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The “Global War on Terror”: Who Wins? Who Loses?

G. Simon Harak, SJ

We have to struggle with the old enemies of peace—business and financial monopoly, speculation, reckless banking, class antagonism, sectionalism, war profiteering. They had begun to consider the Government of the United States as a mere appendage to their own affairs. We know now that government by organized money is just as dangerous as government by organized mob.

—Franklin D. Roosevelt¹

Money has taken on an ominous pseudo life, a new name: Mammon. It is as though the imperial face on coins were speaking aloud, instructing their handlers as to whose pockets they would line. *Accumulation*—the buzzword.

—Daniel Berrigan²

On May 17, 1968, Daniel Berrigan and his brother Philip joined seven other Catholic protesters³ at the Catonsville, Maryland, draft board. They went into the draft board (housed in the Catholic Knights of Columbus building), removed 378 draft files, brought them out to the parking lot and burned them with homemade napalm. The action marked a major turning

point in the antiwar movement and has been immortalized by a play,⁴ a movie,⁵ and more recently, a documentary.⁶

Dan Berrigan explained their use of "homemade" napalm with these words:

Our apologies, good friends, for the fracture of good order, the burning of paper instead of children, the angering of the orderlies in the front parlor of the charnal house. We could not, so help us God, do otherwise, for we are sick at heart. Our hearts give us no rest for thinking of the land of burning children. We say, killing is disorder, life and gentleness and community and unselfishness is the only order we recognize. The time is past when good people may be silent, when obedience can segregate us from public risk, when the poor can die without defense. How many indeed must die before our voices are heard? How many must be tortured, dislocated, starved, maddened? How long must the world's resources be raped in the service of legalized murder? When, at what point, will you say no to the war? We have chosen to say with the gift of our liberty, if necessary our lives: the violence stops here, the death stops here, the suppression of the truth stops here, the war stops here!⁷

In this essay I want to explore one aspect of the use of napalm as a multivalent symbol of the evil of war. Berrigan indicates this investigation when he challenges: "How long must the world's resources be raped in the service of legalized murder?" Specifically, I want to examine war profiteering, starting with napalm in Vietnam, and moving to the current state of war profiteering in the "global war on terror." Along the way, I hope to show how war profiteering has changed from Vietnam until now.

Dow Chemical's Napalm: The "Girl in the Picture"

On June 8, 1972, the Vietnamese village of Trang Bang was bombed with napalm. Among the people fleeing in terror from the burning village was nine-year-old Phan Thi Kim Phuc. Her naked (literally) terror was captured by photographer Huynh Cong "Nick" Ut, who brought her to a hospital in Saigon where she defied prognoses and lived.⁸ Ut's photo helped raise consciousness of the horrors that war weapons produced and stirred further public resistance to the war.

Developed by a group of chemists from Harvard, led by Louis Feisner, napalm is a generic name for any flammable liquid that has been turned into a gel, thus enabled to stick to a target, whether material or human. A major ingredient for the stickiness of napalm is polystyrene.

In 1965, as the Vietnam War was heating up, the Pentagon requested bids from the seventeen US companies that made polystyrene. Dow Chemical of Midland, Michigan, won the contract and became the sole producer of napalm for the US military at its Torrance, California, plant.

Dow was already a major weapons producer for the US government. It produced twenty tons of mustard gas a day during World War I, along with phenol, an important explosive ingredient. After World War I, Dow continued and increased its manufacturing of chemicals for the military, also improving its phenol formula. Leading up to World War II, "Dow was by far the fastest growing of the nation's large chemical firms, averaging 26 percent in annual growth during a period when one expert estimated growth for the top ten firms in the industry at an average of 3.2 percent yearly, and much of Dow's growth was in products that were to be key to the war, such as magnesium and styrene."⁹

Having won the contract for napalm production in 1966, Dow continued to work on the product. Their "improvements" were succinctly and cavalierly recounted by a soldier in a conversation with photojournalist Philip Jones Griffiths:

We sure are pleased with those backroom boys at Dow. The original product wasn't so hot—if the gooks were quick they could scrape it off. So the boys started adding polystyrene—now it sticks like shit to a blanket. But then if the gooks jumped under water it stopped burning, so they started adding Willie Peter [WP—white phosphorous] so's to make it burn better. It'll even burn under water now. And just one drop is enough, it'll keep on burning right down to the bone so they die anyway from phosphorous poisoning.¹⁰

As hideous as it was, napalm was one of the least examples¹¹ of Dow Chemical's valuing profits over people and earnings over the environment. Dow was also one of the manufacturers of Agent Orange, one of whose chemicals, dioxin, had been shown to cause birth defects in mice with concentrations of 0.25 parts per trillion solution.¹² In *Trespass against Us*, investigative reporter Jack Doyle recounts Dow's involvement in various tragedies, such as Bhopal (through its subsidiary, Union Carbide),¹³ its production and false advertising of safety claims for Dursban,¹⁴ and the scandal of silicone breast implants (internal memos later revealed that the "leakage problem" was known to company officials even before they began marketing the implants).

Dow Chemical continues to be pursued for its chemical warfare. It has for the most part, however, escaped legal consequences for its actions.¹⁵

Dow's legal battles have produced three benefits for the company, and for future chemical and weapons manufacturers. First, Dow's out of court settlements forestalled government's passing of laws against negligent and criminal practices. Second, such settlements meant that Dow cannot be legally compelled to clean up the environmental damages. Finally, during the course of these trials (in 1974), Dow succeeded in shifting the burden of proof to the government: the government had to prove that the chemicals were harmful, whereas previously the manufacturers had to prove that the chemical was safe.

Dow's far-reaching success in the legal system was shown in March 2005 when US District Judge Jack B. Weinstein dismissed a lawsuit filed on behalf of over three million Vietnamese against Dow and more than thirty other companies for the use of Agent Orange in Vietnam. In his opinion, Weinstein stated that the plaintiffs failed to prove Agent Orange caused their injuries.¹⁶ If upheld, the case would have required not only personal damages but environmental cleanup in Vietnam. The case has recently gone to federal appeals court, where former US Solicitor General Seth Waxman, arguing for the chemical companies, noted a lack of legal precedent for punishing the use of poisons in war and warned of harming US battlefield decisions if judges find the suit can proceed. "This does affect our ongoing diplomacy," he said, citing the use of depleted uranium shells by US forces in Iraq.¹⁷ The irony of equating battlefield poisons and radioactivity with diplomacy seems to have escaped the defense lawyer.

In the past two decades, there have been other significant economic and political shifts that have, if imaginable, transmogrified war profiteering into an even deeper affliction upon people and the environment.

The Defense Policy Board

In 1985, during the presidency of George Bush, the US government formed the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee, otherwise known as the Defense Policy Board (DPB). Selected by the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy¹⁸ with the approval of the Secretary of Defense, its duties are to:

Review and assess: (a) the long-term, strategic implication of defense policies in various regions of the world; (b) the policy implications of current and prospective weapons classes; (c) the impact of our defense policies on alliance military issues; and (d) other major areas as identified by the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.

Analyze selected, short-term policy issues identified by the Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary or Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and present the results to the requesting official.

Serve as individual advisors to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy as required.

When required, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy may direct that specific, time-sensitive subjects be examined by ad hoc panels of regular and/or associate Committee members.¹⁹

Here, even in the title, we sense a change. Since 1956 the US Department of Defense has been advised by the Defense Science Board, whose members “are selected on the basis of their preeminence in the fields of science, technology and its application to military operations, research, engineering, manufacturing and acquisition process.”²⁰ This relatively new board is not just about research, development or acquisitions. It concerns itself with *policy*. The members of this powerful advisory committee are drawn mostly from the “private sector” (only four members can be active in government), from people who are deemed to have expertise in national security matters. They meet at least four times a year with the under secretary and members of the Defense Department.

WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE DPB?

Christopher Williams is the former acting Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, member of the George W. Bush transition team, and special assistant to Donald Rumsfeld. (A list of DPB Members [July 11, 2007] can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/dpb-members> [under “Members”], accessed August 15, 2011.) When he left that last position in 2001, he joined Johnston & Associates, a Washington, D.C.-based lobbying firm, started by former Senator J. Bennett Johnston.²¹ Williams is also a former member of the Project for the New American Century²² and the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq.²³

Williams sat on the DPB during the entire military buildup of the global war on terror (August 16, 2001–June 4, 2007). At the same time, as a registered lobbyist, Williams was being paid between \$100,000 and \$300,000 a year to lobby for such defense contractors as Boeing and Northrop-Grumman.

During that same period, John J. “Jack” Sheehan served on the DPB. Sheehan retired as a General in the Marine Corps, and was Supreme Commander of NATO forces in the Atlantic region (1963–1997). After his

retirement, Sheehan joined the Bechtel Group, first as manager for Europe, Africa, Middle East, and Southwest Asia (1998–2000), then as senior vice president for Europe, Africa, Middle East, and Southwest Asia (2001–present).

Bechtel is the largest construction company in the world. Its history began in the early twentieth century with the construction of the Bowman Lake Dam in California. It later joined with five other companies to build and complete the Hoover Dam two years ahead of schedule. In 1972 Bechtel completed the Bay Area Rapid Transit System (BART).

