

A Call for Peace: Say NO to America's Military Adventure

With the pace of war against Iran now thundering in all its fury, it is time to mobilize once again to demand peace

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Michael Carmichael's Talk to the Elders for Peace, Chapel Hill, N.C. on December 19th, 2011.

Good afternoon.

I am delighted to be here amongst all of you lovely people working together for peace. In fact, since we are the Elders for Peace, we are all veterans of the perpetual war against peace. Our side never wins, but we still keep working just the same. Never winning, because peace versus war is not a game. We are working for the survival of not only the human race, or even our tiny planet. In our time, when technology has finally led mankind to weapons of mass destruction of literally infinite power - the power to destroy in virtual simultaneity every form of life on earth, we are among the relatively few humans who have embarked on the mission in search of the key to survival of life as we know it.

Today, we find ourselves inside the vortex of a gigantic conundrum - the United States of America. Our nation is the strongest military force in the history of the known universe. For the past century, we have been waging wars all over our tiny planet.

The Great War, WWI was followed by WWII, a war that many believe was even greater. Both world wars catapulted our nation into the leading role of all the nations on earth. We are the richest, the most respected, the most reviled, the most envied, the most powerful nation among nations.

We are the most warlike nation. We must, therefore, be the most warlike people ever to have populated this planet.

Over the past decade, our nation has pursued wars in the Middle East. A war of vengeance against Afghanistan. A war of cupidity against Iraq. Both wars have gone badly for America. While the final combat forces departed Iraq last week, more than 100,000 of our troops are still waging a twilight war in Afghanistan.

But it is really worse than that, for our press, television and mainstream media do not reveal the truth to our people. We are already engaged in a third major land war in the Middle East, a war against Iran.

Before we examine the onrushing Iran War, let us review a few of the latest developments.

Good news

1 - The United States is Pulling out of Iraq. The last combat forces departed from Iraq last week.

2 - The United States is winding down our military operations in Afghanistan.

3 - The United States is preparing to cut the military budget, and for the time being both principal parties appear to be engaged with this important idea.

4 - Former President George W. Bush has been constrained to the confines of the USA by legal maneuvers that would swiftly lead to his indictment for violations of the Geneva Convention on Torture if he were to travel abroad. In recent months, Former President Bush was troubled by attempts to place him under arrest when he visited Canada very briefly, and he was forced to cancel his trip to Switzerland for fear of arrest for war crimes and torture.

5 — Certain Key Elements of our government, the White House, the Obama Administration and the Department of State, are resisting increasingly shrill demands for war against Iran, and at the same time they are fighting for the right to conduct diplomatic contacts with Iran against an ominous array of forces recently unleashed in Congress and beyond.

Bad News

1 - The War on Drugs is a multinational disaster with over 35,000 civilians killed in Mexico over the past five years. The War on Drugs is our most costly war and the most counterproductive. Little is being done to control it. Virtually nothing is being done to bring it to an end.

2 - The Military-Industrial-Complex (MIC) is moving inexorably toward war with Iran.

3 - Technology is totally autonomous - it cannot be controlled. It cannot be managed. It cannot be suppressed. Technology in the hands of the MIC is advancing rapidly toward the robotification of war via drones for surveillance and targeted assassinations. This ominous trend in the technology of death will continue to gain momentum, and this dreadful development of technology is now unstoppable. Soon, we will be witnessing battlefields with many forms of robotic and cybernetic warriors - cyborgs - organisms with biological and cybernetic components. Cyborg assassins. Robotic assassins. The world of Terminator is racing rapidly toward us right now, and nothing whatsoever is being done to restrain it.

4 - Mind Control, Mental Programming, Brainwashing and Perception Management have reached or exceeded Orwellian levels, and we are now moving confidently toward Huxleyian levels of totalitarian enslavement as vividly portrayed in Brave New World - a far more advanced dystopia than George Orwell's Oceania, where torture was still applied to recalcitrant subjects. Brave New World programmed masses via propaganda, brainwashing and sensuality. Here are direct quotations from Aldous Huxley about the evolution of totalitarianism:

It is possible to make people contented with their servitude. I think this can be done. I think it has been done in the past, and it can be done even more effectively now because you can distract them with bread and circuses and you can provide them with endless amounts of distractions and propaganda. . .

