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Why Americans Must End America's Self-Generating Wars□□なぜアメリカ人はアメリカが自ら引き起こす戦争をやめるべきか

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French translation is available; German translation is available; Spanish translation is available; Italian translation is available

The most urgent political challenge to the world today is how to prevent the so-called "pax Americana" from progressively degenerating, like the 19th-century so-called "pax Britannica" before it, into major global warfare. I say "so-called," because each "pax," in its final stages, became less and less peaceful, less and less orderly, more and more a naked imposition of belligerent competitive power based on inequality.

To define this prevention of war as an achievable goal may sound pretentious. But the necessary steps to be taken are above all achievable here at home in America. And what is needed is not some radical and untested new policy, but a much-needed realistic reassessment and progressive scaling back of two discredited policies that are themselves new, and demonstrably counterproductive.

I am referring above all to America's so-called War on Terror. American politics, both foreign and domestic, are being increasingly deformed by a war on terrorism that is counter-productive, actually increasing the number of perpetrators and victims of terrorist attacks. It is also profoundly dishonest, in that Washington's policies actually contribute to the funding and arming of the jihadists that it nominally opposes.

Above all the War on Terror is a self-generating war, because, as many experts have warned, it produces more terrorists than it eliminates. And it has become inextricably combined with America's earlier self-generating and hopelessly unwinnable war, the so-called War on Drugs.

The two self-generating wars have in effect become one. By launching a War on Drugs in Colombia and Mexico, America has contributed to a parastate of organized terror in Colombia (the so-called AUC, United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia) and an even bloodier reign of terror in Mexico (with 50,000 killed in the last six years).[1] By launching a War on Terror in Afghanistan in 2001, America has contributed to a doubling of opium production there, making Afghanistan now the source of 90 percent of the world's heroin and most of the world's hashish.[2]

Americans should be aware of the overall pattern that drug production repeatedly rises where America intervenes militarily – Southeast Asia in the 1950s and 60s, Colombia and Afghanistan since then. (Opium cultivation also increased in Iraq after the 2003 US invasion.)[3] And the opposite is also true: where America ceases to intervene militarily, notably in Southeast Asia since the 1970s, drug production declines.[4]

Both of America's self-generating wars are lucrative to the private interests that lobby for their continuance.[5] At the same time, both of these self-generating wars contribute to increasing insecurity and destabilization in America and in the world.

Thus, by a paradoxical dialectic, America's New

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World Order degenerates progressively into a New World Disorder. And at home the seemingly indomitable national security state, beset by the problems of poverty, income disparity, and drugs, becomes, progressively, a national insecurity state and one gripped by political gridlock.

The purpose of this paper is to argue, using the analogy of British errors in the late 19th century, for a progressive return to a more stable and just international order, by a series of concrete steps, some of them incremental. Using the decline of Britain as an example, I hope to demonstrate that the solution cannot be expected from the current party political system, but must come from people outside that system.

The Follies of the Late 19th Century Pax Britannica

The final errors of British imperial leaders are particularly instructive for our predicament today. In both cases power in excess of defense needs led to more and more unjust, and frequently counter-productive, expansions of influence. My account in the following paragraphs is one-sidedly negative, ignoring positive achievements abroad in the areas of health and education. But the consolidation of British power led to the impoverishment abroad of previously wealthy countries like India, and also of British workers at home.[6]

A main reason for the latter was, as Kevin Phillips has demonstrated, the increasing outward flight of British investment capital and productive capacity:

> Thus did Britain slip into circumstances akin to those of the United States in the 1980s and most of the 1990s – slumping nonsupervisory wage levels and declining basic industries on one hand, and at the other end of the scale a heyday for banks, financial services, and securities, a sharp rise in the portion of income coming from investment, and a stunning percentage of income and assets going to the top 1 percent.[7]

The dangers of increasing income and wealth disparity in Britain were easily recognized at the time, including by the young politician Winston Churchill.[8] But only a few noticed the penetrating analysis by John A. Hobson in his book *Imperialism* (1902), that an untrammeled search for profit that directed capital abroad created a demand for an oversized defense establishment to protect it, leading in turn to wider and wilder use abroad of Britain's armies. Hobson defined the imperialism of his time, which he dated from about 1870, as "a debasement … of genuine nationalism, by attempts to overflow its natural banks and absorb the near or distant territory of reluctant and inassimilable peoples."[9]