Recently, however, Bechtel's reputation has become tarnished. Bechtel botched the 1963 construction of a nuclear power plant in San Onofre, California. Their participation in the privatization of water in Cochabamba, Bolivia, prompted demonstrations when the price of water rose 200 percent. To quell those demonstrations, the Bolivian government fired upon the crowds, killing at least six people, and wounding many more. Bechtel is the primary architect in Boston's "Big Dig,"²⁴ which is currently nine years and twelve billion dollars over budget. In July of 2006, a portion of the tunnel collapsed upon a car driven by newlyweds Angel and Melina Delvalle, killing Melina. "There's no reason why we in the state of Massachusetts should have spent \$16.8 billion and counting to have someone lose a life in Massachusetts. Doesn't make any sense," said former State Inspector General Robert Cerasoli.²⁵

Finally, Bechtel has won nearly three billion dollars in contracts to "rebuild" Iraq. We must use quotes there, because the average household in Iraq now gets about two hours of electricity a day. Iraq unemployment runs about 70 percent. Sixty-eight percent of Iraqis have no access to clean drinking water. Eighty-one percent of Iraqis have no access to sewage treatment.²⁶

Bechtel withdrew from Iraq on October 31, 2006. In their forty-month stay in Iraq, fifty-two of their workers were killed, forty-seven of whom were Iraqis. And yet, according to Bechtel President Cliff Mumm, "We provided training to thousands of Iraqi professionals and craft workers. And we accomplished all this with a safety record that would be the envy of any firm operating in the United States." He added, "We are proud of our record in Iraq."²⁷

Sheehan was a member of the DPB. At the same time, he was senior vice president at Bechtel. Sheehan left the DPB about the same time Bechtel left Iraq.

Richard Bowman Meyers is a retired US Air Force General. He was Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff throughout the buildup for, invasion and occupation of Iraq (October 1, 2001–September 30, 2005). Meyers is

extraordinarily well connected. Prior to becoming chairman, he served as the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from March 2000 to September 2001. As vice chairman, General Myers served as the chairman of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, vice chairman of the Defense Acquisition Board, and as a member of the National Security Council Deputies Committee and the Nuclear Weapons Council. In addition, he acted for the chairman in all aspects of the planning, programming and budgeting system including participation in the Defense Resources Board. He also served as commander-in-chief of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and US Space Command; commander of the Air Force Space Command; and Department of Defense manager of the space transportation system contingency support at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado. Shortly after his retirement, he joined the board of directors of Northrup-Grumman, the world's third-largest weapons contractor. He presently sits on the DPB.

Also in 2005, Vernon Clark retired from his position as admiral in the Navy and joined the Board of Directors of Raytheon. According to *CNNMoney.com*, "Raytheon specializes in defense, homeland security and other government markets throughout the world. With a history of innovation spanning 85 years, Raytheon provides state-of-the-art electronics, mission systems integration and other capabilities in the areas of sensing; effects; and command, control, communications and intelligence systems, as well as a broad range of mission support services." In 2006, Clark joined the DPB. In that year, Raytheon announced over \$20 billion in military contracts.

Sheehan, Williams, Myers, Clark and other members of the DPB would advise the defense department on defense policy: what weapons systems to buy, what countries are "threats," and need (with the new US doctrine) to suffer preemptive military strikes. Yet they and other members of the DPB work for, and are highly paid by, corporations that will directly benefit if the United States does go to war, remains at war, and persists in occupation.

In *War Made Easy*, Norman Solomon recounts how many different corporations have profited from the "global war on terror": Orbit International, Engineered Support Systems, Inc., Northrup Grumman, et al. A typical quote from one of the companies' reports reads, "We are heavily dependent upon military spending as a source of revenues and income. Accordingly, any substantial future reductions in overall military spending by the U.S. government could have a material adverse effect on our sales and earnings."²⁸

Pentagon officials argue that they need to seek out experts in the field of defense to advise them. But we might also wonder: Is it possible that there is a conflict of interest here? Employed and highly paid by such corporations, is the security of the United States the only thing that's on their mind as they advise the Pentagon and government officials on war-making policy? Members of the board reveal their business associations to the Pentagon, but those associations are not revealed to the public, leaving the Pentagon as the sole arbiter of their ethical propriety.

Keeping the DPB in mind, let us turn to other ways that companies have access to government decision-making when it comes to war. By the end of this chapter, through our description of the confluence of such avenues, a clearer picture will emerge of the extent of corporate influence on US war-making policy.

PR Firms and Media Blitzes

From a marketing point of view, you don't introduce new products in August.

—Andrew H. Card²⁹

See, in my line of work you got to keep repeating things over and over and over again for the truth to sink in, to kind of catapult the propaganda.

—George W. Bush³⁰

GULF WAR I

We can easily transition from the power of the DPB to the power of PR firms by noting that Devon Gaffney Cross³¹ and Victoria "Torie" Clarke are members of the DPB. Cross is an adviser to the Lincoln Group. The Lincoln Group of Washington, DC, is a PR firm—and more. In 2005 it "was awarded an indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract, with a potential maximum value of \$100,000,000, for media approach planning, prototype product development, commercial quality product development, product distribution and dissemination, and media effects analysis for the Joint Psychological Operations Support element and other government agencies. The work will be performed CONUS and OCONUS and task orders may be issued from June 7, 2005–June 6, 2010."³² The acronyms are ominous: they stand for "Continental United States," and "Outside the

Continental United States.” This means that the firm has been give enormous resources to perform its operations in the United States.

A small portion (\$6 million) of that contract was given to Iraqex, a newly formed subsidiary of the Lincoln Group, to do PR for the Coalition Forces in Iraq.

On November 30, 2005, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that the US military was paying Iraqi newspapers to publish articles produced by the Lincoln Group.

The articles, written by U.S. military information operations troops, are translated into Arabic and placed in Baghdad newspapers with the help of a defense contractor, according to U.S. military officials and documents obtained by the *Los Angeles Times*.

Many of the articles are presented in the Iraqi press as unbiased news accounts written and reported by independent journalists. The stories trumpet the work of U.S. and Iraqi troops, denounce insurgents and tout U.S.-led efforts to rebuild the country.³³

The authors of the article articulate a theme which I hope the reader can see emerging in this article: “The arrangement with Lincoln Group is evidence of how far the Pentagon has moved to blur the traditional boundaries between military public affairs—the dissemination of factual information to the media—and psychological and information operations, which use propaganda and sometimes misleading information to advance the objectives of a military campaign.”³⁴

On the other hand, one can understand Daniel Berrigan’s life and work as an effort to bear witness to the truth—more precisely, to the Truth of the Gospel. And for Berrigan, the central truth of the Gospel is the nonviolence of the Sermon on the Mount, “Love your enemies.” Berrigan is aware of the image-making (or rather, image-distorting) power of the dominant culture. Crucially, he speaks of how the Empire has coopted the image of Christ.

Christ, it goes without saying, is no longer shown as the accused and abused suffering Servant Hailed before Pilate. Now He is the friend and advocate and beneficiary of Pilate.

The change hardly stops with the later images, the God of “power and might.” Images always go far beyond themselves; they urge new attitudes and behavior, celebrate new social structures. Icons became signs of immense social change, celebrating a new and prosperous status of the Holy vis-à-vis secular power.³⁵

Jesus's claim that he is "The way, the truth and the life" gives Berrigan a useful hermeneutic for analyzing the PR that leads to war. For Berrigan, truth leads to life. Conversely, killing requires lying. "Whenever we find an insistence on killing, the death of the poor is inevitable," that, for Berrigan, is the supreme departure from the truth of Jesus. In his commemoration of Dorothy Day, he writes:

What had she seen? The tragedy of the victim was by no means accidental, nor was it in any way to be equated with the will of God for humans.

Something else was at work, something eminently sinful. Choices against, overwhelmingly against, multitudes of the living. Caught in the gun sights of war and cut down; war being a simple and appalling synonym for the modern world, its main horrific work and business-for-profit.³⁶

Cross's link to Lincoln shows us only one aspect of how PR firms profit from war. We can find even more dramatic cases, one leading up to the first Gulf War in 1991, and another leading up to the 1993 invasion of Iraq.

In 1990, Victoria "Torie" Clarke was general manager of what was then the world's largest PR firm, Hill & Knowlton. In 1990, after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the Kuwait's emirs hired Hill & Knowlton to help "sell" the war to the American people. They paid them between \$12 million (according to "60 Minutes") and \$20 million (according to "20/20"). Their main coup, as recounted by Solomon and others, perpetrated by Tom Lantos (D-CA), who brought in "Nayirah" to tell the tale of how Iraqi soldiers had thrown Kuwaiti babies out of incubators. The story was false and Tom Lantos knew it. Nayirah was the daughter of the Kuwaiti Ambassador to the United States. It is doubtful that Nayirah was even in Kuwait at the time of the invasion, and certainly not in the hospital³⁷ since the al-Sabah family had fled Kuwait in advance of Hussein's invasion.

