

Perfect Autism

Or How We Learned To Stop Worrying and Love Human Rights

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"It is not acceptable to try to evade our obligation by pleading that there is too much evil in the world for us to put it right. Our contribution can make a difference."

British Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, July 1997

autism *or izm, n* absorption in imaginative activity directed by the thinker's wishes, with loss of contact with reality

Wordsworth Concise English Dictionary, 1994

We can attack a country if we fear its weapons

A Lie. International 'law' provides one excuse only for war: the defence of your sovereign territory from attack. Iraq is entitled to shoot down 'our' planes. We are not entitled to bomb Iraq.

We can attack a country if we fear its leader

A Lie. De stabilising a country or forcing a change in its government, by subversion or violence is 'terrorism'. According to both international 'laws' and the domestic laws of the US and UK.

We can attack a country if it attacks somebody else

A Lie. According to international 'laws' and numerous UN resolutions, all territorial disputes must be settled first, between the parties, by negotiation. No grounds exist either for prolonging war after an 'aggression' is reversed or resolved or for using it to pursue other objectives. Amongst the scores of countries, attacked by the US/UK or an ally, not one has ever been allowed the 'right' to retaliate.

We can attack a country if it mistreats its people

A Lie. There is no such thing as a humanitarian war. Nations are powers. They pursue 'interests'. According to the Universal Declaration, a 'human right' cannot be 'defended' by an attack on another. The UN Charter says the first principle of international 'law' is the 'sovereign equality of all states'. If you violate the sovereign independence of another, you are an aggressor, pursuing an 'interest', which has nothing to do with the victims' status, government or conduct.

We can attack a country if it 'threatens' its neighbours

A Lie. You are entitled to respond only to attacks against your territory/ sovereignty, to repel others. From Julius Caesar to Tony Blair, posing as a 'friend' of a 'proxy', is an excuse used, traditionally, by aggressors with 'other' designs. If it were reasonable, let alone lawful, to attack a country because of its 'potential', then almost everyone would be more than entitled to attack the United States or Britain.

Attacking 'rogue' states protects everyone else

A Lie. Historically, no country has ever been made less violent by being attacked and being attacked has nothing to do with being more dangerous. The most violent nations on Earth - western democracies - are virtually immune from attack and entirely immune from defeat, except by rivals. Here, a rogue state is not one which violates or rejects the rights of others. It is, without exception, a poor country in which powerful, aggressive states have 'interests'. In the case of a majority of nations on the planet, the risk of attack by a supremacist power, such as Britain, outweighs, by a huge distance, any other external threat.

It's OK for us to build, own and use weapons because we're a 'democracy'

A Lie. International 'laws' do not discriminate. It is supposedly to protect states from 'terrorism', and attempts to justify terrorism, that all enjoy the same rights and responsibilities, regardless of status or the form of their governments. Being a 'democracy' didn't protect India from 'sanctions' when it built itself a bomb. And being elected hasn't prevented numerous popular leaders from being overthrown or murdered in western sponsored 'coups'. There is nothing in the history of international 'relations' or in the present system of international alliances - absolutely nothing - which suggests that western 'democracies' are more concerned about giving power or freedom to others than they are to protect or refine their control.

Weapons are only dangerous in the hands of dictators

A Lie. Only one nation has used nuclear weapons, the United States, a 'democracy'. The same one which reserves the 'right' to use them on non nuclear states. Virtually all weapons technology was developed by 'democracies' and exported to the world. Britain was dropping chemical weapons on 'recalcitrant tribes' early in the last century, while the US has used chemical and/or biological weapons in many of its recent wars, as well as the forty years silent 'war' against Cuba and other terrorist campaigns. In the Middle East, a nuclear, chemical and biological weapons capacity was developed first, with US technology, by Israel, a 'democracy', not by its Arab neighbours who must prove their 'fitness' by living with the threat. Third world 'dictators' rarely use weapons of mass destruction, and never in scale or outside their 'sphere'. They are preoccupied with personal power and not interested in fighting 'world' wars.