The earlier British empire could be said by a British historian in 1883 to have been "acquired in a *fit of absence of mind*," but this could not be said of Cecil Rhodes's advances in Africa. Maldistribution of wealth was an initial cause of British expansion, and also an inevitable consequence of it. Much of Hobson's book attacked western exploitation of the Third World, especially in Africa and Asia.[10] He thus echoed Thucydides description of

> how Athens was undone by the overreaching greed (pleonexia) of its unnecessary Sicilian expedition, a folly presaging America's follies in Vietnam and Iraq [and Britain's in Afghanistan and the Transvaal]. Thucydides attributed the rise of this folly to the rapid change in Athens after the death of Pericles, and in particular to the rise of a rapacious oligarchy.[11]

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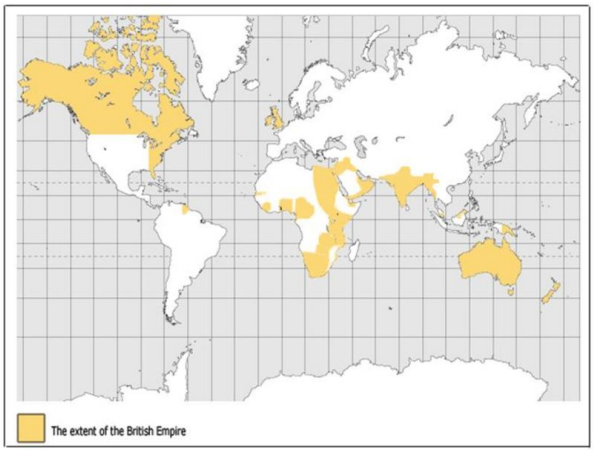
Both the apogee of the British empire and the start of its decline can be dated to the 1850s. In that decade London instituted direct control over India, displacing the nakedly exploitative East India Company.



The British empire during the Victorian Era

But in the same decade Britain sided with France's nakedly expansionist Napoleon III (and the decadent Ottoman empire) in his ambitions against Russia's status in the Holy Land. Although Britain was victorious in that war, historians have since judged that victory to be a chief cause of the breakdown in the balance of power that had prevailed in Europe since the Congress of Vienna in 1815. Thus the legacy of the war for Britain was a more modernized and efficient army, together with a more insecure and unstable world. (Historians may in future come to judge that NATO's Libyan venture of 2011 played a similar role in ending the era of U.S.-Russian détente.)

The Crimean War also saw the emergence of perhaps the world's first significant antiwar movement in Britain, even though that movement is often remembered chiefly for its role in ending the active political roles of its main leaders, John Cobden and John Bright.[12] In the short run, Britain's governments and leaders moved to the right, leading (for example) to Gladstone's bombardment of Alexandria in 1882 to recover the debts owed by the Egyptians to private British investors.

Reading Hobson's economic analysis in the light of Thucydides, we can focus on the moral factor of emergent hubristic greed (*pleonexia*) fostered by unrestrained British power. In 1886 the discovery of colossal gold deposits in the nominally independent Boer Republic of the Transvaal attracted the attention of Cecil Rhodes, already wealthy from South African diamonds and mining concessions he had acquired by deceit in Matabeleland. Rhodes now saw an opportunity to acquire goldfields in the Transvaal as well, by overthrowing the Boer government with the support of the *uitlanders* or foreigners who had flocked to the Transvaal.

French caricature of Rhodes, showing him trapped in Kimberley during the

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Boer War, seen emerging from tower clutching papers with champagne bottle behind his collar.

In 1895, after direct plotting with the *uitlanders* failed, Rhodes, in his capacity as Prime Minister of the British Cape Colony, sponsored an invasion of Transvaal with the so-called Jameson Raid, a mixed band of Mounted Police and mercenary volunteers. The raid was not only a failure, but a scandal: Rhodes was forced to resign as Prime Minister and his brother went to jail. The details of the Jameson raid and resulting Boer War are too complex to be recounted here; but the end result was that after the Boer War the goldfields fell largely into the hands of Rhodes.