Nevertheless, the "incubator story" was repeated over and over by President Bush and the media, and even accepted by Amnesty International. Crucially,

The final decision to go to war was made on January 12, 1991 in a Senate vote of 52 to 47 (a margin of 3). Before passing this resolution, six pro-war senators specifically brought forth the baby incubator allegations in their speeches supporting the resolution. Without the incubator allegations the margin of victory within the Senate would likely not have been sufficient for the war to be approved.³⁸

It is important to note that Hill & Knowlton profited from *promoting* war. That echoes our suspicions of the conflict of interest in the DPB (of which Clarke is currently a member): that the members represent corporations that will profit if they “advise” the United States to go to war.

In the lead-up to the 1991 attacks on Iraq, the media mostly followed the lead of the “hired PR guns.” For example, Solomon notes that “major American news outlets printed and aired comparisons between Saddam Hussein and Hitler at an average rate of several times each day during the five-and-a-half months that led up to the Gulf War in mid-January 1991. Yet Hussein’s dictatorship had been known and supported by the United States for many years.”³⁹

During the 1991 war, the media almost wholly abandoned objective reporting. Writing about that coverage, *The New York Times’s* Chris Hedges said:

It gave us media-manufactured heroes and a heady pride in our military superiority and technology. It made war fun . . . It was war as spectacle, war as entertainment. The images and stories were designed to make us feel good about our nation, about ourselves. The Iraqi families and soldiers being blown to bits by huge iron fragmentation bombs just over the border in Iraq were faceless and nameless phantoms.

. . .

The notion that the press was used in the war is incorrect. The press wanted to be used. It saw itself as part of the war effort . . . For we not only believe the myth of war and feed recklessly off the drug but also embrace the cause. We may do it with more skepticism. We certainly expose more lies and misconception. But we believe. We all believe.⁴⁰

Between the wars, the media were unimaginably remiss in reporting the effects of the *sanctions* on the Iraqi people. In Gulf War I, most of the bombs were dropped on the civilian infrastructure of Iraq, resulting in the loss of electric power and critically, clean water delivery and sewage treatment systems. That specific targeting unleashed water-borne diseases like acute dehydrating diarrhea (cholera), prolonged febrile illness with abdominal symptoms (typhoid fever), acute bloody diarrhea (dysentery), and chronic diarrhea (Brainerd diarrhea) which, as the Defense Intelligence Agency had predicted before the war, reached epidemic proportions within six months.

Deprived by the sanctions of any means of treating these illnesses, or of repairing the damage that unleashed them, the Iraqis began to die in their

tens of thousands, then hundreds of thousands, starting with the weakest. The most authoritative book on this topic to date is by UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq, Hans von Sponeck.⁴¹ I know of only few commentators who include this twelve-year genocidal policy in their analysis of the present situation in Iraq.⁴²

GULF WAR II

We have many books and articles about how the "fourth estate" failed to challenge the Bush Administration's "case" for the invasion of Iraq in 2003.⁴³ I'd like to cull some of these resources to examine some of the strategy used by the US government to "sell" the war on Iraq.

When it was time to convince the US public to invade Iraq after 9/11, the government PR apparatus had become even more sophisticated, and "Torie" Clarke was part of that push as well. Even before 9/11, Donald Rumsfeld had invited Clarke to the Pentagon as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, the public spokeswoman for the Pentagon. After 9/11, Rumsfeld gave Clarke the task of "selling" the invasion of Iraq.

Almost immediately upon taking up her new gig, Clarke convened regular meetings with a select group of Washington's top private PR specialists and lobbyists to develop a marketing plan for the Pentagon's forthcoming terror wars. The group was filled with heavy-hitters and was strikingly bipartisan in composition. She called it the Rumsfeld Group and it included PR executive Sheila Tate, columnist Rich Lowry, and Republican political consultant Rich Galen.⁴⁴

In addition to orchestrating the Defense Department's propaganda leading up to the 2003 invasion, Clarke created the idea of "embedded reporters" during the invasion.⁴⁵

On another media front, on January 21, 2002, by Executive Order 13283, President George W. Bush "established within the White House Office an Office of Global Communications (the 'Office') to be headed by a Deputy Assistant to the President for Global Communications."⁴⁶ Its mission was

to advise the President, the heads of appropriate offices within the Executive Office of the President, and the heads of executive departments and agencies on utilization of the most effective means for the United States Government to ensure consistency in messages that will

promote the interests of the United States abroad, prevent misunderstanding, build support for and among coalition partners of the United States, and inform international audiences.

To accomplish this, one of its principle functions was to

assess the methods and strategies used by the United States Government (other than special activities as defined in Executive Order 12333 of December 4, 1981) to deliver information to audiences abroad. The Office shall coordinate the formulation among appropriate agencies of messages that reflect the strategic communications framework and priorities of the United States, and shall facilitate the development of a strategy among the appropriate agencies to effectively communicate such messages.⁴⁷

One of the duties of the "Office" is to publish the daily "Global Messenger," sent out to all US ambassadors abroad and favorable contacts in the media. It gives the government's position on various events, and thus ensures that everyone is repeating the government's message. *The New Yorker* observed the lock-step effect of such a PR strategy:

During the six months or so prior to and encompassing the nomination and confirmation of John Roberts as Chief Justice of the United States, one phrase was on every Republican senatorial lip. "All of the President's nominees, both now and in the future, deserve a fair up-or-down vote," said Sam Brownback, of Kansas. "Every nominee, no matter if the President is Democrat or Republican, deserves an up-or-down vote," said Jim DeMint, of South Carolina. "We must take action to insure President Bush's nominees are getting the up-or-down vote they deserve," said Kay Bailey Hutchison, of Texas. "Since the day I came to the U.S. Senate," said Pete Domenici, of New Mexico, "I have believed strongly that every nominee deserves an up-or-down vote." The conservative commentariat was equally of one mind about the sanctity of verticality. "The American people," wrote John Podhoretz, in the *Post*, "won't understand why a candidate should be denied an up-or-down vote." The White House, naturally, agreed. "We believe that every judicial nominee deserves an up-or-down vote," said Karl Rove.⁴⁸

That constant repetition of "sound bites" is characteristic of PR. That they come from so many quarters should concern us.

Further, in a by now characteristic move, the government "Office" outsourced the task of selling the war. One of the firms hired was the

Rendon Group. The Rendon Group had also been active in selling Gulf War I, since "during Desert Storm [John] Rendon pulled in \$100,000 a month from the Kuwaiti royal family. He followed this up with a \$23 million contract from the CIA to produce anti-Saddam propaganda in the region."⁴⁹ (Note that in April 2005, the Office of Global Communications was disbanded, but its duties were taken up directly by the National Security Council.)

As reported in *Weapons of Mass Deception*, PR firms have now become so sophisticated that they attach electrodes to members of "focus groups," in order to measure the most minute reactions to their advertisements. What John Rendon and his associates discovered was that people were not much moved, for example, by the fact that Saddam Hussein was a brutal dictator (perhaps they were lulled by all those years that the United States supported his activities), or that there was torture in Iraq (something most Americans—especially in the Justice Department—seem callous toward). What *did* get people upset was "weapons of mass destruction." After 9/11, they had another angle: they could link Saddam Hussein with the terrorist attacks.

Once they had their selling points, the Rendon Group went to work. They assembled a stable of speakers and trained them in the techniques of what Chomsky would call "manufacturing consent." For example, they were trained, whenever they mentioned 9/11, to say "Saddam Hussein," or "Iraq" in the same sentence—whether or not they made a causal relationship. Association was enough, because all that was required was what Nicholas J. O'Shaughnessy calls "emotional proof."

[Emotional proof] is where we feel intuitively that there is a causal connection which is highly significant to the creation of some event and yet which cannot easily be pinned down, but where we believe this thing to be true because we have a deep emotional need for it to be true.⁵⁰

The Rendon group earned their money. "By the start of the war, 66 percent of Americans thought Saddam Hussein was behind 9/11 and 79 percent thought he was close to having a nuclear weapon."⁵¹ The propaganda was even more successful among the military. "[A] Zogby survey of 944 military personnel in Iraq, finds that 85 percent of U.S. troops in . . . Mesopotamia think they are there to avenge Saddam Hussein's role in the 9/11 jetliner attacks.⁵² Seventy-seven percent think the U.S. invaded to stop Saddam from helping al Qaeda."

Just to be clear: these were not mistakes in intelligence; they were lies.⁵³

During the war, PR and psy-ops were needed more than ever.

In Qatar, a stage-set headquarters was set up—under the design of a Hollywood art director who had also worked with illusionist David Blaine—which would accommodate journalists and provide them with representations of conflict through the wizardry of advanced technological communications.⁵⁴

Furthermore, during “major combat operations,” the “embedded” reporters “still presented a largely bloodless—but action-packed—view of the Iraq war to American audiences,”⁵⁵ where the dead were virtually never shown, especially on FNC [Fox News Channel] and where only about 2 percent of shots showed people killed in the war. Even more rare (only 4 shots in 600 hours of coverage) were pictures taken in close enough proximity or with an angle that allowed the audience to see the victim’s face. Instead, the dead were seen at a distance, covered by a sheet, or through a surrogate (most commonly a coffin and very rarely anything as graphic as a pool of blood).⁵⁶

The effect was predictable:

This carefully controlled and choreographed environment produced round-the-clock information which effectively minimized any oppositional reports emerging and was used to restrict the scope for journalistic interpretations which departed from military lines. By filling airtime with propaganda, the Bush administration and the military succeeded in keeping Iraqi reports from infiltrating coverage and thus helped to maintain the illusion that the war was progressing in much the same way as a Hollywood cinematic experience with America fulfilling its mythic role as a civilizing force bringing freedom to those subject to barbarism.⁵⁷

As the above quote indicates, there is, beneath all this PR activity, a deep confusion inherent in the United States that justifies its wars—especially in the case of Iraq, where the United States wants to present itself as a “civilizing force” to the very birthplace of civilization. This deep confusion permeates all areas of official governmental and corporate reporting on Iraq. Perhaps it also explains the “logic” in President Bush’s famous statement, “I just want you to know that, when we talk about war, we’re really talking about peace.”⁵⁸ More humorously, I recently saw a bumper sticker that read: “Be nice to America—or we will bring you democracy.”