We are threatened because we are a democracy

A Lie. The US has not been invaded for two hundred years and Britain not for five hundred. Until the massacre of September 11th, the biggest murder of western civilians since 1945, by anyone, was the Lockerbie bombing. During that time America has attacked poorer countries more than **two hundred times**, killing **twelve million people**, while Britain's score is ninety-six. The death toll does not include those killed in proxy wars instigated or controlled by one or both powers, or the tens of millions who died from starvation or disease as a result of them. One US backed coup, which installed the Indonesian dictator, Suharto, in 1965, killed half a million people! Protected at the UN by Britain and America, Suharto went on to commit one of the post war world's worst genocides, against the people of East Timor. At the moment of the September attacks, one war 'supported' by the West, in the Congo, had killed 20,000, the kind of state sponsored terrorism, routine for us, for which a 'rogue' government would face annihilation. Did you know that, currently, America is harbouring numerous individuals accused of torture, human rights abuses or terrorism? Unlike Mr Bin Laden, none of them is 'hiding'. Did you know, also, that many of Latin America's most notorious dictators, as well as small time killers, were - and still are - 'trained' at a 'school' in Fort Benning, Georgia? It is not poor or dependent nations who assume global influence, any more than it is we who are 'threatened' or expendable. Wars become world wars, threatening everyone, only where the interests of supremacist powers conflict, as they did twice in the last century.

'Evil dictators' are different because they kill their own people

A Lie. No law says you can attack a foreign power because a civil war is being fought inside it, or because of any internal crisis, act or policy. Suharto in Indonesia, Mobutu in Congo, Pol Pot in Cambodia, Pinochet in Chile, Amin in Uganda and Saddam Hussein in Iraq are amongst the scores of dictators who, at some point, benefited, in murdering their own people, from western assistance or complicity. Dictators are proxies of supremacist powers, installed, protected, removed or 'contained' at will, not initiators of world 'order'. Nor does any policy, act or interest, including 'killing your own' have anything to do with the 'character' of governments or leaders.

Israel displaced or murdered two million Palestinians and continues now to evict and kill them. Although a distinct people, like the Kurds in Iraq and Turkey, these Palestinians are citizens of Israel. If Iraq or any Arab state launched a 'humanitarian' war against Israel, it would be bombed to a cow pat. As an aggressor, of course.

Iraq, and in particular the Iraqi security forces, would only convict and sentence a person in the courts with the provision of proper jurisdiction.

Jack Straw, refusing asylum to an Iraqi torture victim, 2002

We can prove 'Saddam' is dangerous. He won't let us 'inspect' his weapons.

A Lie. Only one state has passed a law forbidding inspection of its secret weapons facilities by 'hostile' foreigners. The United States in 1997. Far from keeping 'secrets', which in 'our' case is a 'right', Iraq is the only nation ever to submit to intrusion of this sort by countries engaged in war against it. Secrecy, like 'terrorism', is called something else when 'we' do it. So, when it appears, on the 'news' as an 'issue', the 'threat' has been contrived, a smoke screen behind which the true character of our 'relationship' with the world is hidden. America spends a staggering **fifty per cent** of its gross national product on 'defence', 264 times that of Iraq, only ten per cent of which is spent on organising the defence of its territory. Twenty per cent goes on its nuclear 'deterrent' and a shocking seventy on weapons designed for waging war from distance against remote or weaker 'enemies' (Admiral Gene La Roque). The US is alone in 'needing' to 'defend' itself, and its allies, from space, 'dominating the space dimension of military operations' (US Space Command, 1998). In order to believe this proves nothing about the interests and objectives of super states, you have to believe the rest of the world is organising a conspiracy of gigantic proportions against us.

We're in the Middle East to remove weapons of mass destruction

A Lie. Since the mass bombing of Iraq and Kuwait in 1991, western arms sales to the Middle East have increased by five times. Far from promoting disarmament, western allies have been 'rewarded' with arms contracts. The beneficiaries include Turkey, which, protected by 'no fly zones', is killing Kurds in Northern Iraq (30,000 so far), the feudal autocracy, Saudi Arabia and Israel, which is 'ethnically cleansing' Palestinian villages and 'resettling' Palestinian land. It is Iraq, not Kuwait or Saudi, which is attacked, repeatedly - and illegally - from the territory of its neighbours. How long do you think a Kuwait would last if it nestled alongside America's borders? It would be flattened, as an act of 'self defence'.