The next step in Rhodes' well-funded expansiveness was his vision of a Cape-to-Cairo railway through colonies all controlled by Britain. As we shall see in a moment, this vision provoked a competing French vision of an west-east railway, leading to the first of a series of crises from imperial competition that progressively escalated towards World War I.

According to Carroll Quigley, Rhodes also founded a secret society for the further expansion of the British empire, an offshoot of which was the Round Table which in turn generated the Royal Institute of International Affairs. In 1917 some members of the American Round Table also helped found the RIIA's sister organization, the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations (CFR).[13]

Some have found Quigley's argument overstated. But whether one agrees with him or not, one can see a continuity between the expansionist acquisitiveness of Rhodes in Africa in the 1890s and the post-war acquisitiveness of UK and American oil corporations in the CFR-backed coups in Iran (1953), Indonesia (1965), and Cambodia (1970).[14] In all these cases private acquisitive greed (albeit of corporations rather than an individual) led to state violence and/or war as a matter of public policy. And the outcomes enriched and strengthened private corporations in what I have called the American war machine, thus undermining those institutions representing the public interest.

My main point is that the progressive build-up of the British navy and armies provoked, predictably, a responsive build-up from other powers, particularly France and Germany; and this ultimately made World War I (and its sequel, World War II) all but inevitable. In retrospect it is easy to see that the arms build-up contributed, disastrously, not to security but to more and more perilous insecurity, dangerous not just to the imperial powers themselves but to the world. Because American global dominance surpasses what Britain's ever was, we have not hitherto seen a similar backlash in competitiveness from other states; but we are beginning to see a backlash build-up (or what the media call terrorism) from increasingly oppressed peoples.

In retrospect one can see also that the progressive impoverishment of India and other colonies guaranteed that the empire would become progressively more unstable, and doomed in its last days to be shut down. This was not obvious at the time; and comparatively few Britons in the 19th century, other than Hobson, challenged the political decisions that led from the Long Depression of the 1870s to the European "Scramble for Africa," and the related arms race.[15] Yet when we look back today on these decisions, and the absurd but ominous crises they led to in distant corners of Africa like Fashoda (1898) and Agadir (1911), we have to marvel at the short-sighted and narrow stupidity of the so-called statesmen of that era.[16]

We also note how international crises could be initially provoked by very small, uncontrolled, bureaucratic cabals. The Fashoda incident in

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South Sudan involved a small troupe of 132 French officers and soldiers who had trekked for 14 months, in vain hopes of establishing a west-to-east French presence across Africa (thus breaching Rhodes' vision of a north-to-south British presence.[17] The 1911 provocative arrival (in the so-called "Panther leap" or *Panzersprung*) of the German gunboat Panzer at Agadir in Morocco was the foolish brainchild of a Deputy Secretary of Foreign Affairs; its chief result was the cementing of the Anglo-French Entente Cordiale, thus contributing to Germany's defeat in World War I.[18]

The Pax Americana in the Light of the Pax Britannica

The world is not condemned to repeat this tragedy under the Pax Americana. Global interdependence and above all communications have greatly improved. We possess the knowledge, the abilities, and the incentives to understand historical processes more skillfully than before. Above all it is increasingly evident to a global minority that American hypermilitarism, in the name of security, is becoming – much like British hypermilitarism in the 19th century -- a threat to everyone's security, including America's, by inducing and increasingly seeking wider and wider wars.

There is one consolation for Americans in this increasing global disequilibrium. As the causes for global insecurity become more and more located in our own country, so also do the remedies. More than their British predecessors, Americans have an opportunity that other peoples do not, to diminish global tensions and move towards a more equitable global regimen. Of course one cannot predict that such a restoration can be achieved. But the disastrous end of the Pax Britannica, and the increasingly heavy burdens borne by Americans, suggest that it is necessary. For American unilateral expansionism, like Britain's before it, is now contributing to a breakdown of the understandings and international legal arrangements (notably those of the UN Charter) that for some decades contributed to relative stability.