After the occupation of Iraq was more established, the Rendon Group was awarded a \$6.4 million contract to report the war from Baghdad.⁵⁹ Here, then, is a move that I believe is a pattern for corporations in their dealings with the US government: They sell the war, then profit from it. In tandem with PR firms like Rendon and Lincoln, the Pentagon engaged its own (governmental) "Combat Camera" which gave us the manufactured story of the "rescue" of Private Jessica Lynch:

The Lynch story was fed to the eager press by a Pentagon operation called Combat Camera, the Army network of photographers, videographers and editors that sends 800 photos and 25 video clips a day to the media. The editors at Combat Camera carefully culled the footage to present the Pentagon's montage of the war, eliding such unsettling images as collateral damage, cluster bombs, dead children and US soldiers, napalm strikes and disgruntled troops.⁶⁰

We should note that on its website,⁶¹ one of the duties that "Combat Camera" tasks itself with is "information warfare."

To close this section, I'd like to note that John Rendon and the Rendon Group have an interesting history of working with the government in its war-making policies. Information desks at the CIA have also been outsourced to private companies, with the result that employees from the Rendon Group have taken over jobs long reserved for the CIA. "According to one senior administration official involved in intelligence-budget decisions, half of the CIA's work is now performed by private contractors."⁶² This is further disturbing evidence of corporate takeover of government functions, but the more so because in 1991, the CIA hired John Rendon to "create the conditions for the removal of Saddam Hussein from power."⁶³ Since his firm is being paid for that purpose, what will a Rendon employee do when information comes across his CIA desk?

In the most recent exposé, R. J. Hillhouse discovers other sources inside the CIA that confirm the 50 percent outsourcing figure, then points out another disturbing dimension of this shift:

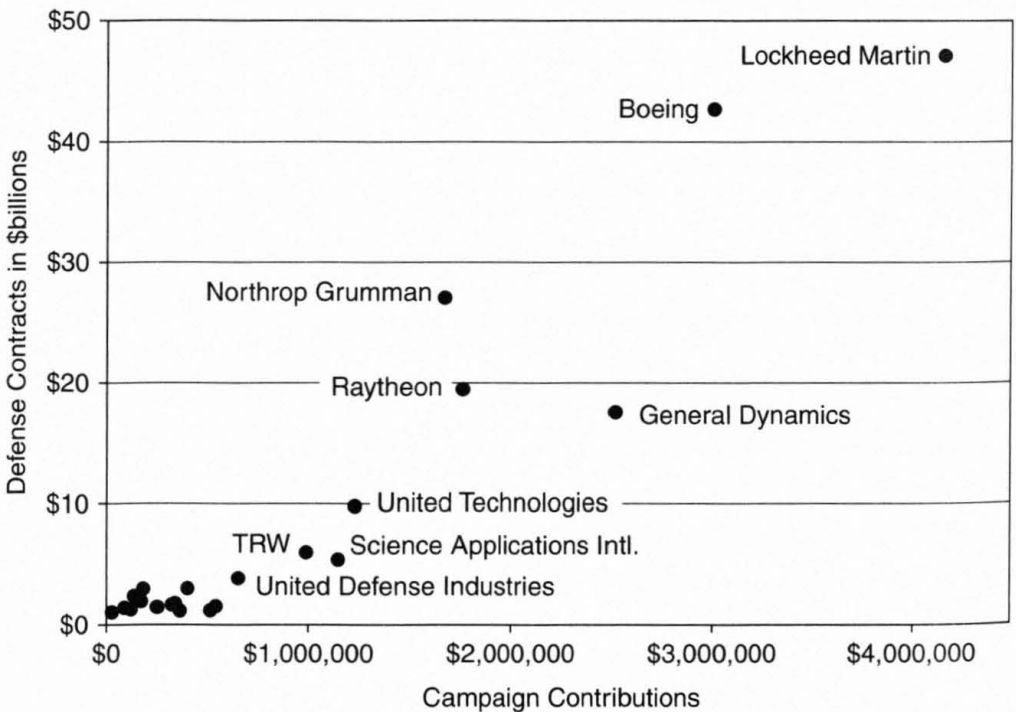
The contractors in charge of espionage are still chiefly CIA alumni who have absorbed its public service values. But as the center of gravity shifts from the public sector to the private, more than one independent intelligence firm has developed plans to "raise" succeeding generations of officers within its own training systems. These corporate-grown agents will be inculcated with corporate values and ethics, not those of public service.⁶⁴

Campaign Contributions

It should be obvious that campaign contributions influence the voting of policy-makers in the government.⁶⁵ But in 2002 the Center for Responsive Politics (CRP) put out a chart that “graphically” demonstrates the relationship with regard to weapons companies (see Figure 1).

While we await an updated chart from the CRP, I might point out two things about this one. The first is contained in the comment on the chart itself: “This means that 90% of the variation in defense contract size is accounted for by campaign contribution size.” Please note that this chart deals with the size of the contract. Actually getting access to the contract is a story that will unfold in the course of this essay.

The second is that the defense contractors are getting a tremendous bargain for their money. For example, Lockheed Martin is the largest



Includes 24 public and private defense contractors with \$1 billion or more in 2000–02 contracts for which the Defense Department accounted for more than 10% of total sales in 2002. “Campaign contributions” include soft-money and Political Action Committee contributions. $R^2 = .8997$. This means that 90% of the variation in defense contract size is accounted for by campaign contribution size.

Figure 1 Campaign contributions and defense contracts, 2000–2002.

weapons manufacturer in the world. When one looks at the campaign contributions of Lockheed Martin for the period charted, one sees that they contributed over \$4 million dollars to various campaigns. That is a great deal of money. But compare that amount to the dollar amount in the contracts awarded to Lockheed Martin during that time: about \$48 billion. Please note the ratio: contributions in the millions reaped contracts in the tens of billions—a huge return on investment (ROI).

A comparison might help to better grasp the enormity of that ROI. Imagine those millions invested and billions returned not in terms of dollars, but in terms of seconds. If you spent \$1 every second, it would take eleven days to spend one million dollars. At the same rate, it would take thirty-one years to spend one billion dollars. And recall that Lockheed-Martin's contracts are in the *tens of billions* of dollars. Then, returning to the chart in Figure 1, one can see that defense contractors "earned" about \$12,000 for every \$1 they "invested" in political campaigns.

Other companies that profit from war also follow a similar pattern of "investment." I will discuss Blackwater later in this chapter. But when Erik Prince was the CEO of Blackwater, he gave about \$250,000 to federal campaigns, and "not a dime to Democrats"⁶⁶ That was not because the Democrats were too peaceful, but because the Republicans were in power when the contracts for mercenaries were being outsourced.

With the power of the DPB, of PR firms with access to CIA desks, and the weight of campaign contributions, I hope a pattern of influence with the war profiteers emerges. I would venture to say that there has been a paradigm shift since the days of the Berrigan protests. Whereas it is still true to say that these corporations profit from war now, because of their great influence on war-making policy, it might be more accurate to say that *they make war for profit*.⁶⁷

We know that in the past, corporations have influenced governments to buy weapons systems. We know that in the days of the British Empire, corporations influenced the government to go to war to pacify areas or to gain access to cheap labor and resources. We know that in 1935, Marine Major General Smedley Butler published *War Is a Racket*,⁶⁸ describing how industrialists profit from war. But now, along with those dimensions, we see that war itself is profitable, that the whole endeavor is a profit-making venture. From the people who "sell" it, and then go to Iraq to "report it," from the weapons manufacturers who destroy, to the reconstruction companies who "rebuild," from the people who "equip" the US military to the people who provide medical care for the returning veterans—twenty-first century US war is a profit-making cycle.

Thus the capitalist standard of profitmaking penetrates into war making as well, giving it a new form. Some years after his Catonsville action, Berrigan in *Whereon We Stand* discussed the all-consuming nature of profitmaking, using religious grammar to describe its omnipresence: "Business as a form of religion, the undeniable religious aura of business, the profane elevated to the sacramental."⁶⁹ Tellingly in the same work, Berrigan proceeds from his analysis of the "peace" struck between religion and greed, to the idolization of Mars, the god of war. He recasts Demetrius's words in defense of Artemis (the goddess whose silver statue reigned in Ephesus), placing them in the mouths of the present-day defenders of war: "Great and loyal and worthy of all support is our work, great are the factories, laboratories, bunkers and bases of Mars. It is though these that our country flourishes unparalleled in the world!"⁷⁰

With "making war for profit" as a working hypothesis, I would like to make explicit another area where corporations have a profound influence on war-making policy in the United States: the so-called "revolving door" between military contractors and positions in the US government.

