing burdens upon the US economy, raising tensions between Washington and its clients, and strengthening the presence of the Shiite Necklace in opposition to the New American Empire—all *undélired*. US sanctions have

hindered Iranian oil and gas production, but that has not given US oil companies substantial control over Iranian oil. Global warring in Libya II was supposed to facilitate US control over Libyan oil. Instead it has led to near collapse of the oil industry. It is not possible to control a production that does not exist. At the same time, global warring provoked disintegration of government authority, leading to reductions in the high levels of income, education, and health produced by Gaddafi's regime. In the anarchy of this state, Islamist "terrorist" groups are growing stronger. In Syria too, US participation in the warring has not led to regime change but rather to vastly greater instability, coupled with immense growth of terrorist groups. US participation in Yemen's, Pakistan's, and Israel's wars has grown terrorism in different ways.

In Africa—be it Chad, Sudan, Somalia, or Uganda—US global warring has supported development of authoritarian, less democratic regimes headed by the likes of Habré and Déby in Chad, Salva Kiir in the new South Sudan, various warlords in Somalia, and Museveni in Uganda. Such states tend to be unstable. Equally, they are places of terrorism. In Chad and Uganda the terrorizing has been that of the state brutalizing its own citizens. In Somalia it has followed from the growth of terrorist organizations like al-Shabaab and al-Qaeda. US military intervention has allowed ExxonMobil to retain considerable control over Chadian oil, but military intervention on the side of southern Sudan essentially led to termination of US control over Sudanese oil.

US global warring against FARC and ELN "terrorists" strengthened the Colombian state's ability to inflict terror on its own people. In Venezuela, as Washington prepares the battlefield to wrest control of the oil, US interventions in opposition to the Bolivarian revolution increase instability. In sum, US global warring has led to increased world insecurity, increased authoritarian polities, weakened bonds between Washington and its clients, and the New American Empire's emergence as an (untried) war criminal.

The preceding has implications for the kinetic power of Washington's global warring. Observe the major wars since 1950: the Korean War was no more than a draw; the Vietnam War, a defeat; the Iraq War, a defeat; Afghanistan II, the greatest strengthening yet of the Taliban; the Bay of Pigs, a defeat. Each defeat was against a country, or countries, of lesser kinetic power. Further, as has just been documented for other of its global wars, often times the powers achieved were unintended and un-*déliré*. Bluntly, the US Leviathan has done poorly at achieving intended kinetic powers using global warring. This suggests the ineffectiveness of war for fixing vulnerabilities.

A third conclusion is that US global warring has been hermeneutically blind. It is intended to fix reproductive vulnerabilities brought on by con-

tradition. Yet it has done nothing of the sort. The neoliberal iteration of the liberal public *délire* has proven hermeneutically blind to fixing the cyclical contradiction. The oil-control iteration of the global domination public *délire* is equally blind to fixing the systemic contradiction that threatens the exigencies of climate change. Even if US elites won complete control of the world's oil, it would do nothing to prevent the consumption of oil that adds to global warming. The anti-terrorist iteration of the global domination public *délire* is blind to the actuality that it increases terrorism, thereby intensifying the dominator/dominated contradiction. Blind to what it does, US global warring spreads the disorder of cyclical economic turbulence, global warming, and violent terror across the sea of modernity.

Finally, ponder a fourth conclusion. The US Leviathan has killed and wounded a lot of people—bug splats, often civilians, often killed pitilessly like Artica, with her unborn child blasted from her womb. The exact number of casualties due to US global warring since World War II is unknown. What is known is that millions upon millions, mostly civilians, have been either directly or indirectly killed or wounded. More millions have been obliged to live the wretched lives of refugees. Still more millions, those not dead or fled, have suffered miserable times as their workplaces, transportation systems, educational institutions, and health care facilities have been blasted to smithereens by military operations.