It needs to be stated clearly that the American arms build-up today is the leading cause in the world of a global arms build-up – one that is ominously reminiscent of the arms race, fuelled by the British armaments industry, that led to the 1911 Agadir incident and soon after to World War I. But today's arms build-up cannot be called an arms race: it is so dominated by America (and its NATO allies, required by NATO policy to have compatible armaments) that the responsive arms sales of Russia and China are small by comparison:

> In 2010 ...the United States maintained its dominating position in the global arms bazaar, signing $21.3 billion in worldwide arms sales, or 52.7 percent of all weapons deals, ...
>
> Russia was second with $7.8 billion in arms sales in 2010, or 19.3 percent of the market, compared with $12.8 billion in 2009. Following the United States and Russia in sales were France, Britain, China, Germany and Italy.[19]

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(A year later America's total dominance of overseas arms sales had more than doubled, to represent 79 percent of global arms sales:

> Overseas weapons sales by the United States totaled $66.3 billion last year, or more than three-quarters of the global arms market, valued at $85.3 billion in 2011. Russia was a distant second, with $4.8 billion in deals.) [20]

And what is NATO's primary activity today requiring arms? Not defense against Russia, but support for America in its self-generating War on Terror, in Afghanistan as once in Iraq. The War on Terror should be seen for what it really is: a pretext for maintaining a dangerously oversized U.S. military, in an increasingly unstable exercise of unjust power.

In other words America is by far the chief country flooding the world with armaments today. It is imperative that Americans force a reassessment of this incentive to global poverty and insecurity. We need to recall Eisenhower's famous warning in 1953 that "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, is in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."[21]

It is similarly worth recalling that President Kennedy, in his American University speech of June 10, 1963, called for a vision of peace that would explicitly *not* be "*a* Pax Americana enforced on the world by American weapons of war."[22] His vision was wise, if short-lived. After sixty years of the American security system – the so-called "Pax Americana" – America itself is ever more caught up in an increasingly paranoid condition of psychological insecurity. Traditional features of American culture – such as respect for habeas corpus and international law – are being jettisoned at home and abroad because of a so-called terrorist threat that is largely of America's own making.

The Covert US-Saudi Alliance and the War on Terror

Of the $66.3 billion in U.S. overseas arms sales in 2011, over half, or $33.4 billion, consisted of sales to Saudi Arabia. This included dozens of Apache and Black Hawk helicopters, weapons described by the *New York Times* as needed for defense against Iran, but more suitable for Saudi Arabia's increasing involvement in aggressive asymmetric wars (e.g. in Syria).[23]

These Saudi arms sales are not incidental; they reflect an agreement between the two countries to offset the flow of US dollars to pay for Saudi oil. During the oil price hikes of 1971 and 1973 Nixon and Kissinger negotiated a deal with both Saudi Arabia and Iran to pay significantly higher prices for crude, on the understanding that the two countries would then recycle the petrodollars by various means, prominently arms deals.[24]

The wealth of the two nations, America and Saudi Arabia, has become ever more interdependent. This is ironic. In the words of a leaked US cable, "Saudi donors remain the chief financiers of Sunni militant groups like Al Qaeda."[25] The Rabita or Muslim World League, launched and largely funded by the Saudi royal family, has provided an international meeting place for international Salafists including some al Qaeda leaders.[26]

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Obama with Saudi King Abdullah, 2010

In short, the wealth generated by the Saudi-American relationship is funding both the al Qaeda-type jihadists of the world today and America's self-generating war against them. The result is an incremental militarization of the world abroad and America at home, as new warfronts in the so-called War on Terror emerge, predictably, in previously peaceful areas like Mali.

The media tend to present the "War on Terror" as a conflict between lawful governments and fanatical peace-hating Islamist fundamentalists. In fact in most countries, America and Britain not excepted, there is a long history of occasional collaboration with the very forces which at other times they oppose.

