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ROTHBARD-ROCKWELL REPORT

FEBRUARY 1991

VOLUME II, NUMBER 2

Mr. Bush's Shooting War

by Murray N.
Rothbard

On January 16, 1991, a day which shall live in infamy, George Bush finally got his cherished shooting war. The United States launched an avalanche of mass murder and mass destruction upon a small, impoverished third-world country. Bush and the military finally got to uncork their high-tech devastation; and the military-industrial complex, secure in the vanishing of the short-lived "peace dividend," can stand tall once more. By personalizing the war and narrowing it to Saddam Hussein, Bush has managed to make Americans forget about the countless number of Iraqi civilians he is going to maim and murder. Or maybe there is nothing to forget: one reason why a U.S. war is always depressing to libertarians is because each new war is yet another demonstration that many Americans are *only* concerned about American lives and body bags, and care not a fig for the annihilation of citizens of other countries.

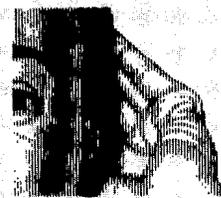
George Bush was, of course, able to maneuver us into a shooting war by aggressively and viciously, in barracks-room language, denying Saddam any way out, any compromise, any avenue of negotiation. "Just get out, unconditionally.... He doesn't need any face.... I'm going to kick his ass." What head of State, ever, is going to submit under such terms?

Every promising initiative by a third party was shot down brusquely by Bush; even the last-minute proposal by France that the U.N. simply implement *its own* resolutions by holding a Mid-East conference (as suggested by Tariq Aziz) was shot down quickly by Bush as "linkage" and "rewarding the aggressor."

George Bush worked his evil will in the face of a sharply divided country and of an anti-war movement of unprecedented scope at this early stage of a U.S. war. He was aided and abetted in this course by a supine Congress. The iniquity of Congress was bipartisan. What happened to the conservative Republicans, so defiant in opposition to Bush's tax increase? They

folded totally in the face of the power of the President. As for the Democrats, led by George Mitchell and Tom Foley — they deliberately waited cravenly to debate until the last minute, when they could effectively be clobbered by the cry to support the President in his last hours of negotiation. And when they finally did allow a debate, they refused to use any muscle to rally the Democrats behind them. In that way, they could support the President, while keeping their voting

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THE EAR

by Sarah Barton

The goofballs and scamsters at ISIL (formerly the Libertarian

International) should latch on to one of their own: one Joseph Matondo, who calls himself "Leader of the *Parti Libertarian du Congo*." It seems that Matondo is ready to set up a massive Libertarian Party in the Popular Republic of the Congo (formerly French Congo) and make a big splash in the

world. All he needs is (you guessed it) some scratch from the wealthy U.S. movement, that, and some "documentation" so he and his entourage can hotfoot it to the U.S. in case things become too dicey on the Congo River. All Matondo and the PLC need is 20 million French Congo francs, but don't worry guys, that's only 67 thousand smackers in U.S. dollars. Joe Matondo and ISIL are made for each other. Write to Joe at Pointe-Noire, Republique Populaire du Congo.

(Cont. next page, col. 1)

**George
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Barriers, black columnist Carl Rowan reveals that left-libertarian hero Martin Luther King, Jr., was recorded in a tryst with his fellow Christian minister, Ralph David Abernathy. "Come on over here, you big black [perpetrator of maternal incest]," said Marty to Ralph, "and let me [perform fellatio on you]."

A political scientist writing a book on the American Right was given a copy of *Liberty's* interview with Cato's Ed Crane. In it, Ed calls the two Rs culturally "neo-fascist," a Marxoid smear, while praising "sexual diversity" as a central tenet of libertarianism. The professor, who will quote extensively from the interview in his forthcoming book, calls Crane "demented, deviant, and opportunistic."

More than "sexual diversity" separates the Ed Crane left-libertarians from the Rothbard-Rockwell right-libertarians: there's also Political Correctness.

Crane is left-libertarianism's "Mr. P.C.," seeking out and denouncing "racism, sexism, and homophobia" wherever he finds them, and probably Eurocentrism, lookism, ableism, ageism, and speciesism too. As he told the *New York Times* (in explaining why he deep-sixed old friend Charles Murray): P.C. "social taboos" must be maintained.

The Ear hates to admit it, but Ed's right. Right-libertarians are anti-P.C. There's not a "sensitive" bone in our bodies.