US military elites insist that America fights humanely. They swear incidents of inhumanity such as the massacre at My Lai during the Vietnam War or at Hadith during the Iraq War are aberrations. However, “American veterans of the war in Iraq” told a different story, one of “a culture of casual violence, revenge and prejudice against Iraqi civilians that ... made the killing of innocent bystanders a common occurrence” (Harris, Beaumont, and al-Ubeidy 2006). Moreover, there is evidence of long-standing and systematic US military brutality since World War II beyond that in Iraq. Harbury (2005) offers a history of US participation in torture. Falk, Gendzier, and Lifton (2006) provide data about US war atrocities in Iraq. Rejali (2007: 581–592) has an eleven-page bibliography of US atrocities during the Vietnam War. Turse (2013) reports systematic American brutality during the Vietnam conflict. McCoy (2006) provides an account of the CIA's involvement in torture. US military assistance programs throughout the world have taught torture. The School of the Americas, renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation in 2000, has been especially notorious for training Central and South American militaries in the use of vicious violence (Gill 2004). The worldwide practice and frequency of US global warring makes it global terrorist No. 1. US media hermeneuts broadcast the monstrosities of resistance terrorists, rightly so. They are silent about the US Leviathan's monstrosities. Thus is created a

cuckoo land of violent unreality in which Americans, who see only others as terrorists, are the cuckoos.

So, is global warring theory approximately true in the instance of the US Leviathan? Not all the data that could bear upon the theory has been evaluated, but it never is. However, the evidence adduced is consistent with the theory. Consequently, mystery 1 appears solved: Deadly contradictions of global warring theory made them do it. Ponder next the second mystery.

## Mystery 2

The second, more abstract and general mystery sought the reality of human being: How it works, or does not. Let us consider next how human being works, or does not.

### *How Social Being Works, or Does Not*

Prior to settling in to the work of social being, allow me to offer a methodological admonition suggested by certain observations in *Deadly Contradictions* pertaining to what is said and written by actors. Ours has been a time when a certain idealism prevails in social and cultural theory. Ideas are texts, and as Derrida once put it, “Il n’y pas hors de text” (“There is no outside to the text”) ([1967] 1976: 158–159). If there is no “outside” to the text, then there is nothing to study there. It is as if there is no context to the text.

This has meant that idealist thinkers have emphasized gathering texts of what people say and write, at the expense of what is “outside”—the social forms in which actors enact the texts. If the present text has revealed anything, it is that what actors say is not what actors necessarily do. US security elites drone on and on about how they come from this really exceptional “city on a hill” that brings “democracy and liberty”; but the reality is they drone on and on bringing terror and disorder. The admonition here is not that we should forget about the text. What actors say and write is part of their culture, and their culture is a force resource that choreographs other force resources. Still, the operation of *all* the force resources provides a better approximation of what people really do. So the admonition is to put the text in the context to more truthfully know reality. Attention now turns to the work of human being, first in general, and then more specifically in empires.

*The Work of Human Being*: The Ur-proposition is: Doing work takes force to have the power to get the work done. Human structures are termed

social forms, which are imagined to work as the result of exercises of force. Social forms are built up from actors in practices, practices in institutions, institutions in systems, and systems into social beings. The space-time sea of human being, then, is full of social beings exercising force, doing work while connected with other social beings, as well as other biological and inorganic beings. Imperial social forms are just one type of social being.

The preceding suggests a contradictory conundrum, not previously identified but of broad relevance to social being: It takes force to have power; and if force is finite, which at present appears to be the case with energy forces, then the more force is exercised, the less force is left to exercise. To have a future, it is necessary to exercise force in the present, but that consumption of force means that it is not there for the future. You may be able to exercise your force today, but maybe not tomorrow. Present use of force is necessary for, but in contradiction with, future use of force.

The work of social beings exercising force is to make strings with logics, whose powers may sometimes be unintended. Two logics are at play in social beings. The first is a logic of disorder, in which contradictions have the power to move social beings toward the pandemonium of structural deconstruction. The second logic confronts the first. It is one of social constitution, in which social reflexivity—the human organization of autopoiesis, using in actors' brains their cultural neurohermeneutic systems—moves social beings away from the bedlam of deconstruction. Contradiction has its concatenations, which may intensify and coalesce. Social constitution has its iterations and reiterations, which may fix the vulnerabilities provoked by contradiction. Social reflexivity involves actors, elite ones in the present study, reflecting upon hermeneutic puzzles and their vulnerabilities provoked by contradictions.