Today America's foreign policies and above all covert operations are increasingly chaotic. In some countries, notably Afghanistan, the US is fighting jihadists that the CIA supported in the 1980s, and that are still supported today by our nominal allies Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. In some countries, notably Libya, we have provided protection and indirect support to the same kind of jihadis. In some countries, notably Kosovo, we have helped bring these jihadis to power.[27]

One country where American authorities conceded its clients were supporting jihadis is Yemen. As Christopher Boucek reported some years ago to the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace,

> Islamist extremism in Yemen is the result of a long and complicated set of developments. A large number of Yemeni nationals participated in the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan during the 1980s. After the Soviet occupation ended, the Yemeni government encouraged its citizens to return and also permitted foreign veterans to settle in Yemen. Many of these Arab Afghans were co-opted by the regime and integrated into the state's various security apparatuses. Such co-optation was also used with individuals detained by the Yemeni government after the September 11 terrorist attacks. As early as 1993, the U.S. State Department noted in a now-declassified intelligence report that Yemen was becoming an important stop for many fighters leaving Afghanistan. The report also maintained that the Yemeni government was either unwilling or unable to curb their activities. Islamism and Islamist activists were used by the regime throughout the 1980s and 1990s to suppress domestic opponents, and during the 1994 civil war Islamists fought against southern forces.[28]

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In March 2011 the same scholar, Christopher Boucek, observed that America's war on terror had resulted in the propping up of an unpopular government, thus helping it avoid needed reforms:

> Our policy on Yemen has been … terrorism and security and al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, to the exclusion of almost everything else. I think, despite what -- what people in the administration say, we have been focused on terrorism. We have not been focused on the systemic challenges that Yemen faces: unemployment, governance abuses, corruption. I think these are the things that will bring down the state. It's not AQAP..... everyone in Yemen sees that we're supporting the regimes, at the expense of the Yemeni people.[29]

Stated more bluntly: One major reason why Yemen (like other countries) remains backward and a fertile ground for jihadi terrorism is America's war on terror itself.

America's is not the only foreign security policy contributing to the crisis in Yemen. Saudi Arabia has had a stake in reinforcing the jihadi influence in republican Yemen, ever since the Saudi royal family in the 1960s used conservative hill tribes in northern Yemen to repel an attack on southern Saudi Arabia by the Nasser-backed republican Yemeni government.[30]

These machinations of governments and their intelligence agencies can create conditions of impenetrable obscurity. For example, as Sen. John Kerry has reported, one of the top leaders of Al Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula (AQAP) "is a Saudi citizen who was repatriated to Saudi Arabia from Guantanamo in November 2007 and returned to militancy [in Yemen] after completing a rehabilitation course in Saudi Arabia."[31]

Like other nations, America is no stranger to the habit of making deals with al Qaeda jihadis, to aid them to fight abroad in areas of mutual interest -- such as Bosnia – in exchange for not acting as terrorists at home. This practice clearly contributed to the World Trade Center bombing of 1993, when at least two of the bombers had been protected from arrest because of their participation in a Brooklyn-based program preparing Islamists for Bosnia. In 1994 the FBI secured the release in Canada of a U.S.-Al Qaeda double agent at the Brooklyn center, Ali Mohamed, who promptly went on to Kenya where (according to the 9/11 Commission Report) he "led" the organizers of the 1998 attack on the U.S. Embassy.[32]

Saudi Arabian Support for Terrorists

Perhaps the foremost practitioner of this game is Saudi Arabia, which has not only exported jihadis to all parts of the globe but (as previously noted) has financed them, sometimes in alliance with the United States. A *New York Times* article in 2010 about leaked diplomatic cables quoted from one of the diplomatic dispatches: "Saudi donors remain the chief financiers of Sunni militant groups like Al Qaeda."[33]

Back in 2007 the London *Sunday Times* also reported that

> wealthy Saudis remain the chief financiers of worldwide terror networks. 'If I could somehow snap my fingers and cut off the funding from one country, it would be Saudi Arabia,' said Stuart Levey, the US Treasury official in charge of tracking terror financing.[34]

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Similar reports of Saudi funding have come from authorities in Iraq, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, according to Rachel Ehrenfeld:

