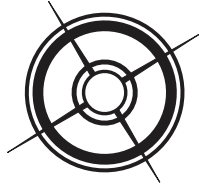


GUERRILLA

01.02
May
'03

DEPROGRAMMER

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION



GNN

Post-War
UPDATE :

Will the Empire Be Fascist ?



About GNN

Guerrilla News Network (**GNN.tv**) is an independent news organization committed to exposing people of all ages to important global issues - free from corporate filters - through innovative multi-platform news and documentary programming. GNN is best known for their short, hard-hitting Guerrilla NewsVideos - design-rich mini-documentaries that deconstruct complex socio-political issues in music video form. Broadcast at GNN.tv, Guerrilla NewsVideos meld high-impact imagery, poignant interviews, archival footage and enhanced graphics with tracks from top recording artists like Peter Gabriel, AdRoc, Dead Prez, and many others. The GNN website is one of the Internet's premiere alternative news outlets, averaging about 30,000 unique visitors a day and offers original and syndicated reporting from some of the world's top writers and journalists, in addition to a lively forum where a dedicated community of guerrillas meet to discuss issues raised by the material.

"People of Baghdad, remember for 26 generations you have suffered under strange tyrants who have ever endeavoured to set one Arab house against another in order that they might profit by your dissensions. This policy is abhorrent to Great Britain and her Allies for there can be neither peace nor prosperity where there is enmity or misgovernment. Our armies do not come into your cities and land as conquerors or enemies, but as liberators."

- From the Proclamation to the People of the Wilayat of Baghdad, that British General Stanley Maude issued when he took the city in 1917.



Empire.

ops most likely taking place all across the planet, and a military budget greater than the rest of the world's countries combined, what other word could you correctly chose to describe American ambitions at the dawn of the 21st Century? But building an empire is a radical agenda, one that poses great risks. George Bush Sr. halted the march to Baghdad precisely because he feared becoming, as one commentator put it, "an occupying power in a bitterly hostile land." And that is the problem for this administration. America is a conservative country, at heart. As long as it sees itself in the rose-tinted glasses of the "liberator," the Bush empire will roll along like gangbusters. But as the mission becomes messier and messier, and Al Qaeda continues to operate with impunity, the stakes rise. Fear is a sharp blade that can turn on you in an instant. In their quest for empire, Bush & Company have created a monumental challenge for themselves - one that requires an unprecedented level of information management.

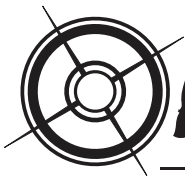
In this edition of the Deprogrammer, GNN looks at the issue of "empire": media censorship and the rise of Bush ally Clear Channel, the secret history of Donald Rumsfeld's trips to Baghdad, and we ask noted professor Richard Falk for his theory on the potentially fascist nature of Bush foreign policy. We hope you find it insightful, and that you will print it out and distribute it widely.

Be sure to check out GNN's web site (GNN.tv) for daily news and lively discussion, updates on GNN Live! screenings, and, as always, free streaming Guerrilla NewsVideos...

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NewsWire of the month: Prime Time Payola

A feverish, corporate-sponsored nationalism has taken root in America at a time when the public depends on a vibrant communications culture to sustain its institutional democracy. Nowhere is this more clear than in the case of Clear Channel Communications, the nation's largest radio chain.

In the outrage that followed the Floridian scandal and George Bush Jr.'s appointment by the Supreme Court to the Oval Office, many in the media missed an equally alarming familial maneuver. In one of his first bureaucratic decisions as president, Bush named Michael Powell, son of Secretary of State Colin Powell, as chairman of the Federal Communications Commission. That the son of one of the nation's most decorated and politically entrenched former military officers should be given control of the agency that regulates the domestic news and entertainment networks - indeed the whole telecommunications industry - is something that is more imaginable in ... well, Iraq.

The FCC is comprised of five commissioners, one of whom is appointed chairman by the president. Typically, commissioners ride out their terms and retire when it suits them. But in a rare move, Sen. John McCain (R-Arizona) used his considerable influence to block the 1997 re-appointment of a sitting Republican commissioner. Powell replaced him on the FCC and four years later he was chairman.

Powell took over as chief regulator for a corporate communications industry in the throes of a radical transformation following the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which opened the door for deregulation and sparked widespread condemnation from media activists who saw the act as an attack on the public interest function of the FCC. The existing television and radio networks launched into mergers of unprecedented size, while new players with deep pockets were able to claim previously unthinkable levels of market share.