Actors' minds, John Locke notwithstanding, are not *tabulae rasae*. Far from it, their neuronal culture is loaded with technical, ideological, worldview, personal, and positional culture. From the culture come different hermeneutics—meanings of what is and what to do about it. Different actors have different perceptual and procedural interpretations of a contradictory situation, which form the basis of hermeneutic politics. Some actors perceive a reality in G way, and believe that people should proceed to Y exercise of force to fix the situation. Other actors perceive that reality in H way, and believe that people should proceed to Z exercise of force to fix it.

Contradicting this tendency to hermeneutic diversity is the actuality that actors in similar positions have similar cultures and thus understand reality in similar ways. In such situations it is possible for actors to be hermetically sealed into particular interpretations. Yet it is always likely there will be some difference. The antipathy between Colin Powell and Dick Cheney had a great deal to do with their understandings of what to do



about Iraq. *Deadly Contradictions* offers no theory to explain who wins in hermeneutic politics; but to the victors in these politics go the spoils of their interpretation having become the fix for the vulnerabilities. Social being in this optic is subject to a Nietzscheanesque “play of forces” in which the forces in the logic of disorder seek to damage the beings’ force, while those in the logic of social constitution work to reproduce it. Permit five observations expanding upon this perspective.

First, contradictions count: all things break down (though they may be transformed). Breaking down is things moving toward the limit of their being, which is contradiction. For humans, contradictions can and do turn deadly. The systemic economic contradiction is already responsible for 5 million deaths per year, by one estimation (Leber, 2015). The US global warring that resulted from the particular concatenation of contradictions in the 1945–2014 time frame has killed millions.

Contradictions count for another reason, which is that they are a basis of what actors sense, feel, and think about. Another way of putting this looks to Spinoza’s notion that being determines reflecting upon being (see Duff 1903); therefore contradictory being as a particular instance of being determines reflection on itself. However, actors’ reflection upon contradictions is *not* direct. Rather, people know contradictions through the already noted interpretive device in their I-spaces, the cultural neurohermeneutic system, which involves the brain in processing the relevance that cultural messages stored in neurons have to events occurring in reality. Most people will not know that an event sensed is part of a contradiction but instead will interpret the event in terms of the cultural knowledge of that event. One of the old boys, if asked whether the events in Eastern Europe in the late 1940s were those of the inter-imperial contradiction, would probably have responded, “No, those events are about the Soviet spread of communism.” Further, the old boys’ understanding of the event would be part of the string of events involved in social reflexivity, which might lead to further understandings of it. Hermeneutic blindness and deception may lead to complete misunderstanding of contradiction. For example, many people believe that the climatic extremes of global warming brought on by the land/capital contradiction are just “normal” weather variations. This is hermeneutic blindness. A number of people who believe this do so because hermeneuts serving the oil and gas industries tell them that climate variations are “natural.” This is hermeneutic deception.

A second observation bearing on the work of social forms is that the strings produced by exercises of force in the logic of social constitution tend to exhibit what might be termed a conservation of *délires*. Recall that social reflexivity, operating as part of the logic of social constitution, produces public *délires* that choreograph the exercise of force to reproduce.

So long as the desires of the powerful remain constant, the public *délires* they institute to ensure their reproduction will remain similar or are likely, to use the term introduced earlier, to be iterations of each other. “Conservation of *délires*,” then, is the principle that social change moves iteration by iteration of public *délires*, with iterations understood as similar ways of doing the same thing.

For example, the global domination public *délire* was instituted in 1950. At first there was its NSC 68 iteration. Then there was its Nixon iteration during Nixon’s presidency; the PD 18, Islamic card, and oil-control iterations during the Carter administration; and the Reagan and anti-terrorism iterations under Reagan. Each of these iterations was an interpretive response to changes in conditions influencing public *délires* and their ability to help reproduce global empire. The oil-control iteration was about fighting to reproduce the empire by having power over its oil and gas energy supplies, threatened by the land/capital contradiction. The anti-terrorist iteration was about fighting to reproduce the empire by having power over “terrorists,” who posed a threat because of the dominator/dominated contradiction.