Our publisher Burt Blumert says "the Ear is the best-read feature" of this publication. Murray and Lew, eat your hearts out! ●

(Bush's War... cont. from P.1) records clear in case the war should eventually turn sour.

In the highly touted and self-congratulatory Great Debate on the eve of war, Congressman after Congressman got up to admit that the mail from his constituents was running 9 to 1 or 11 to 1 against the war resolution, but he was, blah blah blah, voting for it anyway. Why? Amidst all the congratulations, why did no one ask what kind of "democracy" are we living under, when the Congressmen are willing to defy so blatantly the expressed will of the public?

Hawk Theory Disproved

Throughout the preparation period until January 15, the Bush Administration and its stooges operated on one and only one dimwit theory, which they intoned endlessly: That if Bush could only send

a "clear message" that the U.S. will be ultra-tough and will exert maximum force against Iraq on passing the deadline, Saddam Hussein will certainly turn tail and leave Kuwait. As time went on, Saddam showed no signs of buckling, Bush kept reiterating that "he must not have gotten the message clearly...he doesn't understand the message." Indeed, the decisive argument that convinced the pro-Bush Democrats in Congress was that, especially at that late date, a defeat would weaken or negate that "message." Hence, as Doug Ireland pointed out in the *Village Voice* (Jan. 22), "the

debate was conducted almost entirely in Orwellian terms: those who voted war spoke for peace...." Ireland also pointed to the "bilge" of the *New York Times* editorial after the debate that "Congress has armed the President, first and foremost, for peace." Yeah sure. And that's what we got, right?

In vain did Tariq Aziz, in his eloquent but totally unheeded press conference at Geneva, rebut that Iraq understood the "message" all too well that "We know very well what the President is saying. We too watch CNN."

And so Saddam Hussein did not surrender, did not quit, and thus successfully knocked the Bush-hawk theory into a cocked hat. Did Congress, after the deadline of January 15, rush to recognize this fact and rescind its approval of Bush's

war, as it logically and morally should have done? To the contrary, Congress capped its abject and spineless role by rushing to pass a unanimous resolution, after the war began, commending George Bush! O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts, and men have lost their reason.

The only war hawk who momentarily saw the light was none other than Henry Kissinger. The night the shooting war started, Kissinger, in a rare moment of self-criticism on television, admitted that he was greatly surprised that, after all the ultra-toughness on the part of

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the U.S., Saddam Hussein had not cut and run.

Well, I have news for Kissinger and the other war hawks, to the extent that their toughness-surrender model was not simply a coverup for a cherished war. Answer me this, war hawks: when, in history, when did one State, faced with belligerent, ultra-tough ultimatums by another, when did that State ever give up and in effect surrender — before any war was fought? When? Certainly not the Japanese, who responded to Secretary of State Cordell Hull's "get out of China" ultimatum of November 27, 1941, by going to war at Pearl Harbor. Then who? I can't think of a single instance. My old friend, Dr. David Gordon, Mr. Erudition, mentioned an instance in the nineteenth century when Belgium caved in to a French ultimatum, but that proves my point: you really have to reach. No head of State with any pride or self-respect, or who wishes to keep the respect of his citizens, will surrender to such an ultimatum. The whole point, is, that by belligerently sealing off any face-saving or way out for Saddam, the Bush Administration in effect insured that war would come.

Television commentators on the Congressional debate observed that the two sides had two contrasting models of previous wars in their minds when they cast their votes. The pro-Bushers were operating on the "Hitler appeasement" model, the antis on the "Vietnam War" model. The odd thing is that no one, in Congress or out, has referred to a far more apposite model: World War I, the monstrous granddaddy of all the major wars of the incredibly bloody twentieth century. In World War I, no one "appeased" anyone else, everyone was ultra-hawkish, mobilized, and hanged tough, and the result

was a momentous, totally disastrous, and useless four-year war that devastated Europe beyond repair, and ineluctably set the stage for the victories of Communism and Nazism, neither of which would have gotten anywhere if peace had prevailed. War-hawk theory is not only grievously and evidently incorrect, it has the blood of countless millions on its hands.

Will the conspicuous failure of this theory in the case of Saddam discredit it at long last? Hah! That'll be the day. To quote the great Mencken in a different but similar context: it will happen "on the Tuesday following the first Monday of November preceding the Resurrection Morn."