One of the act's most prominent benefactors was Clear Channel Communications, a relatively unknown broadcaster based in San Antonio, Texas. Led by L. Lowry Mays, a rancher and one-time George W. Bush business associate, Clear Channel has ridden a wave of acquisitions, spending more than \$30 billion to become the world's largest radio broadcaster, concert promoter and billboard advertising firm. Clear Channel owns more than 1,200 radio stations (approximately 50 percent of the U.S. total), five times more than its closest competitors, CBS and ABC. Considering the fact that prior to the Telco Act, a single broadcaster could not own more than 40 stations in the entire country, it is hard to see the behemoth as anything but a creation of the act itself.

But while Clear Channel's unhindered expansion is the result of the deregulation media barons crave, its growth has not been viewed favorably by the rest of the industry. Other would-be monopolists, anticipating the next phase of deregulation, fear that they will be adversely affected by Clear Channel's gluttonous horizontal consolidation. Recent lawsuits and congressional

hearings regarding the brutish tactics and political influence of Clear Channel have thrown a spotlight on the FCC and its abandonment of regulatory restraints. Led by articulate critiques by digital journalists such as Jeff Perlstein of Corpwatch and Eric Boehlert of Salon, the mainstream media have been prodded out of complicit somnambulism. With the FCC scheduled to review the last remaining set of protections on media diversity this spring, Big Media is worried that the upstart Texans will ruin it for everybody.



And they have reason to be concerned. In January, Sen. John McCain's Commerce Committee held two hearings that targeted, among other things, the issue of media concentration. At the first hearing, Michael Powell and his four commissioners were subjected to intense questioning about their strategy to protect the public interest from "sky's the limit" deregulation. In a response that clearly surprised the committee, Powell, traditionally an unabashed proponent of the free market and loosened restrictions to ownership, said he was "concerned about the concentration, particularly in radio." Mediageek.com's Paul Riismandel explained: "Indeed, [Powell] didn't want much publicity or input ... But now the cat is out of the bag and yowling like crazy."

Smelling the blood of a close Bush ally, partisan Democrats on the committee, led by maverick Republican McCain, called new hearings to specifically examine "consolidation in the radio industry." As the committee's star witness, McCain summoned Clear Channel's Lowry Mays.

Mays was systematically skewered by the hostile committee and those invited to testify on behalf of the public (and private) interest. Rep. Howard Berman (D-California) catalogued charges to the Justice Department and the FCC against Clear Channel. These include anti-trust violations, payola and a form of tactical extortion in which monopolies over local concert bookings are used to pressure record companies into buying radio spots, called "negative synergy." But, as we learned during the Enron hearings, lawmakers are less concerned with corporate criminality than

they are with sustaining the corporate capitalism that perpetuates it. The committee's ranking Democrat, Sen. Ernest "Fritz" Hollings (D-South Carolina), emphasizing more savory bureaucratic concerns, lamented, "Radio consolidation has contributed to a 34 percent decline in the number of owners, a 90 percent rise in the cost of advertising rates, [and] a rise in indecent broadcasts. If ever there were a cautionary tale, this is it."

While most of the congressional debate over media concentration focuses on the diminished health of the marketplace, Clear Channel has revived traditional progressive fears that media concentration will negatively impact the breadth of dialogue permitted in the public sphere. Indeed, since 9/11 and the advent of Bush's "war on terror," Clear Channel has been the most sycophantic and pro-militarist Big Media corporation, which is saying a lot.

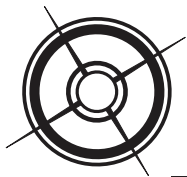
Just days after the 9/11 attacks, slates of blacklisted songs, including Cat Stevens' "Peace Train" and John Lennon's "Imagine," were leaked to the public. But it was not until the invasion of Iraq that Clear Channel really kicked into high gear. Facing the massive public outcry and protests against the war, the network began sponsoring pro-war rallies called "Rally for America." Using its 1,200 stations, Clear Channel pummeled listeners with a mind-numbing stream of uncritical "patriotism." Finally, there was the recent and gleeful banning of Dixie Chicks songs from several prominent Clear Channel stations after singer Natalie Maines made derogatory remarks about George W. Bush.

Perhaps Clear Channel is simply exercising its right to free expression and supporting the foreign policy initiatives of the current administration. This is hardly the first time that a major media network used its power to marginalize political beliefs that contradict those of its owners. However, one cannot deny the potential for a conflict of interest. Clear Channel is currently facing a major congressional investigation of its business practices. The FCC has blocked two of its most recent requests for station transfers, something that the commission has not done since 1969. Clear Channel's share price is down nearly 50 percent from the value it held before the 9/11 terrorist attacks. All this is coming at a time when the FCC is about to rule on the existing barriers to consolidation, a decision that could dramatically affect Clear Channel's ability to further collateralize its massive debt by expanding its holdings.