The conservation of *délires* means that social beings, especially great and complex ones, like the US Leviathan, change course slowly as they glide through the sea of space and time. If a social being’s logic of social constitution is having trouble formulating fixes that relax the logic of disorder, then its course is toward the whirlpools of contradictory disorder. This perspective of change omits the vectoring and optimism of Hegelian dialectics that saddled some of Marx’s thought. Social beings are not assured a thesis-antithesis-synthesis directionality. There is no inevitable zig-zagging progress from the heights of synthesis to still higher synthesis. Rather, social beings inch along according to their public *délires*; making new iterations through hermeneutic politics as new conditions, especially those pertaining to their contradictions, arise. Thus understood, change is, in Lewis Henry Morgan’s terms, “experimental.”

Fourth, hermeneutic politics does not invariably provide public *délires* that work, in the sense of being successful reproductive fixes to contradictory vulnerabilities. Enlightenment thought posited humans as rational. Fat chance—Shakespeare knew better. Humans are giddy. Hermeneutic blindness and deception are always possible. Autopoeisis is not guaranteed. Social beings can and do become disordered when they are unable to sail courses away from the deconstructions of contradiction. Otherwise put, sometimes social beings work, sometimes they do not, and sometimes they work themselves into not working.

The fifth observation begins with a question: if not by rationality, how do humans change social forms? Charles Saunders Peirce, in his essay

“How to Make Our Ideas Clear,” articulated what came to be regarded as the canonical expression of pragmatist thought. This was to “consider what effects, which might conceivably have practical bearings, we conceive the object of our conception to have. Then, our conception of those effects is the whole of our conception of the object” (Peirce 1992: 132). Actors involved in hermeneutic politics consider the practical effects of each iteration of a public *délire* in order to attain better practical effects in the next iteration of that *délire*, and it is in this sense that experimental change is pragmatic in the play of forces of social beings sailing the sea of human being. Next, reflect upon the work of empires.

*The Work of Empires*: To consider the work of empires, I pose the question, whatever happened to negative reciprocity? One of anthropology’s gifts to social thought has been to demonstrate that the market distribution of goods and services is not the only way of organizing economic exchange. Anthropologists discovered that gift-giving was important, especially in social forms that were not modern. Two main traditions developed regarding gift-giving: one that went from Marcel Mauss ([1924] 2000) to Claude Lévi-Strauss ([1949] 1969); and another that went from Karl Polanyi (1944) to Marshall Sahlins (1972). The latter tradition emphasized that there have been three forms of exchange in human history—reciprocity, redistribution, and the market. In “On the Sociology of Primitive Exchange,” Sahlins (*ibid.*: 191–210) distinguished three forms of reciprocity: generalized reciprocity, where gift return was not immediate and when it occurred was a gift roughly equivalent to the original; balanced reciprocity, which involved immediate gift return, with the return gift roughly equal to the original; and finally, the residual category of negative reciprocity, where the reciprocity was not one of roughly equivalent gift exchange. In this case, one of the exchanging actors sought to get “something for nothing with impunity” (*ibid.*: 195) through measures such as haggling, theft, or wife-capture. The first two forms of reciprocity were supposed to dominate nonmarket economies. Less was said of negative reciprocity. It was less important because it was less frequent in the giving and counter-giving of nonmarket economies.

A substantial secondary literature has arisen to discuss and critique different aspects of the original gift-giving and exchange scholarship. One strand in this literature is debate over the difference between gifts and commodities, with Gregory (1982) insisting upon difference and Appadurai (1986) arguing for similarity. Another strand recognizes that gift-giving did not go away when markets emerged (Cheal 1988; Carrier 1992). Absent from this literature is contemplation of whatever happened to negative reciprocity.<sup>1</sup>

I believe *Deadly Contradictions* suggests that negative reciprocity has exploded in importance since the origin of empires. To explain why this is so, let us first define “reciprocity” in terms of flows and counterflows of force resources to parties in an exchange. Implicit here is that gifts and commodities are variant forms of reciprocity distinguished in terms of who gets how much, when, of force resources in an exchange. Generalized and balanced reciprocity remain exchanges where parties to the exchange receive roughly equal amounts of force resources. “Negative reciprocity” characterizes exchanges where somebody “gets something for less” (than was given). It is an exchange where the party giving less—and such a party may be a social position, such as “capitalist”—can accumulate more in force resources than do the others.