> Pakistani police reported in 2009 that Saudi Arabia's charities continue to fund al Qaeda, the Taliban and Pakistan's Lashkar-e-Tayyiba. The report said the Saudis gave $15 million to jihadists, including those responsible for suicide attacks in Pakistan and the death of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.
>
> In May 2010, *Buratha News Agency*, an independent news source in Iraq, reported on a leaked Saudi intelligence document showing continued Saudi governmental support for al Qaeda in Iraq in the form of cash and weapons.... An article in the May 31, 2010, edition of *The Sunday Times* in London revealed that the Afghan financial intelligence unit, FinTRACA, reported that since 2006, at least $1.5 billion from Saudi Arabia was smuggled into Afghanistan, headed most probably to the Taliban."[35]

However the Saudi backing of al Qaeda was not, according to the *Times*, limited to funds:

> In recent months, Saudi religious scholars have caused consternation in Iraq and Iran by issuing fatwas calling for the destruction of the great Shi'ite shrines in Najaf and Karbala in Iraq, some of which have already been bombed. And while prominent members of the ruling al-Saud dynasty regularly express their abhorrence of terrorism, leading figures within the kingdom who advocate extremism are tolerated.
>
> Sheikh Saleh al-Luhaidan, the chief justice, who oversees terrorist trials, was recorded on tape in a mosque in 2004, encouraging young men to fight in Iraq. "Entering Iraq has become risky now," he cautioned. "It requires avoiding those evil satellites and those drone aircraft, which own every corner of the skies over Iraq. If someone knows that he is capable of entering Iraq in order to join the fight, and if his intention is to raise up the word of God, then he is free to do so."[36]

The Example of Mali

Something similar is happening today in Africa, where Saudi Wahhabist fundamentalism "has grown in recent years in Mali with young imams returning from studying on the Arab peninsula."[37] The world

press, including Al Jazeera, has reported on the destruction of historic tombs by local jihadis:

> Fighters from the al-Qaeda-linked group Ansar Dine, controlling northern Mali, have destroyed two tombs at the ancient Djingareyber mud mosque in Timbuktu, an endangered World Heritage site, witnesses say.... The new destruction comes after attacks last week on other historic and religious landmarks in Timbuktu that UNESCO called "wanton destruction". Ansar Dine has declared the ancient Muslim

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> shrines "haram", or forbidden in Islam. The Djingareyber mosque is one of the most important in Timbuktu and was one of the fabled city's main attractions before the region became a no-go area for tourists. Ansar Dine has vowed to continue destroying all the shrines "without exception" amid an outpouring of grief and outrage both at home and abroad.[38]

Djingareyber

But most of these stories (including al Jazeera's) have failed to point out that the destruction of tombs has long been a Wahhabi practice not only endorsed but carried out by the Saudi government:

> In 1801 and 1802, the Saudi Wahhabis under Abdul Aziz ibn Muhammad ibn Saud attacked and captured the holy Muslim cities of Karbala and Najaf in Iraq, massacred parts of the Muslim population and destroyed the tombs of Husayn ibn Ali who is the grandson of Muhammad, and son of Ali (Ali bin Abu Talib), the son-in-law of Muhammad). In 1803 and 1804 the Saudis captured Makkah and Medina and destroyed historical monuments and various holy Muslim sites and shrines, such as the shrine built over the tomb of Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, and even intended to destroy the grave of Muhammad himself as idolatrous. In 1998 the Saudis bulldozed and poured gasoline over the grave of Aminah bint Wahb, the mother of Muhammad, causing resentment throughout the Muslim World.[39]

The Chance of Peace and Insecurity, the Chief Impediment to It

Today one must distinguish between the Saudi Arabian Kingdom and the Wahhabism promoted by senior Saudi clerics and some members of the Saudi Royal Family. King Abdullah in particular has reached out to other religions, visiting the Vatican in 2007 and encouraging an interfaith conference with Christian and Jewish leaders, which took place in 2008.