We're in the Middle East to force compliance with UN resolutions

A Lie. As a sop to international opinion, the Security Council resolution which imposed arms 'inspections' on Iraq, provided for the same process of 'disarmament' across the Middle East. In arming Iraq's neighbours/rivals, the Anglo-American alliance is violating the very resolution it trumped up, so shamelessly, to facilitate its illegal war. Since 1973, America has vetoed, in the Security Council, twenty seven resolutions criticising the excesses of Israel! South Africa, Turkey, Indonesia, Morocco, Ethiopia and Iraq are all countries who invaded neighbours but enjoyed the protection, at the UN, of the western 'superpowers', especially Britain and the US, responsible, since 1965, for 80% of Security Council vetoes. Not to mention America's own invasions, during the 1980s, of Panama, Grenada and Nicaragua, all, uniquely, condemned by virtually every other nation on the planet. The world may cry for Iraq, but the deaths of two million of its citizens will never constitute a crisis, nor will the character of the war waged against it ever become news. In September 2001, for the tenth year in succession, and by a vote of 167 to 3, the UN General Assembly condemned America's illegal blockade of Cuba. Ignoring the 'world' might be a crime if

you're Iraq, but not so if you're America, since then, of course, it is no more than the sovereign right of any state to act in it's own 'interests'.

We're attacking Iraq to defend our pilots

A Lie. Incursions by foreign planes into Iraqi air space are unilateral and, therefore, illegal. And, like any act in violation of the UN Charter, it cannot be made legal by a Security Council resolution. In spite of the propaganda which seeks to 'create' one, Iraq is not waging war on this country. Nor is Afghanistan. Or Yugoslavia. Or Somalia. Or Sudan. Or Yemen. If international 'law' meant what it says, there is no 'right' of 'defence' against a country you are attacking illegally, only an obligation to withdraw. In fact, Iraq's 'horrifying' technology is so inferior to 'ours' it has little chance of hitting any of the planes which violate or attack it. During the Gulf massacres of 1991, America and its allies suffered fewer casualties than they would have expected to sustain in 'live' military exercises of the same scale. While the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of helpless people was over within days, and celebrated as a triumph of 'civilisation' over savagery, the propaganda was not over. The 'threat', which 'justified' the extension of the war, to Iraq's economy, sovereignty, defences and society, focused on 'weapons of mass destruction'. It would, wouldn't it? After all, we had used them on the Iraqis.

We have to do something, there is 'no alternative'

A Lie. For a dispossessed Palestinian or Kurd, or a starving Afghan or Iraqi, there is no alternative. In spite of that truth, violence by them, or in support of them, is never justified. More than that, it is proof of evil in them, their religion or their societies. For someone else, the 'no alternative' argument justifies entirely the September attacks on the United States. What's more, for many suffering peoples, the claim is true. In fact, and in spite of it, few people in the world accept such thinking as normal, except of course ... **here** ... where it is assumed that every act against 'us' must be 'punished' or 'prevented'. When those who are attacked, threatened, killed or degraded by 'us' enjoy the right to murder you, your soldiers or your leaders, then it will be a right. Then, and only then, will you, or we, be entitled to claim the protection of such a right. In fact, in comparison with the 'great' powers, the world's 'uncivilised' nations rarely resort to force, and never against remote or distant countries. Nicaragua, for instance, lost thousands of its citizens in a 'war' waged against it by death squads armed, trained and led by the US. Sponsoring terrorism, no doubt, though you won't have realised at the time that the world was facing such a threat. No alternative there may have been, but Nicaragua didn't drop bombs, which, of course, in its case would be unacceptable, as well as pointless. It went instead to the world court, then the Security Council and finally the UN General Assembly. America's response to world wide condemnation was to escalate the war! The case was genuine, Nicaragua has no hidden global agenda. Still, no one here would accept the country's right to kill Americans, and this would be so regardless of the pain inflicted upon it. Although, 'no alternative' is the most common of the 'arguments' you hear, in defence of imperialism, it's also the most revealing. It illustrates what Edward Pearce called the state of 'perfect autism' which is a western citizen's 'understanding' of the world.