It is common knowledge in anthropological literature that for the vast bulk of human history, people lived more or less egalitarian lives in their social forms. However, when the state was invented in ancient times and imperial social beings began their diffusion across the globe, the violent force of aristocrats in the empires was used to ensure that they accumulated more force resources than anybody else. This was because: A (the aristocrats) took force resources in the form of produce from B (food producers) and reciprocated by giving B the force resource of land from their holdings. Usually, the land received was about enough to support the food producer’s family. Critically, the violent force of aristocrats ultimately allowed them to have large tracts of land, of which portions could be provided to many producers. This meant that individual aristocrats took force resources from numerous producers. Bs received enough force resources from their labor on their land to support themselves. However, A received vastly greater force resources from the labor of Bs on their land than did individual Bs. This was negative reciprocity—a differential accumulation of force resources favoring aristocrats. Such negative reciprocity is termed “aristocratic.” By the end of medieval times much of the world had been subjugated to the tender mercies of aristocratic negative reciprocity.

Then, in early modern times, as capitalist institutions emerged as the basis of the economic systems of Europe’s old empires, the military institutions in the political system of those empires warred—not always or invariably successfully, but frequently—to reproduce the conditions for capitalist accumulation. The two parties to the exchanges required for such accumulation are capitalists and labor. In their exchanges, A (the capitalist) gets surplus value from B (labor), and B (labor) gets wages from A (the capitalist). Surplus value and wages are monetary forms of force resources and as such are a form of capital. Capitalists always accumulate far more surplus value than labor acquires wages. In this optic, capital accumulation is understood as a logic producing greater negative reciprocity, in the sense that

it makes greater numbers of laborers who provide greater sums of surplus value to capitalists. By the end of the old empires, imperial domination had spread across the entire globe along with the negative reciprocity understood as “capitalist.”<sup>2</sup> Hence, the growth of old and new modern empires has involved the growth of negative reciprocity through the operation of the logic of capital accumulation. The building of a world of imperial social beings with their aristocratic and capitalist negativity reciprocity has had another effect, considered next.

*The Arc of the Moral Universe:* On 7 March 1965, some six hundred largely African-American civil rights marchers left Selma, Alabama, for Montgomery, the state capital. There they intended to struggle against racial segregation by demanding their voting rights. They had gone only six blocks when they were set upon by police, who beat them brutally. The event became known as Bloody Sunday. A little over a week later, Martin Luther King led another march from Selma to Montgomery. This time it was successful, and before a huge crowd in front of the state capital he stated that segregation was “on its last legs” (in Remnick 2010: 13). Then he rhetorically asked his listeners how long it would be before it was over and responded, “Not long, because the arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice” (ibid.: 13). Martin Luther King is one of the world’s great moral leaders. I think he was wrong about the arc of the moral universe.

To understand why, consider the following: Many elites, and even their subjects, in the empires of modernity, helped by their hermeneuts, think of history as the growth of civilization. The actuality is different. The US Leviathan might be the most powerful empire ever, but in its propensity to violence it is a typical empire. Ever since the invention of empires some four or five thousand years ago, they have developed force resource extraction institutions, directly or indirectly supported by institutions of violent force, to accumulate force resources for their elites. They have all been the most powerful social beings of their epochs. History has been the emergence of ever more powerful empires, with ever more extensive and dense powers, ever more devastating violence, and ever more negative reciprocity—in the sense that ever more persons are actors in logics where some few get lots of force resources, and the vast majority get few such resources. Life for the vast majority who get a little is not much of a picnic. Life for the elites favored by the negative reciprocity is very much a life of privileged picnics. Such an organizing of human being is unfair and, accordingly, unjust. Consequently, and sadly, it is important to recognize that Reverend King was wrong. For a very long time, the arc of moral justice has bent toward injustice.

So what is the solution to the second mystery? Human being has been the work of a contradictory “play of forces” subject to logics of social constitution and disorder. There is no guarantee that the work works, in the sense that social constitution always wins out over disorder. Moreover, this play has so far instituted ever grander empires that, all their fine monuments, arts and literatures notwithstanding, are moral eyesores.