Neither was World War II in Europe a case where toughness worked. On the contrary, Hitler disregarded the English guarantee to Poland that brought England and France into the German-Polish war in September 1939. And even if that failure can be dismissed as sending "mixed signals" to Hitler after Munich, no country could have had a tougher and hawkier foreign policy than Colonel Josef Beck and his ruling junta of Polish colonels in the late 1930s. Geopolitically, the new country of Poland faced the two Great Powers of Germany and Soviet Russia on its borders. Any sort of rational foreign policy at the time would have required Poland to be friendly and dovish with *at least one*, and preferably both, of these powers to insure national survival. Instead, in a burst of hawkish idiocy that should remain as a permanent alarm bell against a tough, hawkish foreign policy, the Polish colonels stubbornly refused to negotiate at all on the substantial territorial demands or grievances of either power, thus assuring Polish

doom for half a century.

To return to the present war, let us finally assess the hawk theory by indulging in a lovely hypothetical: suppose that some miracle occurred, and a superpower United Nations was sending the United States a series of stern resolutions ordering U.S. troops out of Panama unconditionally, and by January 15. As the U.S. refuses to pull out, suppose, too, that the U.N. sends a series of "clarifying" messages, warning Bush of crushing consequences and maximum force if the U.S. does not pull out, replete with comments that the U.S. must not be rewarded for its aggression against Panama, that no excuses will be entertained, and that if Bush does not pull out in accordance with U.N. orders, Perez de Cuellar will "kick his ass." Does anyone imagine for a single second that Bush would comply? But, *why not*, if the hawk theory is true?

A Cover for Gorby

And in the meanwhile, as all U.S. power and attention are focused on Saddam, Gorby unsheathes his claws, forgets about "democracy," and launches a crackdown against the gallant Baltic states. What is Bush's reaction? Does he show at least as much concern for "freedom" and the "rights of small nations" in the Baltic as he does for a phony "nation" that is merely an oil company wholly-owned by the Sabah kleptocracy? Fat chance. No, with Gorby, Bush is the essence of politeness, tapping his wrist with faint regrets and mild hopes for improvement. No, nothing must be allowed to disturb the billions of dollars that Bush is shovelling into the maw of the Gorbachev regime, helping to fasten repression once again upon the Baltics and the

peoples of the Soviet Union. To say that this is a "double standard" is scarcely enough to describe the shamefulness of the Bush foreign policy. Truckling to monstrous dictatorial regimes such as the Chinese and the Soviets, while trumpeting the high morality of our defense of "small nations" and the New World Order in the case of Kuwait, is simply sickening.

And it is not enough for neo-conservatives like Frank Gaffney to call (on *Crossfire*) for a hawkish policy toward both the

U.S.S.R. and Iraq. In the first place, even as crazed a war-hawk as Gaffney only wants all-out war against Iraq; against the Soviet Union, he only wants diplomatic pressure and economic sanctions. But more importantly, the whole point of the Bush foreign policy is that the establishment and enforcement of his beloved New World Order *requires* the support and consent of China and the U.S.S.R., both of whom have permanent veto power on the U.N. Security Council. American *de facto* dominance under the *de jure* cover of the United Nations and the "world community" requires the U.S. to purchase the consent of these two still-monstrous regimes.

The seemingly eerie coincidence of Gorby cracking down on the Baltics with the Soviets cracking down on the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 under cover of the Anglo-French-Israeli war against Egypt, has already been noted widely. But

it is no mere coincidence. A more interesting question is this: was there a private agreement between Bush and Gorby at one of their summits that Bush would look the other way from a Gorby crackdown if Gorby loyally supported us on Iraq? It sure looks like it.

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This suspicion has met with the usual barrage of "paranoia" and "conspiracy theory of history." Conspiracy analysis is hardly a "theory of history"; the analyst is trying to make sense out of seemingly peculiar or senseless

actions, by postulating rational, if cynical, motives on the part of historical actors. Since the archives won't be opened for decades, we have to proceed in political life on our best guesses, and such guesses can only be enriched by considering plausible causal theories. In this case, our "conspiracy" analysis fits all the facts and has terrific predictive value. And as for "paranoia," I like to recall the definition of an old friend of mine, "today's 'paranoia' is tomorrow's headlines."

Does not one remember our pre-Cold War Soviet policy? I refer, of course, to our World War II alliance with Stalin, and to its fruits in such pro-Soviet deals as Potsdam, Yalta, and the murderous Operation Keelhaul. And above all, that reached its culmination in the United Nations, designed to bring about a New World Order run jointly by the U.S. and U.S.S.R. In the new post-Cold War Era, it is precisely that self-same New World Order that is

now being trumpeted by George Bush.