We act on behalf of the international community

A Lie. Taking account of a fraction only of the historical record, since most of its a 'secret', Britain and the United States are far and away the world's most violent repeat offenders and the only countries committed, as a standard policy instrument, to large scale terrorism. America, almost alone, refuses, openly, to accept international court rulings it doesn't like, or to ratify conventions which threaten its alliances with despots. It was one of the last to ratify the conventions against genocide, torture and racial discrimination, and refuses still to ratify conventions on the child and on sex discrimination. Because of its alliances with South American dictators, and its sponsorship

and training of paramilitary death squads, it refuses to recognise any regional 'human rights' treaties. The US is the only state to have been condemned, for international terrorism, by the world court. And the only one to have vetoed a Security Council resolution calling on it to observe international law. And this, in spite, of its ability to coerce or control the United Nations. One hundred and thirty five countries, in the UN General Assembly, condemned the use of sanctions and other forms of economic and political warfare by 'great' powers against poorer countries. And the world speaks with one voice also on 'terrorism', which the UN General Assembly condemned by a vote of 153 to 2. Why, you ask, did the US and Israel (who voted against) feel unable to understand 'terrorism' as it is understood by most of its victims? Answer? The resolution exempted groups or peoples fighting for self determination or against racist or colonialist regimes! Do not be taken in by references to 'allies', 'coalitions' or 'international peacekeeping forces'. There is widespread sympathy across the world for people victimised by terrorism or war, no matter where they live, but none for the tyrannical 'idea' of world 'leadership' or the odious objectives of imperialist powers.

The Western war against Iraq has killed more people than have been killed by all weapons of mass destruction in history.

Mueller & Mueller, Journal of Strategic Studies, 2000

Britain is a nation that stood alone against fascism

A Lie. Britain is an aggressor. It has never stood alone against anyone or 'triumphed' in the face of overwhelming odds. Delusions of special character are a result of historical abuse and domination of other peoples, no different from the fantasies of similar European conquering races. In spite of the widespread sympathy for its plight, Iraq, not Britain, stands alone, for which resistance it is derided not admired. In terms of power, Britain is a leader, most of its modern wars waged not against competitors, but against the weak, the poor and the powerless. In both world wars, German imperialism was defeated not by its victims, but by a stronger alliance of rival imperialist powers, who, once they'd finished, carved up the planet between them. In 1939-45, the decisive role was played by the emerging 'superpowers', the US and the Soviet Union, not Britain, defeated in 1940. All that 'changed' was that America assumed, from Britain, 'leadership' of the global 'interest'. Super powers have never been interested in fighting 'fascism', which they find, in many parts of the world, a convenient tool. While, in 1936, thousands went to Spain to fight the fascist general, Franco, the west favoured the future dictator, who, like Hitler, was a bulwark against 'communism'. Since world war two, in every squalid war Britain has waged it demonised as terrorists and murderers colonial peoples. In Oman, Kenya, Malaya, Egypt and elsewhere, world war two was 're run', accompanied, as now, by racist propaganda, implying that our victims are so backward, childlike, savage, helpless, weak, duped or stupid that our influence over their lives is 'good' for them. The natives who, without exception, are slaughtered in huge numbers, rarely look like Hitler and most of them would have ended up in his concentration camps, as indeed, more than a few ended up in ours. Consider the history of so many of the world's 'rogue' states, and our 'relationship' with them. Without exception, they are former colonies, and, like Libya, Afghanistan and Iraq, often of Britain. Many fought to free themselves from puppet tyrannies and dictatorships, imposed from outside by imperialist powers. The 'campaign' against Afghanistan will, like Kosovo before it, and Iraq after it, result in another colonial style 'protectorate'. Yes, you can see just how like Nazi Germany they are.

This is total war. We are fighting a variety of enemies. There are lots of them out there ... If we just let our vision of the world go forth, and we embrace it entirely, and we don't try to piece together clever diplomacy but just wage a total war, our children will sing great songs about us years from now.