The nightmare of 1984 is destined to modulate into the nightmare of Brave New World - the

change will be brought about as a result of a self-need for increased efficiency . . .

Totalitarian regimes of the future will not be based upon terror, because they will have other means - brainwashing and propaganda - which will be much more efficient and much more economical than terrorism and torture.

5 - As evidence of point 3 above, Congress is almost totally enthralled (literally in moral and intellectual bondage) to the Military Industrial Complex. We now live in a Military Dictatorship dressed up in the political refinement of democracy, but that is only a myth. The reality is Military Dictatorship.

6 - Three days ago by a margin of 410 to 11, Congress has just passed one of the most potentially dangerous pieces of legislation in world history, The Iran Threat Reduction Act. Every member of the North Carolina delegation voted in favor except for two who were absent - both rock-ribbed Republicans (Myrick and Coble). While other nations and international organizations are attempting to criminalize war, the US congress is attempting to criminalize diplomatic contact and potential peace negotiations. This astonishing piece of legislation symbolizes the dangers Americans face from their elected representatives in government and those from the Military Industrial Complex who are actually in control of our government.

The Iran War

The buildup of the Iran War has been long and arduous. Over the past eight years, our military intelligence establishment working hand-in-glove with other shadow agencies of other nations has been building up the notion of a casus belli against Iran predicated upon their allegedly clandestine nuclear arms program.

We all know that Iran is an Islamist state. In 1979, the populist uprising long incubated by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini finally ejected the hated regime of the Shah, one of America's most cherished allies in the oil-rich region.

It must be said that the Shah was a great burden unto his people. While he lived in unparalleled luxury seated on a jewel-encrusted throne shaped like a peacock, the Shah entertained more lavishly than any other potentate on earth, even though his people suffered under the cruel heel of the Savak, one of the most brutal, repressive and predatory secret police forces ever devised.

The United States was on intimate terms with Savak. We trained them. We armed them, and they served our purposes in their region.

Richard Nixon loved the Shah, and the Shah loved Richard Nixon. The Shah granted Nixon the power and privilege of oil-riches, and Nixon tacitly granted the Shah immunity from the crime of heroin production, one of the largest and most profitable industries on earth, a fact known by Interpol for decades.

We all know, the Shah fell, and Khomeini rose to power.

What we often forget is that soon after the Iranian Revolution, our honorable ally, Saddam Hussein, at our beckoning and with our blessing, attacked Iran with arms we provided unto him. The Iran-Iraq War lasted 8 years. We do not know the exact number of casualties, but

the figure of one million is probably far too small. We do know that Saddam Hussein did our bidding, and we do know that under the administration of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush, we secretly armed Iran in order to permit the Reagan White House to wage an illegal war by arming the Nicaraguan Contras, a political movement that was nothing more than a death squad of gigantic proportions that murdered nuns, priests, women, children and poets in their campaign of carnage against a democratically elected government that sought to create economic justice within their own finite economy.

Today, the Republican presidential candidates sing from the same songbook on Iran – with one notable exception, Ron Paul. The official Republican line is: war with Iran to purge them of their Islamist regime and destroy their nuclear program. Rank and file Republicans bitterly criticize President Obama for being too soft on Iran. It is ironic that rank and file Democrats are beginning to believe the same thing.

Last week, by a margin of 410 to 11 – the House of Representatives just passed a bill that would criminalize diplomatic contact between the USA and Iran. The bill barring diplomacy with Iran is the work of Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, (R-FL) backed by Howard Berman, (D-CA). The White House, the Department of State and key members of the Senate are working to ensure the failure of this egregious piece of legislation.

Our nation is suffering deeply in the throes of Islamophobia, and now we have developed an even more virulent phobia, Iranophobia, a fear of the nation and people of Iran. America is not the only nation afflicted with Iranophobia, the small and vulnerable nation of Israel is obsessed with the threat of imminent nuclear annihilation by an Iranian nuclear bomb, a weapon whose existence at this point in time is totally imaginary, the hypothetical component of a conspiracy theory. If America and Israel were psychiatric patients, their condition would be described as delusional. Instead, our government and our obeisant media are doing everything in their power to brainwash the American people to inculcate into their psyches the fear of every molecule of Iranian origin.