### Critical Mediations: Utopia or the Sixth Extinction

I have lived inside the monster and know its entrails. (Martí 1895)

The bureaucratic, totalitarian monster grew stronger and spread. (C. L. R. James 1969)

Remember from the Preface that Rousseau said anthropology should be the discipline that studies other people in the world to better “know our own.” Investigation of twenty-four US wars among other peoples all over the world has told us something about “our own,” which in the course of our travels we have discovered is an interconnected world where we all live. Imperial social being was in some measure the reason those wars were the way they were. Now reread the two quotations above of Jose Martí and C. L. R. James.

They were not hybrid intellectuals, though both had lived in the US. Martí was a Cuban patriot and poet who spent time in the US during the 1880s and 1890s. James was a Trinidadian political economist, cricket commentator, and Marxist who lived off and on in the US in the twentieth century. US hermeneuts do not usually take such interpreters’ views seriously. Not American. Not Harvard or Yale. What can they know? Martí knew the US when it was first flexing its muscles in extraterritorial imperialism. James knew it while the New American Empire was being instituted. Both knew the same thing: the US was a “monster.” To US hermeneuts this is balderdash, the nonsense of two Caribbean cranks. America is “the shining city on the hill” whose security elites track and bugplat monster-alterities, and even whacked Saddam and bin Laden.

But the “shining city on the hill” claim is unsupported by *Deadly Contradictions*. The US is an empire—a new sort of empire, but an empire nevertheless. In the New American Empire, much of the extraction of force resources is done through capitalist negative reciprocity, by capitalist institutions with military institutions supporting them. This leads to a Rousseauian understanding that Martí and James help to clarify. This text’s analysis of the twenty-four wars, despite its focus on other peoples where the wars occurred, has led us to “know our own.” Here is what we

now know: Rousseau had it wrong, at least for modernity. There is no “our own” world and their, other world. Structurally it is a monad. Imperial social beings reproduce by connecting with, and thereby becoming part of, other social forms. In doing so, the US Leviathan, following a negative reciprocity logic, choreographed by the global domination public *délire*, sows terror and disorder.

I ask my readers not to think this reality abstractly, but to feel it. Think of pregnant Artica trying to protect herself and her unborn child. Hear the rocket swoosh in to explode. Smell the stench of blood, feces, and explosives hanging over her body, blown open with the fetus hanging out. Know that this has happened to millions upon millions in different ways and times since 1945. Sowers of such horror are monsters. This revelation answers the question that President Obama left unanswered in his Nobel Peace Prize speech, the location of evil. The US Leviathan is a moral monstrosity.

*Apocalypse Soon*: What does the future hold? In the current moment, according to Slavoj Žižek, leftist missionary to postmodernists, humanity is coming to be *Living in End Times* (2011). Some Jeremiah is always declaring that end times are just around the corner. But curiously, Žižek was not alone: the years from 1990 to 2014 witnessed an upsurge of apocalyptic nattering in America. A 1993 poll found that 20 percent of Americans believed Armageddon was near (Berlet 1995). By 2011 the figure had doubled to 41 percent, with well over half the people surveyed in the American South convinced it was approaching (Pew 2010). There is a tendency to poke fun at the interpretations of fundamentalist “rednecks.” Remember also that Hank Paulson’s wife told him to turn to God as the hard times of the Great Recession began. Rednecks and economic elites seem to share in apocalyptic angst.

They may be on to something. There have been five mass extinctions of species in the history of the globe. Some believe that a sixth is in progress (Kolbert 2014). It is obvious that no reproductive fixes are currently operating for the systemic contradictions that threaten human and other living being. The concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere has already risen to 400 ppm, where it is known to have deleterious consequences. The oil companies are sucking up the last dregs of tight oil. Peak oil may be postponed, but it is coming. Critically, the oil-control public *délire* does nothing to fix the land/capital contradiction. Even if successfully implemented, which it does not appear to be, all it can do is increase the New American Empire’s power as the key energy force resources disappear and disorder sets in. So it is appropriate to talk of *very* late modernity, in the sense that either modernity will change to something else, or the something else will

be nothing else. Consequently, all hands are on deck on the US Leviathan as the Sixth Extinction gathers force, because its apocalypse is imminent and scary. This leads to a grave hermeneutic puzzle: what, in Hell is to be done?