The Revolving Door

From the moment the Bush team took power, the Pentagon was stacked with ideologues like Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith . . . and with former corporate executives, many from large weapons manufacturers, like Under Secretary of Defense Pete Aldridge (Aerospace Corporation), Army Secretary Thomas White (Enron), Navy Secretary Gordon England (General Dynamics), and Air Force Secretary James Roche (Northrop Grumman).

—Jeremy Scahill⁷¹

I have suggested that corporate representatives influence decision-making through the DPB. The DPB, however, is still technically an advisory group. With what is called the "revolving door," government policy-makers and -enforcers become members of corporations who use their contacts and access to enrich the corporations (and themselves). Then they return to government positions with their vision of national security colored (at best) by their corporate experience. Then they return to the corporate world with even more influence, and then return to government, and so on.

I will give several examples of this, but my prime example is former Vice President Dick Cheney. In 1989 Cheney was appointed Secretary of

Defense for George H. W. Bush, overseeing, in part, Gulf War I. After the war, Cheney hired a private firm to cap the oil well fires in Kuwait. The name of the firm was Halliburton. In 1992, Cheney paid a private firm \$9 million to determine whether the outsourcing of military logistics would be economically feasible. After nearly a year, the private firm said that outsourcing to private firms would indeed be the way to go. The name of the private firm was Brown and Root (later, KBR), a wholly owned subsidiary of Halliburton.

When Cheney left office in 1995, he had no experience working in corporate management structures. Nevertheless, he was hired by Halliburton and became their CEO. Then Brown and Root won a five-year contract to provide logistics for the US Army Corp of Engineers all over the globe. Over the next five years, Halliburton doubled the number of contracts it received from the US government. "At Halliburton, Cheney exploited his government and international contracts to boost Halliburton's government-guaranteed loans from \$100 million to 1.5 billion in less than 5 years. He also created 35 offshore, tax-free subsidiaries."⁷² And in the decade following KBR's "findings" for the government, 3,000 government contracts were outsourced to private firms. Halliburton received 750 of those contracts.⁷³

Working for the government (or more accurately, vice versa) has other benefits beside guaranteed profits. In 1998, Halliburton paid \$302 million in taxes. In 1999, it paid nothing. In fact, in 1999 Halliburton received a tax refund of \$85 million.⁷⁴ Such "tax breaks" are not uncommon. As Antonia Juhasz reports, "The Arms Trade Resource Center determined that almost 80 percent of Lockheed's 2004 earnings were paid for by U.S. taxpayers . . . Moreover, the Resource Center found that in 2002 Lockheed paid so few taxes that it was effectively taxed at just 7.7 percent, compared to the average American's tax rate of about 20 to 35 percent."⁷⁵ Not only that, but a recent GAO report revealed that more than 60,000 contractors with the US federal government that owe more than \$7.7 billion in back taxes, including 27,000 Department of Defense contractors.⁷⁶

There seems to be a further advantage in this government-corporation weddedness: contracts can be gained through contacts, rather than through competitive bidding. Thus, Representative Waxman reports:

Last year's [2006] report found that no-bid contracts and other forms of contracts awarded without full and open competition had risen from \$67.5 billion in 2000 to \$145.1 billion in 2005. This year's report finds that spending on these no-bid and limited-competition contracts

surged over \$60 billion to \$206.9 billion in 2006, the largest single-year increase ever. The value of federal contracts awarded without full and open competition has more than tripled since 2000. For the first time on record, more than half of federal procurement spending was awarded through no-bid and limited-competition contracts in 2006.⁷⁷

In 2000 George W. Bush asked Cheney to help him find a suitable vice-presidential candidate. After interviewing a dozen people, Cheney submitted his own name, and Bush accepted. He immediately resumed outsourcing. In 1997 KBR had lost its contract because of fraudulent billing practices in Bosnia. But in 2001, when Cheney was back in government, KBR got its contract back—"just in time for the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq."⁷⁸

Before he became vice president, Cheney had to sell off his Halliburton stocks to avoid a conflict of interest. He made about \$35 million from the sale. However, he left with a "compensation package" of 433,000 stock options in Halliburton. As with all corporations, Halliburton has made moves to assure that its stock remains robust. For example, in 2002 Halliburton realized a \$25 million profit by cutting in half the pensions of people it had forced into early retirement.⁷⁹ Now Halliburton is leaving Texas to establish its main offices in Dubai, centering itself at the crossroads of the Middle East-Asian oil trade, and escaping whatever vestiges of control that might still be exerted by the US government.

Cheney's compensation package included five years of deferred payments from Halliburton. These payments were detailed in a press release from Senator Frank Lautenberg's office on September 15, 2005.⁸⁰ It might be helpful to place those amounts received from Halliburton in comparison with Cheney's salary as vice president (see table).

Cheney's Salary

	<i>As Vice President</i>	<i>From Halliburton</i>
2001	\$175,400	\$205,298
2002	\$175,400	\$162,392
2003	\$198,600	\$178,437
2004	\$198,600	\$194,852

Might there be a conflict of interest there? Is national security and public service the only thing influencing Cheney as he makes his policy decisions?⁸¹

Oddly, Cheney's official biography from the vice president's site neglected to mention his five-year term at Halliburton. Also unmentioned is that until 2001, Cheney's wife Lynne served on the board of Lockheed Martin. Or that Cheney's son-in-law Philip J. Perry had Lockheed Martin as a client in his law firm, and that he worked as a registered lobbyist for Lockheed Martin in 2003 and 2004.⁸²

Speaking of Lockheed Martin, and continuing in the theme of the revolving door, let us examine the case of James B. Comey. In 2002 George W. Bush appointed Comey as Deputy Attorney General of the United States, the second highest office in the Department of Justice. In 2005 Comey left governmental service and took a job as the General Counsel and Senior Vice President at Lockheed Martin, overseeing their stable of 140 lawyers. Commenting on the hire, Charles W. Garrison of District-based Garrison & Sisson Inc., a recruiter, said Comey was "pretty much able to write his own ticket," given his credibility and his longstanding contacts within federal agencies. "While Lockheed Martin hasn't had a lot of problems, it's probably a very good defensive acquisition for them, and an offensive acquisition for them as far as Comey being able to open doors."⁸³

Nor is Comey alone in joining the ranks of Lockheed Martin. Johnson and Witte point out that Lockheed Martin's board of directors is well-stocked with prominent former government officials, including E. C. "Pete" Aldridge Jr., former undersecretary of defense; Gen. Joseph W. Ralston, former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Adm. James O. Ellis Jr., former commander of the U.S. Strategic Command; Gwendolyn S. King, former commissioner of the Social Security Administration. The company also has many of former government officials in its executive ranks and has hired numerous former members of the House and Senate to lobby on its behalf.⁸⁴

All this—"advisory committees" like the DPB, the power of PR firms hired by the government, the impact of campaign contributions, the access of "revolving doors"—points to the profound influence, one might venture to say control, that corporations have over governmental policy, especially in war making. Time to look at the effects of this corporate-dictated policy, especially in Iraq.

"WINNING" ON THE GROUND IN IRAQ

Following the aforementioned twelve years of genocidal sanctions, the US invasion of Iraq in March 2003, and the subsequent occupation, is a moral,

diplomatic and military disaster. Most analysts say (neglecting the fact that the invasion was based on lies and greed) that the United States went in without a plan for post-invasion Iraq. But in a well-researched and important work, Antonia Juhasz writes:

It has been said so often that it is now repeated as gospel that the Bush administration had no plan for post-conflict Iraq. But the gospel is not correct. There was at least one clear plan—an economic plan—the blueprint for which was ready and in Bush administration hands at least two months prior to the invasion.

She goes on to point to the origins of that plan—predictably, with an enormous government payment to another private corporation, which “provides analysis and assessment for undertaking a “mass privatization” of Iraq’s state-owned industries.⁸⁵

The 107-page three-year contract between the Bush administration and Bearing Point, Inc. of McLean, Virginia, lays out the president’s economic agenda in Iraq. In return for \$250 million, Bearing Point provides “technical assistance” to the U.S. Agency for International Development on the restructuring of the Iraqi economy to meet Bush administration goals.⁸⁶

To this end, the Bush administration brought in Paul Bremer to be the director of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance for post-war Iraq. After a stint in the Foreign Service, Bremer also served for a while as the managing director of Kissinger and Associates, a worldwide consulting firm founded by Henry Kissinger. Coincidentally, Kissinger is a member of the DPB. In his role as head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, Bremer reported primarily to Donald Rumsfeld, the US Secretary of Defense, and for approximately one year, exercised absolute authority over Iraq’s civil administration.