In 2002 Abdullah, as Crown Prince, also submitted a proposal for Arab-Israeli peace to a summit of Arab League nations. The plan, which has been endorsed by Arab League governments on many occasions, called for normalizing relations between the entire Arab region and Israel, in exchange for a complete withdrawal from the occupied territories (including East Jerusalem) and a "just settlement" of the Palestinian refugee crisis based on UN Resolution 194. It was spurned in 2002 by Israel's Sharon and also by Bush and Cheney, who at the time were determined to go to war in Iraq. But as David Ottaway of the Woodrow Wilson Center has noted,

> Abdullah's 2002 peace plan remains an intriguing possible basis for U.S.-Saudi cooperation on the Israeli-Palestinian issue.

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> Abdullah's proposal was endorsed by the entire Arab League at its 2002 summit; Israeli President Shimon Peres and Olmert both referred to it favorably; and Barack Obama, who chose the Saudi-owned al Arabiya television station for his first interview after taking office, praised Abdullah for his "great courage" in making the peace proposal. However, the presumed new Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, has strongly opposed the Saudi plan, particularly the idea that East Jerusalem should be the capital of a Palestinian state.[40]

The plan has no traction in 2012, with Israel hinting at action against Iran and America paralyzed by an election year. However Israeli President Shimon Peres welcomed the initiative in 2009; and George Mitchell, President Obama's special envoy to the Middle East, announced in the same year that the Obama administration intended to "incorporate" the initiative into its Middle East policy.[41]

These voices of support indicate that a peace agreement in the Middle East is theoretically possible, but by no means do they make it likely. Any peace settlement would require trust, and trust is difficult when all parties are beset by a sense of insecurity about their nations' futures. Pro-Zionist commentators like Charles Krauthammer recall that for thirty years before Camp David, the destruction of Israel was "the unanimous goal of the Arab League."[42] Many Palestinians, and most of Hamas, fear that a peace settlement would leave unsatisfied, and indeed extinguish, their demands for a just settlement of grievances.

Insecurity is particularly widespread in the Middle East because of the widespread resentment there against injustice, which insecurity both grows from and propagates. Much of the global status quo has its origins in injustice; but the injustice in the Middle East, on all sides, is extreme, recent, and ongoing. I say this only to offer this advice to Americans: to keep in mind that the issues of security and justice cannot be separated.

Above all, compassion is needed. We as Americans must understand that both Israelis and Palestinians live in conditions not remote from a state of war; yet both have reason to fear that a peace settlement might leave them even worse off than in their present uncomfortable situation. Too many innocent civilians have been killed in the Middle East. American actions should not increase that number.

This sense of insecurity, the major impediment to peace, is not confined to the Middle East. Since 9/11 Americans have experienced the anguish of insecurity, and this is the major reason why there is so little American resistance to the manifest follies of the Bush-Cheney-Obama War on Terror.

The War on Terror promises to make America more secure, yet in fact continues to guarantee the proliferation of America's terrorist enemies. It also continues to disseminate the War into new battlefields, notably Pakistan and Yemen. By thus creating its own enemies, the War on Terror, now solidly entrenched in bureaucratic inertia, seems likely to continue unabated. In this it is much like the equally ill-considered War on Drugs, dedicated to maintaining the high costs and profits that attract new traffickers.

Above all this contributes to Islamic insecurity as well, causing more and more Muslims to deal with the fear that civilians, not just jihadi terrorists, will be the victims of drone attacks. Insecurity in the Middle East is the major obstacle to peace there. Palestinians live in daily fear of oppression by West Bank settlers and retaliation by the Israeli state. The Israelis live in constant fear of hostile neighbors. So

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does the Saudi royal family. Insecurity and instability have increased together since 9/11 and the War on Terror.

Middle Eastern insecurity replicates itself on a wider and wider scale. Israeli fear of Iran and Hizbollah is matched by Iranian fear of Israeli threats of massive attacks on its nuclear installations. And recently former U.S. hawks like Zbigniew Brzezinski have warned that an Israeli attack on Iran could lead to a longer war that spreads elsewhere.[43]

Above all, in my opinion, Americans should fear the insecurity spread by

drone attacks. If not soon stopped, America's drone attacks threaten to do what America's atomic attacks did in 1945: lead to a world in which many powers, not just one, possess this weapon and may possibly use it. In this case the most likely new target by far would be the United States.