Has the fact that the FCC chairman is the son of the nation's most politically enfranchised former military official had any impact on the fanatically pro-war stance that Clear Channel has taken with its recent actions? Or is the Clear Channel executive leadership, closely connected to the president, simply providing him with the kind of support one expects from political allies?

Whatever the answer, with Michael Powell, George W. Bush and Clear Channel, the lines between political, military and corporate media power have become blurred into one authoritarian impulse.

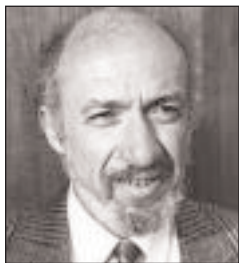
- Stephen Marshall



ColIntel
excerpts of the month:

featuring

RICHARD FALK & JIM VALLETTE



Dr. Richard Falk, a longtime professor of Politics and International Affairs at Princeton and now at UC Santa Barbara, has worked tirelessly to strengthen the rule of international law, and to imbue it with true humanist ideals. Recently, GNN talked with him about his latest book, "The Great Terror War" (Olive Branch Press) in which he asks the question, **Will the Empire Be Fascist?**



It's Nov. 1983. U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz receives an intelligence report describing how Saddam Hussein's troops are resorting to "almost daily use of chemical weapons in his war against Iran. Undeterred, Reagan signs a secret order instructing his charges to do

"whatever was necessary and legal" to prevent Iraq's defeat. A month later, he dispatches a special envoy to Baghdad on a secret mission. On Dec. 20, the envoy meets with Saddam. He isn't there to lecture the dictator about his use of WMDs or the fine print of the Geneva Conventions. He's there to talk business.

GNN: How can your interpretation that we are heading towards a sort of American-led global fascism be grafted onto what is happening now domestically in terms of the erosion of civil liberties?

FALK: One of the basic characteristics of a fascist regime is the annihilation of civil liberties and the complete distrust and rejection of electoral democracy, constitutional process and independent judiciary. And what one, I think, sees in the current reaction to 9/11 is not a fascist formation at this stage, but trends that are moving toward increasing the power of the state at the extent of the liberties of the citizen, and creating a sense that those that are the opponents of the policies of the state are evil. To the extent that it is focused on Islam and on males from the Arab world, there is a racist undertone that also feeds an ideology that seems at least to be proto-fascist or pre-fascist in its implications. One should be clear that the leadership has not endorsed an explicitly fascist tactic, at this point, or doesn't embrace fascism as their preferred ideology. Indeed, they are trying to convey an impression that their commitment is to constitutional democracy and to the world of law and to peace. They are using that language in a very Orwellian way. I have sometimes said that it seems as if George Bush read 1984 too early in age and didn't realize it was satire, because he uses all these very common words associated with a liberal society to validate very illiberal policies.

GNN: For a lot of young people, our frame of reference for the word empire is Star Wars, in which the Empire is the embodiment of evil, versus the Force, which is the embodiment of good...

FALK: Yes. It is interesting that in George Bush's important speech at West Point in June of 2002, he made a point of saying that the U.S. seeks neither empire nor utopia. And what he appeared to mean by that was the United States was not trying to establish explicit control over the societies with which it was in conflict. And it is important to recognize that empire is descriptive of many different types of political arrangements of control. What empire refers to is a form of multi-state control. A basic form of world order is based on sovereign states exercising political autonomy within their territory. What an empire does is to centralize that control in some place - some site of power that exerts some control over a group of states or, in this case, the whole world or region, and doesn't necessarily establish formal control. It can be an informal empire, as I would certainly believe the American global empire will be. It will set limits on what other countries are allowed to do. It will use covert methods of controlling their internal politics. It will establish the rules of the game for how world politics are pursued. And it will seek to exert control over the pricing and supply of oil in particular, and energy resources in general and in the world economy...

The envoy was Donald H. Rumsfeld, then CEO of pharmaceutical giant Searle. The meeting ushers in a new era of U.S.-Iraq relations, opening the door to shipments of dual-use munitions, chemical, biological agents and other dubious technology transfers. But for years what exactly was discussed in that now infamous meeting has been shrouded in secrecy. Until last month. In a new report from the Institute for Policy Studies, entitled **Crude Vision: How Oil Interests Obscured U.S. Government Focus On Chemical Weapons Use by Saddam Hussein**, researchers led by **Jim Vallette** discovered that Rumsfeld was sent to Baghdad to convince Saddam to approve an oil pipeline on behalf of the Bechtel Corporation. The Bechtel pipeline would have carried a million barrels of Iraqi crude oil a day through Jordan to the Red Sea port of Aqaba.

GNN: Tell us about Bechtel.