The amount of money that has been poured into the corporations to maintain the Global War on Terror (GWOT) is literally unimaginable. The most recent report from the Congressional Research Service reveals that Congress has appropriated \$610 billion in war-related money since the 9/11 terror assaults. This is about the same amount spent on the entire Vietnam War. All by itself, the Iraq invasion and occupation has put nearly half a trillion dollars into the hands of the war-makers. When Congress approved President Bush’s pending request for another \$147 billion for the budget year starting October 1, 2008, the total bill for the war on terror since September 11 reached more than three-fourths of a trillion dollars,

with appropriations for Iraq reaching \$567 billion. Also, if the increase in war tempo continues beyond September, the Pentagon's request "would presumably be inadequate," CRS said.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that additional war costs for the next 10 years could total about \$472 billion if troop levels fall to 30,000 by 2010, or \$919 billion if troop levels fall to 70,000 by about 2013. If these estimates are added to already appropriated amounts, total funding for Iraq and the GWOT could reach from about \$980 billion to \$1.4 trillion by 2017.⁸⁷

More recently, Nobel Prize laureate in economics Joseph Stiglitz presented a more detailed analysis of the costs of the war, submitting that a "moderate" estimate would be three *trillion* dollars.⁸⁸

Of course, to establish and maintain the US occupation and to profit from it, the government needed weapons, lots of them. And then, of course the weapons and vehicles have to be replaced. So, as might be expected, weapons companies profited from the "boom" of warfare. Listed on the "CorpWatch" site are the major weapons manufacturers in the United States, and how they've benefited from war. Lockheed Martin is averaging around \$20 billion a year in contracts, a significant increase from before the so-called global war on terror. Other weapons manufacturers like Boeing, Northrup Grumman, General Dynamics, and Raytheon show a similar growth patterns.

One company, ATK in Minnesota, has the contract to manufacture all the bullets for the US military. It has had to outsource its contract to an Israeli company, however, because ATK cannot keep up with demand. It can only produce about four million bullets a day.⁸⁹

But once the weapons have destroyed the country, the reconstruction companies have to come in to "rebuild" it, another turn of the profit cycle. We have already heard something of how Bechtel gained access for its nearly \$3 billion of contracts in Iraq, and its "success" there. "According to the U.S. State Department of 249 water and sewage projects originally planned [by Bechtel], only 64 have been completed."⁹⁰ Sometimes Bechtel's PR graces us with photos of gleaming water plants in Iraq. But the several water plants that have been completed have no pipes to connect them to the houses. Further, "None of the 19 electrical facilities that has undergone U.S.-funded repair work is being run correctly."⁹¹

Other companies are no better. Parsons, which had the contract to repair the health care system in Iraq, once, before Gulf War I, the sanctions and Gulf War II, the envy of the Arab world, "won" \$3.3 million in

profit for its work. "And that is in addition to the \$186 million that U.S. taxpayers shelled out to Parsons to build dozens of clinics that have yet to dispense a single aspirin."⁹² Though contracting for 120 health care centers, Parsons and the Army Corps of engineers actually only built four. And of those four none was opened. The World Health Organization called this situation "shocking."⁹³

Halliburton, as mentioned above, first went into the war area after Gulf War I, under Cheney's Department of Defense. In 1992 its subsidiary, won a \$2 billion KBR Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) contract to supply logistical support for the military in any theater it went to. But under Cheney's vice presidency, Halliburton returned to the Iraq theater with a vengeance. KBR received a \$23 billion contract for military logistics in Iraq.

Recently, even though Stewart Bowen, the special investigator general for Iraq reconstruction, reported that KBR had been unable to account for how much fuel had been delivered, or not delivered. It had overcharged \$4.5 million for food, and the report "found numerous errors in KBR's automated billeting tracking tool"⁹⁴ (which is used for tracking and assigning housing). Nevertheless, the military awarded KBR an additional \$50 billion for logistical support, to be shared with Fluor and DynCorp.

Interestingly, the Pentagon has hired *another* private firm, SERCO, to oversee the work of those three private firms, thus putting them another level away from government reach. The "oversight" contract specifically states that SERCO has no enforcement or punitive powers.⁹⁵ In response to that, Cray points out:

No company can be expected to provide this kind of accountability, companies are designed to make money for themselves and their shareholders, not safeguard the taxpayers. The buck ultimately stops somewhere in the Pentagon's chain of command where, instead of overseeing the actual work (keep in mind that KBR has some 200 subcontractors working in Kuwait and Iraq), they will spend increasingly more time evaluating SERCO's work. And even then, SERCO has influence over the process. (See page 31 of SERCO's contract "Contractors Self-Assessment.")⁹⁶

Overall, by June 2005, "the Defense Department had 149 "prime contracts" with seventy-seven contractors in Iraq worth approximately \$42.1 billion. According to Pentagon auditors, Halliburton 'alone represent[ed] 52% of the total contract value.'⁹⁷ In addition, Halliburton received a no-bid, \$30 million contract from the Navy to repair oilrigs destroyed in

the Gulf of Mexico by hurricane Katrina.⁹⁸ In 2007, Halliburton "spun off" KBR, so that it could "focus more on energy."

Jeremy Scahill provides us with an in-depth look at other "winners" in the Iraq war: private security firms, principally Blackwater. Even the General Accounting Office admitted in December 2006 "that the military had no effective system of oversight and that 'officials were unable to determine how many contractors were deployed to bases in Iraq.'"⁹⁹ Scahill, however, estimates the number of mercenaries in Iraq at 48,000.¹⁰⁰ Even more surprising, Scahill reveals that Britain has sent more mercenaries to serve in Iraq than it has its own military personnel: "By October 2006, there were an estimated twenty-one thousand mercenaries working for British firms in Iraq, compared to seventy-two hundred active duty British troops."¹⁰¹

Worldwide, the mercenaries are a \$100 billion-a-year business. Particularly in Iraq, mercenaries are needed to protect the corporations that have invested in Iraq. Indeed, the fact that the military has outsourced so many of its tasks to private firms creates a greater need for mercenaries to protect those firms. As a result, more and more of the "reconstruction" money is being siphoned off to pay for these security firms. These mercenaries are hired both with official "government" funds (read: US taxpayer money), with stolen Iraqi money,¹⁰² and by the corporations themselves. Halliburton, for example, hires security guards from Blackwater and Triple Canopy. Thus:

When Bremer left Iraq in June 2004, there were more than twenty thousand private soldiers inside the country's borders and Iraq had become known as a "Wild West" with no sheriff. Those mercenaries officially hired by the occupation would be contracted for more than \$2 billion of security work by the end of the "Bremer year" and would account for upwards of 30 percent of the Iraq "reconstruction" budget.¹⁰³

That, of course, does not take into account the private entities that widely hired mercenaries in Iraq.

In fact, the war has created a greater need for mercenaries in the United States itself. First, as Jeffrey St. Clair points out, moving all those military police from US bases to Iraq and Afghanistan prisons means that there are fewer soldiers left on the bases. So now the Pentagon has to outsource military police positions in the US to private corporations. For example, Chenega and Alutiiq received \$500 million to provide 4,385 private security guards. They subcontracted this out to other companies.¹⁰⁴ Second,

“After Katrina in 2005, hundreds of heavily armed Blackwater mercenaries—some fresh from deployment in Iraq—fanned out into the disaster zone. Within a week, they were officially hired by the Department of Homeland Security to operate in the US Gulf, billing the federal government \$950 a day per Blackwater soldier. In less than a year, the company had raked in more than \$70 million in federal hurricane-related contracts—about \$243,000 a day.¹⁰⁵

More ominously, private security firms like Titan and CACI have participated in the interrogation and torture of prisoners in Iraq and elsewhere.¹⁰⁶ Yet even after the Abu Ghraib scandal, the Pentagon responded by renewing a \$16 billion contract with CACI and awarded Titan a new contract worth up to \$164 million with options.¹⁰⁷

It also goes without saying that the mercenaries are paid better than the government’s military. Often they are better equipped. This creates a temptation for governmental soldiers to leave government service and join private security firms. Scahill reports:

There is slang in Iraq now for this jump. It is called “Going Blackwater.” To put it bluntly, these private forces create a system where national duty is outbid by profits. And yet these forces are being used for mission-critical activities. Indeed, in January Gen. David Petraeus admitted that on his last tour in Iraq, he himself was protected not by the active-duty military but by private “contract security.”¹⁰⁸

So, we might add, was Paul Bremer during his stay in Iraq. “Once Blackwater started recruiting for its first big job, guarding Paul Bremer, the rate shot up to \$600 a day [from \$300 a day].”¹⁰⁹

There are a number of profound difficulties with this increasing turn toward mercenaries to support the US military ventures. Two problems are noted by Michael Ratner, president of the Center for Constitutional Rights in an email to Scahill. First:

The increasing use of contractors, private forces or as some would say “mercenaries” makes wars easier to begin and to fight—it just takes money and not the citizenry. To the extent a population is called upon to go to war, there is resistance, a necessary resistance to prevent wars of self-aggrandizement, foolish wars and in the case of the United States, hegemonic imperialist wars. Private forces are almost a necessity for a United States bent on retaining its declining empire.