Richard Perle, Advisor to George Bush Jr, on his destiny

In 'democracies' issues are discussed and debated

A Lie. While, in less 'fortunate' lands, power is mistrusted, challenged and sometimes defeated, in a country like Britain, where the source is global capital, power is remote, unelected and entrenched. It is immovable, regardless of the character or beliefs of the governing party or leaders. The illusion that we are 'free' to question is what makes us grateful and, therefore, compliant. In countries, which are not 'free', people sacrifice their lives to fight the global system which rules over them and the tyrants and dictators who are employed by it. Nothing of importance is ever 'debated' here, since the point at which any normal person would begin his assessment of the world or the moralities of international behaviour, is never reached. When they're not having a debate about what, for any rational person would be beyond debate - how best to terrorise or control small countries - they are instigating another about something which is not happening. The war against drugs, terrorism, communism, fundamentalism, the hunt for Osama, none of which has anything to do with the reason we are 'in' other people's countries, or the objectives which are being pursued. Once you've accepted as 'real', what is not, and as normal what is abnormal, you have no ability to question, let alone dissent. In the real world 'we' are the issue, the instigators and the problem, a reality supported by overwhelming evidence but which, because it cannot be rebutted, remains conveniently 'denied'. Recently, George Bush Senior wrote a book in which he admitted that the mass bombing of Iraq and Kuwait was not about rights, but oil. Admitting that he lied, or that he murdered, in order to exploit and dominate others, makes no difference to anyone. Such historical 'discoveries' and admissions are as commonplace as our wars. They confirm only what we know already but have mastered the art of 'forgetting'.

We're really fighting a war for 'democracy' against Islamic fundamentalism

A Lie. If you're going to tell the people a lie, said Hitler, make it a great one, for then they will have no choice but to believe it. And Britain, of course, is a specialist in great lies. From the 'Mad Mahdi' of 1898 to the 'Mad Mullah' of 1998, it worked before, so it will work again. Enter 'Islamic fundamentalism'. Like the rest, it has nothing to do with the 'interests' concerned, which is why so many of Britain's 'allies' in the Middle East, 'created' by British colonialists, are Islamic states while its priority victims, Iraq and Libya, are not. Mujahideen in Afghanistan (which spawned the Taliban) was 'created' by Jimmy Carter and trained by the British SAS, while Hizbollah in Lebanon was armed and encouraged by the west, which, at the time, preferred it to more 'dangerous' secular movements. And Al Qaida, the latest terror 'network', fought on the side of the Kosovans and the Bosnian Muslims, for which 'terrorism' you can be sure, its volunteers will not be punished. In every war they wage, the evidence is staring us in the face, that the 'reasons' for war are a lie. Take the war against 'terrorism', currently Afghanistan. At time of writing (March 2002), the imperialists are grooming the Mujahideen (or Northern Alliance) by the 'usual' standards, a terrorist organisation, as a proxy army. Like the KLA in Kosovo, it will kill and die in the place of our heroic 'troops'. They're calling in favours from old 'friends', Pakistani dictator Musharraf and Uzbek dictator, Karimov, who will be suitably 'rewarded'. While Musharraf is arming and supporting Kashmiri separatists in India, ie 'terrorists', India is 'urged' not to pursue its grievances, as we are 'entitled' to do ... that is, by force. Millions of refugees have been created, a great many of whom

will die of starvation or disease, but without the references to 'genocide', which accompanied their Muslim counterparts in Kosovo or Bosnia. And, like their predecessors, in a flickering moment, these tortured people will turn into 'parasites', come here to 'steal' a life which is too good for the likes of them. As before, such shifting 'alliances' and barefaced contradictions, will not lead to anyone here drawing a conclusion about the nature of our role in the world. In America, a society saturated with images of God and flag, no fundamentalist will be called a fanatic. And despite seventy to eighty per cent support for all and any of our post colonial 'wars' on 'evil', no one here will be accused of 'hating' other people. All racist propaganda, from whatever source, creates a 'war', waged by its victims against their oppressors. In order to justify their policy of expulsion and murder, Nazi propagandists speculated, endlessly, about the religious and moral beliefs of Jews, as well as their 'character', none of which had anything to do with the campaign against them. Like any citizen of a 'great' nation, the average German saw no history. Nor did he see policies which masked objectives or interests. What he saw was a 'Jewish problem', a threat to his 'way of life' which had to be 'addressed'.