How long will it be, I wonder, before a prevailable force of Americans will recognize the predictable course of this self-generating war, and mobilize against it?

What Is to Be Done?

This paper has argued, using the analogy of British errors in the late 19th century, for a progressive return to a more stable and just international order, by a series of concrete steps, some of them incremental:

> 1) a progressive reduction of America's bloated military and intelligence budgets, over and above that already contemplated for financial reasons.
>
> 2) a progressive phase-out of the violent aspects of the so-called war on terror, while retaining traditional law enforcement means for dealing with terrorists
>
> 3) Much of the recent intensification of American militarism can be traced to the "state of emergency" proclaimed on September 14, 2001, and renewed annually by American presidents ever since. We need an immediate termination of this state of emergency, and a reassessment of all the so-called "continuity of government" (COG) measures associated with it – warrantless surveillance, warrantless detention, and the militarization of domestic American security.[44]
>
> 4) a return to strategies for dealing with the problem of terrorists that rely primarily on civilian policing and intelligence.

Forty years ago I would have appealed to Congress to take these steps to defuse the state of paranoia we are living under. Today I have come to see that Congress itself is dominated by the powers that profit from what I have called America's global war machine. The so-called "statesmen" of America are as dedicated to the preservation of American dominance as were their British predecessors.

But to say this is not to despair of America's ability to change direction. We should keep in mind that four decades ago domestic political protest played a critical role in helping to end an unjustified war in Vietnam. It is true that in 2003 similar protests – involving one million Americans – failed to impede America's entry into an unjustified war in Iraq. Nevertheless, the large number of protesters, assembled under relatively short notice, was impressive. The question is whether protesters can adapt their tactics to new realities and mount a sustained and effective campaign.

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Under the guise of Continuity of Government planning, the American war machine has been preparing for forty years to neutralize street antiwar protests. Taking cognizance of this, and using the folly of British hypermilitarism as an example, today's antiwar movement must learn how to apply coordinated pressure within American institutions – not just by "occupying" the streets with the aid of the homeless. It is not enough simply to denounce, as did Churchill in 1908, the increasing disparity of wealth between rich and poor. One must go beyond this to see the origins of this disparity in dysfunctional policies that can be changed. And one of the chief of these is the so-called War on Terror.

No one can predict the success of such a movement. But I believe that global developments will persuade more and more Americans that it is necessary. It should appeal to a broad spectrum of the American electorate, from the followers of Znet and Democracy Now on the left to those of Murray Rothbard and Ron Paul on the right.

And I believe also that a well-coordinated nonviolent antiwar minority – of from two to five million, acting with the resources of truth and common sense on their side – can win. America's core political institutions are at present both dysfunctional and unpopular: Congress in particular has an approval rating of about ten percent. A more serious problem is the determined resistance of corporate and personal wealth to reasonable reforms; but the more nakedly wealth shows its undemocratic influence, the more evident will become the need to curb its abuses. Currently wealth has targeted for removal Congress members who have been guilty of compromise to solve government problems. Surely there is an American majority out there to be mobilized for a return to common sense.

Clearly new strategies and techniques of protest will be needed. It is not the purpose here to define them, but future protests – or cyberprotests – will predictably make more skillful use of the Internet.

I repeat that one cannot be confident of victory in the struggle for sanity against special interests and ignorant ideologues. But with the increasing danger of a calamitous international conflict, the need to mobilize for sanity is increasingly clear. The study of history is one of the most effective ways to avoid repeating it.

Are these hopes for protest mere wishful thinking? Very possibly. But, wishful or not, I consider them to be necessary.

Peter Dale Scott, a former Canadian diplomat and English Professor at the University of California, Berkeley, is the author of Drugs Oil and War, The Road to 9/11, and The War Conspiracy: JFK, 9/11, and the Deep Politics of War. His most recent book is American War Machine: Deep Politics, the CIA Global Drug Connection and the Road to Afghanistan. His website, which contains a wealth of his writings, is here.

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