*Lenin's Question:* What to do, of course, was Lenin's question. I have sympathy for Lenin's answer, but my procedural response differs somewhat. Perceptually, imperial organizations are monstrosities. Humanity is better off without them. So I believe, like Lenin, they need to be eliminated by whatever means work. Procedurally, this is no easy matter.

Elimination of imperial monstrosities, as Lenin knew, is not a simple matter of having a revolution in which the winners take all and live happily ever after. Procedurally, imperial elimination involves two chores: eradicating the empires and instituting a global replacement able to equitably divide force resources in ways that allow these force resources to be reproducible. Instituting such novel social beings at a global level would be an extraordinary feat in the building of complex beings. No matter what, history will continue. Humans will experiment with different iterations of reproductive fixes. Perhaps some fix will emerge and enable global social beings to continue reproduction with equitable division of force resources. At present, however, there are no such fixes.

Further, remember the principle of the conservation of *délires*. There are hermeneuts working as hard as they can to keep the monstrosity going. Economic elites work day and night at the Harvards and Yales of very late modernity, fixated upon discovery of neoliberal iterations of capitalist reproduction to better regulate the flow of force resources to capitalist elites. They are aided by similarly continuously laboring security elites in the military-industrial complex who are fixated upon discovery of more "shock and awe" so as to produce more lethal iterations of global domination public *délire*. But after all is said and done, humans are giddy pragmatists. There is no necessity for fixes to work and save the day.

The average species exists five to ten million years before extinction (Lawton and May, 1995, Chapter 1). The human species has been around about three hundred thousand years. For 99 percent of this time, as earlier noted, human beings sailed the sea of space and time in classless social forms. Then the species invented empires, whereupon it went from bigger to even bigger empires capable of bigger and even bigger monstrosities. The conservation of *délires* saw to it, iteration by iteration, that imperial social beings extracted ever more force to exercise more power to reward elites with more prizes. The most recent incarnation of such predatory beings, the New American Empire, has generated contradictions whose fullest intensification promises complete disorder—apocalypse soon.



President Reagan, in his farewell address at the end of his presidency, said, "I've spoken of the shining city all my political life. ... And how stands the city on this winter night? ... After 200 years, two centuries, she still stands strong and true to the granite ridge, and her glow has held no matter what storm" (Reagan 1989). Poppycock! Since antiquity and the invention of empire there have been many imperial monsters on many hills, each with their appalling fires atop "granite" ridges. Perhaps what President Reagan really glimpsed, when he saw the "shining city" glow in very late modernity, was the latest, biggest monster's light in the enormity of the infinite universe, flaring in a darkened world.

Here comes the unsatisfying part. Some will complain that I have been pessimistic. Critical thought is supposed to liberate. They demand hope. Hope is not an answer. It is an opiate. Some demand to know, what is to be done? Liberation can be gained only when people know the actuality of their social being. This knowledge is what *Deadly Contradictions* has sought to contribute. Liberation begins with the elimination of empire. It ends with the establishment of complex, egalitarian, reproducible social beings able to operate globally. Liberation will not come merely by altering economic systems. Imperial economic systems are fused with their political counterparts, bristling with military institutions that control and exercise immense amounts of nonviolent and violent force. Elites in these institutions are disposed by their positional culture to solve hermeneutic puzzles violently. Unless their force is tamed, contradictions are likely to be deadly. Some may be tempted to label the vision of a future human being without empire as utopian. The choice may in fact be between utopia and the Sixth Extinction.

## Notes

1. Entry points into the gift-giving and reciprocity literature would include Gregory (1982), Jonathan Parry (1986), and Graeber (2001: 217), who believes that "as currently used," reciprocity is "very close to meaningless." Narotzky and Moreno (2002) present the only major discussion of negative reciprocity, which they explore in Nazi concentration camps.

2. Piketty (2014: 1) has published an empirically rich and theoretically convincing explanation of why "capitalism automatically generates ... inequalities," which in our terms means it generates negative reciprocities.

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