The Iran War is the brainchild of the neocons of the Bush-Cheney administration. In top secret meetings of the national security council, Dick Cheney argued for war against Iran as early as 2002 and 2003. Cheney's daughter, Elizabeth Cheney served in the State Department as the conduit for \$85 million per year in funds to "pro-democracy" organizations inside Iran – groups like the Mujaheddin e-Khalq, a Marxist Islamist paramilitary cult of celibate terrorists, commandos, assassins and agents who sublimate their sexual desires for the practice of assassination, bomb manufacture, espionage, torture and terrorism. Today, 3000 members of the MEK are stranded in Camp Ashraf, an encampment inside Iraq that is now scheduled for demolition by the government of Prime Minister Maliki. Astonishingly, Governor Howard Dean has combined forces with Republican neoconservatives to remove the MEK from the US listing of terrorist organizations, so we can continue to provide them with more aid for their cult of terror.

While the tempo and pace of the buildup of the Iran War has been long, complicated and terrifying for those of us who monitor it, we must report that in the last few months, the pace is definitely quickening.

- Iran has arrested an untold number of Americans who languish in their prison system classified as "spies." Apparently, Americans are crossing the border between Afghanistan and Iran as if they were embarking on "hikes" – and we the people of the United States know very little about these cases, their number, the individuals, the circumstances.

- Just over a year ago, a cyber attack by the Stuxnet Worm was unleashed against the Iranian nuclear industry. This anonymous cyber attack made international headlines in most of the advanced nations on earth, but only a slight smear on the inner pages of our newspapers in the USA.

- In July of this year, an Iranian nuclear scientist was shot dead by an assassin on a motorcycle in Tehran.

- In America, ABC ran a story headlined: “Who is Killing Iran’s Nuclear Scientists?”

- In Britain, the BBC ran a story headlined: “Is Iran Already Under Covert Attack?”

- In London, the coverage read: “Iranian Scientist’s Death Probably the Work of Western Security Agencies: Analysts Suggest Mossad or CIA Behind the Murder.”

- Recently, the Obama administration announced the interception of a disturbing terrorist plot allegedly masterminded by the elite Iranian Revolutionary Guards or the Quds Force. The US Drug Enforcement Administration intercepted intelligence about an alleged Iranian plot to assassinate the Saudi Arabian Ambassador in Washington by outsourcing the murder to contract killers connected to a Mexican drug cartel. While this story was shocking, we have been advised by our government to take it seriously, even though it is considered to be risible, laughable and incredible in almost all other parts of the world. It may be worth reminding ourselves that propagandists have long operated with the principle of the big lie: the bigger the lie, the more likely people are to believe it. After the exposure of this fantastic plot, the United States elevated the level of monitoring and surveillance of the nation of Iran.

- In November, working under their new Director Yukiya Amano, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) issued a report on the Iranian nuclear program. The first Amano-Era IAEA report cited evidence that Iran was “studying nuclear weapons.” Iranian officials immediately denied the report of nuclear weapons research. In America the most authoritative source on US-Iranian tension, Seymour Hersh described the Amano report on Iran as: “The shift in tone at the I.A.E.A. seems linked to a change at the top.” and, “The new report, therefore, leaves us where we’ve been since 2002, when George Bush declared Iran to be a member of the Axis of Evil—with lots of belligerent talk but no definitive evidence of a nuclear-weapons program.” Thus, the IAEA report created more tension, but little more. Seymour Hersh appeared on Democracy Now in a lengthy interview explaining his reservations about the objectivity of the IAEA report. The Seymour Hersh story on Democracy Now was headlined: “Propaganda used ahead of Iraq War Now Being Reused Over Iran’s Nuke Program.”

- As you will know, a US drone spy plane was recently shot down over Iran.

- You may not know that only three weeks ago there was a mysterious series of explosions at a nuclear facility located in close proximity to the historic city of Isfahan in Iran.

- Shortly after these explosions, Iran ordered the closure of the British embassy.