Second, Ratner notes, "Likewise, here at home in the United States. Controlling an angry, abused population with a police force bound to obey the Constitution can be difficult—private forces can solve this 'problem.'"¹¹⁰

Finally I would like to add a third observation from my own studies of Rome. A turning point in the Roman Republic came when Rome changed the law that said that you had to be a Roman citizen to serve in the Roman military. This limitation had to be removed as Rome extended its empire farther. How, then, might one get noncitizens to fight for Rome? By paying them. But this brought about a crucial change in the motivation of the military. They were not so much fighting for Rome as they were for the person who paid them. Their loyalties shifted. The men, or "triumvirates," who could pay the most, had the bigger and better army. When Caesar's troops "crossed the Rubicon" in violation of Roman law, it was because they had more loyalty to him than to Rome. Such a shift of loyalty and power was a major factor in ending the Roman Republic and ushering in the dictatorship (the word is Roman in origin) of the emperors.

Analogously, as mercenaries grow more powerful both in the United States and abroad, their power will accrue to those who can pay them most. In the future, that will be not one person, but the corporations. Ironically, the corporations will have been empowered first by taxpayer money, as we are seeing now. Then having had their wealth swelled by public coffers, they will become powerful enough to rule over the very people and governments whom they purport to serve. We have seen that already, corporations are paying for mercenaries. Recently, Lockheed Martin bought its own mercenary company, Sytek. I do not think that the day is very far off in the future when mercenaries from one corporation will be fighting mercenaries of another, for control of territory, resources and labor.

How big the "win" was for corporations in Iraq is best described in Antonia Juhasz's excellent work, *The Bush Agenda*. She draws our attention to the extent to which the quarter-million-dollar "Bearing Point" plan which "provides analysis and assessment for undertaking a 'mass privatization' of Iraq's state-owned industries."¹¹¹

The scope of the plan to transform the Iraqi economy is, she writes, "astonishing." "The company specifies changes in every sector of the Iraqi economy—from trade rules to banking and financial services, to public services, agriculture, housing, media, elections, and the structure of the government itself. It even specifies propaganda tools to sell these policies to the Iraqi public."¹¹²

In one of his steps to implement this plan, Bremer disbanded the Iraqi army, placing over half a million armed men into the streets with no work, and with families to support. He handed their work over to US contractors. He eliminated benefits to war widows and disabled veterans who were party members. But in a by-now predictable turn, the plan for demobilization was handed over to a private US corporation. "On March 14, 2003, three days before the invasion, Ronco Consulting Corporation of Washington D.C. was awarded a \$419,000 U.S. Defense Department contract to develop a plan to 'disarm, demobilize and reintegrate the Iraqi armed forces.'" ¹¹³ Juhasz also notes that the lack of a viable military is one of the primary justifications the Bush administration gives for not being able to pull out of Iraq.

During his tenure in Iraq, through a series of one hundred orders, Bremer re-shaped the country according to the Bearing Point model. Juhasz takes us through several of those orders and explores their ramifications for Iraq. For example, Order 12 removed all protective tariffs, customs duties, licensing fees, and so on. This allowed local labor and products (so damaged by Gulf War I, the sanctions, and Gulf War II) to be overrun with foreign goods and resources.

Order 17 "granted full immunity from Iraqi laws and the Iraqi legal system to Coalition military forces and all foreign contractors, including private security firms." The same order gave "foreign contractors freedom from all income from all income taxes, corporate taxes, and sales taxes, and denies Iraqis the ability to inspect contractor vehicles or require any sort of licensing or registration fees. Contractors do not have to pay tolls and are granted 'freedom of movement without delay throughout Iraq.'" ¹¹⁴

Most significant are Orders 39 and 94. The latter allows for 100 percent foreign ownership of Iraqi banks. The former, the "Foreign Direct Investment Law," allows unrestricted, 100 percent foreign ownership of all "economic sectors in Iraq" except oil, and allows 100 percent removal of their profits out of Iraq "without delay."

This, truly, is "astonishing." *All* economic activity in Iraq: telecommunications, road building, transportation, garbage collection, hula hoops, everything can be foreign owned, and all the profits can be taken out of Iraq. Bremer also made sure that such economic policies were ensconced in the new Iraqi Constitution (he had veto power over any aspect of it). They can only be acted upon by a parliament that, even if it weren't a puppet government and even if it actually *could* fully assemble, would still need a two-thirds majority to revoke them. When Michael Lampres, vice president of insurance for the Overseas Private Investment Corporation

(OPIC) said in 2003 that "Iraq is open for business," perhaps he should have said, "up for sale."

This shift seems to have been predicted by Berrigan when he wrote, six years before 9/11:

Let us suppose that an international crisis has arisen; the possibility, then the probability of war.

Special, altogether urgent interests are now involved and converge. The trough is filled; the appetites are voracious. A huge investment of money and talent has been mounted in view of (indeed if truth were told, in hope of) one contingency: war.

No need to underscore the provocation offered by prior, mostly secret arrangements; all those weapons, all those soldiers (otherwise unemployed and possibly dangerous to law and order) all those weapons experts. Get things moving! Test the weapons, prove the sound nature of the permanent war economy in a "dangerous world."¹¹⁵

At this point, one might want to reflect on the corporate motivations of the invasion and occupation of Iraq as discussed above. It seems that the wishes of the corporations have borne full fruit in the passage of Bremer's laws. And I invite the reader to reflect on a statement that a researcher made as he pored through this information at the War Resisters League: "The corporations have conscripted the US military to effect a hostile takeover of an entire nation."

Of course the major economic prize in Iraq is its oil. Before January 2004, Halliburton had the contract to develop all the oil fields in Iraq. In 2004 the northern oil fields were given to Parsons to develop. Historians point out that during the Bush administration, for the first time in US history that the president, the vice president and the secretary of state are all former oil officials. We might mention that Robert Gates, the past secretary of defense, served on the board of Parker Drilling Company, an American company that owns offshore oil drilling rigs.

This oil cartel in the highest ranks of US government might give us further insight into motivations for the invasion and occupation of Iraq. It might also help to explain Executive Order 13303 (May 22, 2003) that, about the same time as Bremer's Order 17, granted complete legal immunity to all transnational oil companies operating in Iraq.

Investigative reporter Greg Palast has suggested that the oil companies' "control" of Iraqi oil was to keep the oil *off* the market so that the price of oil might increase. Whatever the reason, we see that in the last few years,

the profits of the oil companies have been staggering. In one year, from 2004 to 2005, ExxonMobil announced that its profits had risen 42 percent to \$36.13 *billion* dollars. And again, this is *profit*. The next year, 2005–6, ExxonMobil's profits rose again, this time to \$39.5 billion dollars. For the *first quarter* of 2007, its profits were \$9.28 billion—up 10 percent from the previous year's first quarter.¹¹⁶ Other oil companies have followed suit. Chevron, for example, set a 125-year record for profits in 2005. They broke it the next year.

Recently, the United States has developed a plan for Iraqi oil distribution. It has passed through the House and Senate, and been sent to Iraq to be passed by its parliament. The proposed petrochemical bill, however, is deeply flawed. In "The Struggle for Iraqi Oil," Michael Schwartz provides a history of the US pursuit of Middle Eastern Oil.¹¹⁷ He then turns to the new Petrochemical Bill:

The Iraq National Oil Company would have exclusive control of just seventeen of Iraq's eighty known oil fields, leaving two-thirds of known—and all of its as yet undiscovered—reserves open to foreign control.

The law also grants foreign oil companies "national treatment," which means that the Iraqi government cannot give preference to Iraqi oil companies (whether public or privately owned) over foreign-owned companies when it chooses contractors.

The law sets no minimum standard for the extent to which foreign companies would not have to invest their earnings in the Iraqi economy, partner with Iraqi companies, hire Iraqi workers or share new technologies.

Schwartz notes that the resistance to the new bill is strong, and spread throughout Iraqi society. First, the Iraqi Parliament itself kept deferring discussions on the bill, and now its provisional acceptance has been challenged by the Kurds, who said they had had no part in the discussion. Next, the Iraqi ministers of oil (who would actually implement the law) are opposed, resenting the interference of outsiders in their oil. The Iraqi Federation of Oil Unions has opposed the new law and has undertaken labor strikes against it.¹¹⁸ Further, there is armed resistance to the implementation of the law. This was demonstrated, sadly, by the assassination of Vice President Adel Abdul Mahdi, a major advocate of the law, on the day the bill was made public. In addition, the law has been opposed in a formal statement by six women Nobel Prize recipients.¹¹⁹

The Obama Administration and the New Congress

With Barack Obama's election being supported by so many in the peace movement, and with polls indicating that the ousting of the Republican majority in Congress was due to popular resistance to the war, one might expect that the situation might improve. However, the penetration of corporate profiteering into the policymaking of our government has become systemic. Of itself, the government is no longer able to change this system. If the peace movement is to succeed in the twenty-first century, it must embrace and develop the second dimension (resistance to government being the first dimension) of the protest of the Catonsville Nine—the corporations themselves. Without a conscious, continuous, and direct focus on the corporations who press us to make war for profit, the peace movement will never succeed in defeating the United States' forced addiction to war making.

Early actions of the new administration and congress indicate the unwillingness, or better, their inability, to change this structure. Note, for example, that Robert Gates was initially kept as secretary of defense, with his history of serving on the board of the Parker Drilling Company (whose significant customer was Halliburton), and his service on the Board of SAIC, another company that profits from war making.¹²⁰ During the years 2002–8, Obama's Deputy Secretary of Defense, William Lynn, oversaw a team of lobbyists who won \$54 billion in contracts for Raytheon. Further investigations of Obama's appointees will reveal that the business-politics revolving door is still spinning.