I am of course not calling for a revival of the Cold War against the Gorby regime. What I am proposing is simply old-fashioned "isolationism": that is, a policy that is neither engaged in warfare against the Soviet Union nor busily subsidizing it. That is, a foreign policy where the U.S. does not spend its time trying to decide which countries are "bad guys" whom we war against, as versus "good guys" upon whom we lavish all manner of favors and aid.

It would be nice, too, if the Bush Administration ceased all the hokum about our "Coalition partners" throughout the world. As Tariq Aziz pointed out, the pitiful contributions to the war effort of our "partners" were purchased by the U.S. with "billions and billions of dollars" of aid, that is, of the money of American taxpayers.

Random Notes on the War

Particularly heroic in the Congressional vote was Senator Mark Hatfield (R., Ore.). Not only was Hatfield one of only two Republican Senators to vote against the war resolution (the other was Charles Grassley of Iowa), but he *also* voted against the Democratic resolution, because he is opposed to the Democratic policy of sanctions. In short, Hatfield, a prominent anti-Vietnam War dove, was against the U.S. being in the Persian Gulf to begin with. Hatfield has also long been the most ardent opponent of conscription in the U.S. Congress.

All this reminds me that during 1970-71, Senator Hatfield was seriously contemplating running against President Nixon in 1972. During that era, I and several other

libertarians met the Senator in his office, during which he flatly declared himself to be an old Taft Republican and a "libertarian." At one point, he spontaneously assured us that "I have not, like Faust, sold my soul to politics." When I set forth the "New Libertarian Creed" in the *New York Times* (Feb. 9, 1971), in reply to an attack on libertarianism by Bill Buckley, Hatfield read it into the *Congressional Record* (Feb. 24), and also wrote a favorable review of my *Power and Market* (*The Individualist*, Feb. 1971).

At any rate, nostalgia has now been greatly reinforced by Hatfield's current vote; his deviations from economic liberty in the past two decades surely pale in comparison.

I was glad to see a powerful article against the imminent war by my old friend, New York Reform Democrat and quasi-libertarian George N. Spitz. ("Why Not Let Iraq Save Face?" *USA Today*, Jan. 15.) Spitz wrote that "as an Orthodox Jew who respects Torah (biblical) values, I am distressed by the belligerence of Israel and many U.S. Jews.... I was surprised and gratified when a majority of Jewish members of Congress voted against the resolutions authorizing military force." Typically, Spitz was once a member of the Libertarian Party of New York, but was driven out by the gaggle of youthful Modals because he wasn't "pure."

It is all too possible that the last-minute decision of Brooklyn's Representative Charles Schumer to vote against the war was influenced by a predicted reapportionment primary battle with fellow-Brooklyn Democratic Stephen Solarz, a

Vietnam dove who rivals even Senator D'Amato (R., N.Y.) in his thirst for Iraqi blood.

After a night and day of merciless pounding by U.S. missiles, Iraq finally got off seven SCUD missiles in the direction of Israel. They landed in the cities of Haifa and Tel Aviv, and yet did not succeed in killing a single Israeli. This is the great military threat to the United States, against which we had to take action now? Who's been conning us?

Whatever happened to our alleged original purpose in dispatching U.S. troops to Arabia: to save Saudi Arabia from allegedly imminent attack? Remember when the role of the troops was supposed to be "purely defensive"? Does anyone really think now that Saddam had the slightest intention of invading Saudi Arabia?

Whatever happened to the defensive posture of the U.S.? I'll remind you: just *two days* after the November elections, the defensive was abruptly abandoned by Mr. Bush, who announced the doubling of our troops in the Gulf, and the objective of kicking Saddam out of Kuwait. No wonder that the *Village Voice*, in its trenchant editorial against the war, calls Bush "our prevaricating president." And more important, we see why the *Voice*, in this context, cites Gore Vidal's perceptive remark that "America is a country that has elections instead of politics" (*Village Voice*, Jan. 22), that is, phony circuses instead of exercising genuine choices.

No sooner did the war start, when those sports writers who aspire to become pundits called for the closing down of the football play-offs

and the Super Bowl. No matter that sports (except, of course, for the Olympics) went on as usual during all of World War II. No matter that closing down sports or other entertainment would add not one whit to the war effort. All it would do is to inflict unnecessary pain upon the American people. But that, of course, is the main aim in life of left-liberal pundits, in or out of sports. The alleged purpose of war is to safeguard people in continuing their daily pursuits; those pursuits then, should always proceed as normally as possible. But, as Jackie Mason likes to say: "Every *schmuck* becomes a philosopher!"