Throughout it all, we are being assured by our government that Iran is culpable of violations of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, but we are given no conclusive evidence that this casus belli is any more credible than the risible case Colin Powell presented to the United Nations in February 2002 stating that Saddam Hussein posed a threat because of his vast

and powerful arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

While Powell's presentation impressed the domestic news media and its obedient audience – the American public, I was in Europe at the time – and nobody accepted Powell's presentation as true. From the outset, Powell's presentation was deemed to be a total fabrication. That lack of American credibility is why the global demonstrations of February 15th 2003 were so enormous. One million Romans marched in protest; one million Japanese marched to protest; in London, I was with Tony Benn in a vast throng estimated at one million in Hyde Park to protest the US-led march into the folly we now know as the Iraq War.

War

Humanity is perpetually marching into folly. War is the most violent form of folly. War is predicated on delusions: delusions of grandeur; delusions of demonization.

While reading Cormac McCarthy's historical novel, *Blood Meridian*, I met one of the most unforgettable villains in world literature: Judge Holden.

The Judge joined a group of mercenaries led by John Joel Glanton who were commissioned to kill Indians in Mexico. Glanton's force was made up of psychopaths, including a former priest, outlaws and a violence prone youth as well as Judge Holden.

Glanton and his mercenaries murdered hundreds of Indians and took their scalps in exchange for generous bounties from Mexican authorities.

But, the Glanton atrocity did not stop there. So lucrative was the project of war, that Glanton and his men would kill innocent Mexican civilians: men, women and children and take their scalps to exchange for hoards of gold and silver and furs and jewels and guns and clothes and horses and treasure from the Mexican authorities.

In one episode as retold by McCarthy, surely one of our greatest literary artists, Judge Holden lectured the raw recruits on war.

The Judge - on war

Around a campfire one evening after a series of murderous atrocities, Judge Holden engaged some of Glanton's Indian Fighters on the nature of war. After some noticed that the Bible warned those who lived by the sword that they would perish by it, the Judge responded:

What right man would have it any other way?

When someone reminded the group that the Bible recounted many tales of bloody wars, Judge Holden said:

It makes no difference what men think of war. War endures. As well to ask men what they think of stone. War was always here. Before man was, war waited for him. The ultimate trade awaiting its ultimate practitioner. That is the way it was and will be. That way and not some other way.

After some banter with another character about the trade of the Indian Fighters, the Judge

told the men that all human endeavor is concentrated in war. When asked if that was the reason war endures, the Judge said:

No. It endures because young men love it, and old men love it in them. Those that fought, those that did not. Men are born for games. Nothing else. Every child knows that play is nobler than work. He knows too that the worth or merit of a game is not inherent in the game itself but rather in the value of that which is put at hazard. Games of chance require a wager to have meaning at all. Games of sport involve the skill and strength of the opponents and the humiliation of defeat and the pride of victory are in themselves sufficient stake because they inhere in the worth of the principals and define them. But trial of chance or trial of worth all games aspire to the condition of war for here that which is wagered swallow up game, player, all.

At that point, the Judge provided a metaphor for war that is the major literary legacy of Blood Meridian:

Suppose two men at cards with nothing to wager save their lives. Who has not heard such a tale? A turn of the card. The whole universe for such a player has labored clanking to this moment which will tell if he is to die at that man's hand or that man at his. What more certain validation of a man's worth could there be? This enhancement of the game to its ultimate state admits no argument concerning the notion of fate. The selection of one man over another is a preference absolute and irrevocable and it is a dull man indeed who could reckon so profound a decision without agency or significance either one. In such games as have for their stake the annihilation of the defeated the decisions are quite clear. The man holding this particular arrangement of cards in his hand is thereby removed from existence. This is the nature of war, whose stake is at once the game and the authority and the justification. Seen so, war is the truest form of divination. It is the testing of one's will and the will of another within that larger will which because it binds them is therefore forced to select. War is the ultimate game because war is at last a forcing of the unity of existence. War is god.

As elders for peace, we have seen wars come and go and come again.

We have seen the brutality of man against man.

We have seen the brutality of man against animals, the deer of Orange County, the Tigers of China, the whales of the seven seas - all slain for sport, for gold, for pleasure.

We have seen men and women executed for crimes they did or did not commit.

We have seen the relentless assault on the black and tan races by the white master-race.

Perhaps, these visions of violence, torture, destruction and death are what unites us in our movement to protest, to oppose and to abolish war.

With the pace of war against Iran now thundering in all its fury, it is time to mobilize once again to demand peace.

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