Then, too, note that on February 25, 2009, House Democrats killed a resolution that would have called for an ethics committee inquiry into the relationship between campaign contributions and earmarks.¹²¹ Tim Holden (D-Pa.), who presided over the House during the vote, received more than \$57,000 in campaign contributions from PMA's political action committee (a major defense lobbying group) from 2001 to 2008.¹²² Holden secured \$3.2 million in earmarks for clients represented by the PMA Group in the fiscal 2008 defense appropriations law. Congressmen who were overseeing the defense budget received \$8 million from the PMA Group and its clients. In particular, John Murtha (D-Pa), Chair of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, received \$2.4 million from the PMA Group and in turn earmarked over \$300 million for PMA's clients in the most recent Defense Appropriation Bill.¹²³ The power of corporate campaign contributions still reigns, it seems, in Congress.

At the same time, Obama has chosen to escalate the war and the number of troops in Afghanistan. Some 90 percent of the spending for Afghanistan

in the Obama administration's current supplemental bill is military. Nor does the Obama administration scruple about attacking Pakistan with bombs and Hellfire missiles fired from MQ-9 Reaper and MQ-1 Predator drones.

And while Obama promises to reduce US troop presence in Iraq, the "withdrawal" of US troops is from the cities, and into rural bases just outside the cities. At the same time, his administration has increased the number of military contractors in both Iraq and Afghanistan. As Jeremy Scahill reports:

According to new statistics released by the Pentagon, with Barack Obama as commander in chief, there has been a 23% increase in the number of "Private Security Contractors" working for the Department of Defense in Iraq in the second quarter of 2009 and a 29% increase in Afghanistan, which correlates to the build up of forces in the country. These numbers relate explicitly to DoD security contractors. Companies like Blackwater and its successor Triple Canopy work on State Department contracts and it is unclear if these contractors are included in the over-all statistics. This means, the number of individual security contractors could be quite higher, as could the scope of their expansion.¹²⁴

The power of the military contractors has increased under the Obama administration, with the additional effect of obscuring the actual military presence and misleading the American public about the extent of the US commitment to an armed presence in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Finally, we cannot ignore the growing number of robot soldiers on the ground in Afghanistan, and especially in Iraq. As P. W. Singer reports, "When U.S. forces went into Iraq in 2003, they had zero robotic units on the ground. By the end of 2004, the number was up to 150. By the end of 2005 it was 2,400, and it more than doubled the next year. By the end of 2008, it was projected to reach as high as 12,000."¹²⁵

After US troops and military contractors, these robot soldiers comprise the third largest army in Iraq. Together with the massive increase in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) again, their presence further serves to mask, and mislead the public about, the US commitment to military dominance. This roboticization of the battlefield once again illustrates the new theory of war profiteering we have been proposing in this chapter. The corporations develop the technology and then sell that technology in order to profit from, and perpetuate, the war they have promoted.

While we can acknowledge that the use of such unmanned vehicles reduces the number of US troops being killed, there are long-term consequences that we need to examine. For example, if the "pilot" is at home in the United States in an office or university or research facility, would it not be legitimate to attack the pilot there? If research for such robots is being conducted (among many other projects) in a university, would it not make that university, with all its personnel, a legitimate military target? Or take another tack: the electromagnetic pulse (EMP) from a nuclear weapon detonated over a battlefield would instantly decommission all such unmanned vehicles. Would the deployment of such robotic weaponry, with such vulnerability, require the development of nuclear weaponry as defense?

In short, every development of weaponry in war has led to countermeasures. As researcher Eric Stoner puts it, "When it comes to killer robots, the stakes are high. If activists don't work to stop this robotics revolution in its tracks, science fiction has warned us about our potential fate."¹²⁶

The Lost

I cannot close here without first honoring what we have lost and are losing by surrendering to the greed of the corporations. By the time this chapter is published, we will most probably have nearly 5,000 US military dead, and tens of thousands wounded. Nor will there be adequate care for the veterans who return. A recent report by Physicians for a National Health Program stated that already by 2004 there were 1.7 million veterans without health insurance, access to government hospitals, or clinics for veterans.

One reason for this (and the recent reports of scandalous health care for vets) is again, that health care for the military has been outsourced to private firms. Health Net, for example, was a private firm that was losing money in the public sphere. Once they were given a military contract, they experienced a \$285 million increase in profits in 2005. In this regard, recall that Berrigan has written:

The motto of the "Baals" [false gods in early Hebrew literature], here excoriated, comes to this: Everything has its price. Baal is, among other things, a market god.

"Everything," including humankind, exists only "as priced." Indeed, the price tagged upon humans is their only reality.

Humans are on sale, precious as jewels or gold, their price inflated or reduced, remaindered, expendable as slave labor, or to be discarded if unproductive, the disabled, the aged, dwellers in-utero, the condemned on death row.¹²⁷

And to that we might now add, US veterans and the Iraqi people.

For all the veterans, there are spiritual and psychological wounds as well.¹²⁸ These are particularly difficult to heal because of the reluctance of any military person to admit that he or she is “weak.” In addition, military “treatment” sometimes calls for personnel suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to be treated in the war theater—with the supposed assumption that getting back into combat would signify a cure. Finally, when the warrior returns, the military asks if they feel they might be suffering from PTSD. If so, they should stay on the base and be treated. What might their answer be, when their families are waiting for them just outside the fence? And with all this, the US military still reports a 25 percent incidence of PTSD.

And in a larger sense, what will all of us Americans do as our civil and human rights, and our humanity itself, crumble under the ictus of war?

I speak of these first because, as Plato said long ago, “It is better to suffer harm than to do it.” So we turn to the suffering of the Iraqi people. I have already indicated the losses Iraq suffered during the twelve-year sanction regime. I have spent most of this chapter speaking about the loss of economic, political, and personal independence by Iraqis.

Finally, I note that in October 2006, the *Lancet* published a well-researched, peer-reviewed study estimating conservatively that the invasion and occupation had taken the lives of 655,000 Iraqis.¹²⁹ One can only imagine the trauma for the survivors—especially the children. In one news story we heard from [Child psychiatrist Dr. Ali] Hameed that there isn’t enough money or manpower to treat the million or more of Iraq’s children he estimates are deeply traumatized, much less the millions of children learning to live—and die—by the gun.

“So they are being trained to be killers?” asked [CBS News correspondent Kimberly] Dozier.

“I’m sorry to say that I think yes,” Hameed answered.¹³⁰

“[I]t is decreed by the temple god that little children suffer and die for the sins of the mighty,” writes Berrigan in a passage that is both remorsefully retrospective and painfully prescient.¹³¹

Once in our New York Jesuit community, we were discussing our reactions to 9/11. I told of how my first (and second) reaction was denial. Older in the movement, much wiser and more sorrowful, Daniel said that his reaction was, "So . . . it's come home at last."

What shall we do when all—or even a fraction of—this horror we've visited upon these peoples "comes home?" Will we excoriate "the Arabs?" Tell of how "Islam is a violent religion?" Torture ever more people? Turn again to the very violence that brought us to this pass in the first place? As Kathy Kelly and Brian Terrell write about their protest of the drone attacks on Pakistan, "In the past few days, the Taliban have responded to US drone attacks with attacks of their own and with threats of further retaliation which have provoked renewed drone attacks by the United States. Are we to believe that the predictable spiral of violence is the only way forward?"¹³²

By now I hope the reader sees that, like Daniel Berrigan and his companions, we must join together in nonviolent opposition, but this time in resistance to the increasing encroachment of corporations on governance. One effective strategy is a "corporate counter-recruitment" campaign, similar to the military counter-recruitment campaigns in schools. That is, nonviolent activists could identify war profiteers and block their recruitment efforts in colleges and universities. Activists could educate job candidates about the war profiteering practices of certain companies, then get candidates to sign a pledge that they will not work for those companies, and will discourage their friends from working there as well. These pledges can be sent directly to the CEO of the war profiteer. Finally, "Catonsville Nine" style direct actions can be directed against corporations since, more and more, that is where the "recruitment" for war is taking place.

And in a larger sense, we must adopt more nonviolent lifestyles. The United States consumes about 20.7 million barrels of oil a day. That's the equivalent of the oil consumption of China, Japan, Germany, Russia, and India—*combined!* The US military alone consumes about 365,000 barrels of oil a day—almost double the daily consumption of the entire country of Ireland.

That is just one example. Overall, the United States is 5 percent of the world's people, consuming 25 percent of the world's goods. This disparity, this injustice to the rest of the world, does not occur voluntarily. The "American way of life" (which our politicians are always urging us to defend) is enforced by the most lethal military in the history of the world. In just one measure: if the dollar amounts of military expenditures are totaled

correctly, the United States will spend about \$647 billion in 2008¹³³—more than the *rest of the world combined*. Economically, such violence is unsustainable, as our current recession should indicate to us. Most seriously, our planet earth cannot bear such violence.

The boldness and originality of the action of the Catonsville Nine were unprecedented in their resistance to the destruction of life, land, and community. Unless we wish to “perish together as fools,” we will need similar visionary activists to turn us from the path of corporate profiteering toward building of the beloved community.