VALLETTE: Bechtel is a privately held company, one of the largest construction companies in the world. They and Halliburton are dominating the contracting for post-war Iraq. They have deep ties with the Bush-Cheney Administration. Shultz went straight from being CEO of Bechtel to the White House, where he promoted this pipeline idea. They hired Donald Rumsfeld, and sent him to Baghdad. In the first meeting, Saddam told Rumsfeld that he thought the pipeline sounded like a good idea. He needed to avoid the Persian Gulf where the Iranians were attacking Iraqi ships. This would-be pipeline would circumvent the Persian Gulf. But Saddam told Rumsfeld that he was worried about the possibility of the Israelis attacking the pipeline.

GNN: The Israelis had attacked their nuclear plant at Osirak in 1982.

VALLETTE: Exactly...Bechtel met with a Swiss billionaire Bruce Rappaport, who was close personal friends with the Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres. Rappaport and another agent E. Robert Wallace tried to make certain arrangements with the Israeli government, which included funneling off oil pipeline profits into Peres' Labor Party. (Peres was reportedly offered \$700 million over ten years. Rappaport was later investigated by the FBI for illegal oil dealing. Wallace and his former client Attorney General Edwin Meese were investigated by a special prosecutor for their role in the bribing scandal.)

Read the complete ColIntel interviews at www.GNN.tv.

Technology Review

REAL TIME SPY: spy software

Think twice about opening that e-mail attachment! Spy Software Solutions sells a program that remotely deploys monitoring software to any computer once the recipient downloads and runs a nondescript-looking email attachment. Through an undetectable connection, Spy Software users can log all keystrokes typed, websites visited, windows opened, chats conducted, and system info in real time, to a password protected personal account on the "Real Time Spy" server.

www.spy-software-solutions.com \$79.95

CAS-200W: wireless net camera

This small Wi-Fi camera has a built in CPU and its own IP address, enabling it to feed full motion video to a server from any location. It can be controlled remotely using a laptop with broadband access, and the quality is reasonable at about 15 frames per second. Hit a spot with Wi-Fi access and you can be up and running with a live video feed in minutes. Think of it as a poor man's satellite videophone. And with all the free Wi-Fi nodes popping up in major cities, innovative new live-to-air content from indy mediamakers is in the ether.

www.advanteknetworks.com \$295

Art of Revolution



Spin of the month:

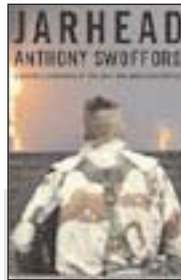
Road to War Paved with Disinformation

"The case for invading Iraq to remove its weapons of mass destruction was based on selective use of intelligence, exaggeration, use of sources known to be discredited, and outright fabrication," The Independent writes. "A high-level U.K. source said last night that intelligence agencies on both sides of the Atlantic were furious that briefings they gave political leaders were distorted in the rush to war with Iraq. Quoting an editorial in a Middle East newspaper which said, 'Washington has to prove its case. If it does not, the world will forever believe

that it paved the road to war with lies,' he added: 'You can draw your own conclusions.'... Some American officials have all but conceded that the weapons of mass destruction campaign was simply a means to an end in a 'global show of American power and democracy,' as ABC News in the U.S. put it. 'We were not lying,' it was told by one official. 'But it was just a matter of emphasis.'"

Source:
Independent (UK), April 27, 2003

Book Reviews



"Jarhead: A Marine's Chronicle of the Gulf War and Other Battles," Anthony Swofford (Scribner)

Coverage of Iraq gave us the PG version of the American soldier at war: clean-cut, fearless, exceedingly polite. In reality, wars are fought by aggressive, hard-edged young men who seek sex, violence and destruction with equal enthusiasm. Gulf War vet Anthony Swofford takes you on a raucous, almost poetic tour through the war he fought. War is hell, but it is also the defining moment for most of the men who are fighting it.

barred book that destroys the absurd myth that the media is liberal. In this aggressive, detailed argument, Alterman highlights scores of examples of how the U.S. media swings right. If all else fails just use it as a weapon to smack Bill O'Reilly fans in the head. It's a hardcover.



"Reefer Madness: Sex, Drugs, and Cheap Labor in the American Black Market," Eric Schlosser (Houghton Mifflin)

Fast Food Nation author goes deep into America's hidden economy, showing how pot, porn and illegal migrant labor make up 10% of the nation's wealth. His big conclusion: The free market is a myth. "The government is intervening all the time in the market, but on whose behalf? Is it protecting somebody who wants to smoke marijuana in their home, a migrant worker forced to live in a cave, or, more likely, a multinational drilling for oil?"



"What Liberal Media? The Truth About Bias and the News," Eric Alterman (Basic Books)

If you love to hate Ann Coulter, you'll love this one. Finally, a no-holds-

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