In the first days of the war, when every channel featured wall-to-wall coverage, I quickly evolved my own personal rules for when to switch channels. I hit the remote control button at (1) pickups from the man-in-the-street (knew nothing); (2) interviews with any politician (ugh!); (3) official U.S. pool coverage (shots of U.S. planes landing in a dark airfield); (4) any pictures of Wolf Blitzer (is there *any* TV channel or radio station that does not feature this ex-Mossadnik?)

Calvin Trillin, Political Analyst

Once again, Calvin Trillin, left-liberal political humorist, is revealed to be one of our most perceptive political analysts. Trillin has enunciated two keen, if chilling, political rules: One is that "sooner or later, every President makes you nostalgic for his predecessor." I now have to confess that George Bush is making me yearn for Ronald Reagan. Why? Not only did Reagan move to end the Cold War, he never got us into a war in the Middle East. Or

rather, after a kamikaze attack killed two hundred Marines, Reagan, quietly but quickly, making no noise about it, got us clean out of Lebanon!

The second insight of Trillin was an explanation of why Reagan was successful whereas Carter was not. Because Reagan launched a very big, and therefore successful, invasion of a very small country (Grenada.) In contrast, Carter launched a very small and therefore unsuccessful, invasion of a very big country (Iran.) George Bush, Trillin wrote, followed up the Reagan course by a very big invasion of the next smallest country (since he couldn't very well re-invade Grenada): Panama. So is Iraq *this year's* Bush invasion? Who's next?

Conclusion: Rally Round "Our Commander in Chief"?

The orthodox line, even among many critics of the war, is that, at least for a while, or "until the body bags start coming home," we must rally round "our" commander-in-chief. Sorry folks, I ain't rallyin'. In the first place, he is not "our" commander-in-chief. The Constitution makes him the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and as yet, we have not been conscripted. I do not propose to be a cheer leader for Mr. Bush's immoral, unjust, and unnecessary war, now or later. I stand with the great John Randolph of Roanoke, patron saint of the new paleo John Randolph Club, who set forth his principles thus:

"Love of peace, hatred of offensive war, jealousy of the state governments toward the general government; a dread of standing armies; a loathing of public debt, taxes, and excises; tenderness for the liberty of the citizen; jealousy, Argus-eyed jealousy, of the

patronage of the President."

Or, let H.L. Mencken have the last word, with this bit of perceptive doggerel:

When after many battles past,
Both, tired with blows, make
peace at last,
What is it, after all, the people
get?
Why, taxes, widows, wooden
legs, and debt. •

"Date Rape" on Campus

by M.N.R.

A lot of strange things are happening on college campuses these days, and one of them is a great deal of kvetching about the alleged epidemic of "date rape." William Celis 3rd's special report to the *New York Times* on the subject (1/2/91) is best summed up by its subtitle: "Agony on Campus: What is Rape?" To a libertarian, or indeed to

any sensible person, there is no problem: if the sex was coercive, and took place against the will of one of the parties, then it was rape and if not, not. If it was, you call in the gendarmes, and if it wasn't, you don't. So what's the big problem?

But to the current generation of college students, things are very different. One says; "it's such a fuzzy topic," and another adds, "it's easy to look at sex and second-guess." There follows a lot of guff about how the feminist movement has succeeded in alerting countless

coeds about this terrible problem. But why should it take feminist theoreticians to inform a girl that she has been raped? Why is this topic "fuzzy," when to this reactionary it appears clear-cut? What's going on here?

Reading on, we find that many men are confused about these rising protests by college females. The guys charge that "women with whom they have had sex did not say 'no' and did not physically resist, yet later complained of date rape." Other "angrier" men claim that "in some cases women have encouraged their advances." But the feminists lash back that these are "after-the-fact excuses." Instead, "sexual inter-

course, they argue, should proceed from clear mutual consent."

Now we're getting somewhere. For whether or not "encouragement" took place, it strikes me as crystal-clear that if the girl did not say no and did not physically resist, then sex did indeed take place

by "clear mutual consent." What do the feminists want? Will they only be satisfied if (a) the two parties sign an express consent form before the act, and then (b) sign another one immediately after? And have them both notarized on the spot, with forms sent in triplicate to their respective attorneys and to the county clerk? If so, the notary publics in college towns are in for a thriving business, plus some Peeping Tom (or Tomasina) opportunities on the side.

The point is that, as in so many other aspects of human

As in so many other aspects of human "relationships," the feminists are setting out to destroy romance.