We treat them better than they'd treat us.

A Lie. Apart from the racism, nothing could have illustrated more, the cynicism of this particular lie than the reactions of people across the world to the murder, on September 11th 2001, of three thousand people in America. Even in countries attacked by the US, or ruled by oppressors it supports, the reactions of most people were strikingly different from what is 'normal' here. Whatever they felt, no one failed to notice or was indifferent. And contrary to what you may have read, most people condemned it. In the helplessness of their own condition some saw an instant of common understanding. Maybe the experience of pain would move us. Maybe we would recognise and reject the double standard by which we are never responsible for the violence we do to others. Sadly, but not surprisingly, those who yearned for change, a sense of common rights and values, were to be disappointed. Far from misunderstanding our honest intentions, many people in the developing world persist in thinking far better of us than we deserve. Most believe that if only we knew or saw the crimes committed in our name, we would reject them. In fact, this is untrue. An ugly and racist blindness in our sense of 'human rights', is the reason that delusions of apocalypse are far more common here, where 'we', rather than our victims are always the objects of doomsday attacks and scenarios. This has nothing to do with an honest assessment of the danger people face, or its causes. It reflects only the status we feel belongs to people like 'us'.

Our armed forces are the best in the world

A Lie. According to an opinion poll published in 2001, the British are the only people in the world who rate their 'armed forces' as their greatest source of national 'pride'. Forget art, industry literature or political struggle, the average citizen of the old imperial butcher is most proud of our old imperial wars and thinks of the monsters who perpetrated them as history's 'great' men. Given that our eminence in the world is born of little else, no one is so fascinated and beguiled as we by the 'art' of killing. The crimes of a rival power, Nazi Germany, are the only crimes of historical supremacy the average Briton can recognise. Maybe it was this that tempted Noam Chomsky to ask, sublimely, what any of us would think about German society or culture if the average German had never heard of the Holocaust or believed only a few people died in it. The professor should have taken the question a stage further. He should have asked what we would think of such a culture if the people sat around congratulating themselves on their restraint and 'professionalism', their 'contribution' to humanity and their 'concern' for other people. History, as Chomsky said, looks very different to the slave than it looks to the master.

I do not understand this squeamishness about the use of gas. I am strongly in favour of using poisoned gas against uncivilised tribes

Winston Churchill, Colonial Secretary, on gassing the Kurds, 1924.

They're not like us. They're always killing each other

A Lie. It's because they can't make a case for supremacy, that western 'foreign policy' is conducted as it is, on the basis of 'pretexts'. Deep down we know the excuses aren't true, which is why we accept it when they suddenly change. When 'they' are not 'killing their own', they're doing the opposite ... organising 'international' terrorism against us. And if you think it doesn't matter what we do because we only kill foreigners, ask yourself if you would apply such a standard to anyone who invaded or attacked our own country. You certainly didn't apply it on September 11th. In spite of the desperate conditions which prevail in many parts of the 'colonised' world, most third world countries are not at war most of the time - unlike we who are at war all of the time, everywhere, albeit without noticing. To realise how normal we consider making war on the world to be, think about the 'response' to the attacks of September 11th. According to US Vice President Cheney, 'forty to fifty' countries are being lined up to 'pay' for our 'security'. Do you really believe that people who are so ruthless everywhere else in defence of their 'interests' would be any less so if, by some miracle, their own people took up arms against them?

Only cranks worry more about 'strangers' than 'their own'

A Lie. Cranky or not, worrying about 'strangers' is what we spend most of our time doing. We gorge on a daily diet of trivia about the lives of rich or famous people remote from our own, washed down with emotional stories of tragedies and misfortunes which happen to strangers, but which we are encouraged to feel 'belong' to us. Indeed, we are invited to draw conclusions about society or the world from what happens to people whose lives are very different from most of us or whose experiences are personal, unusual or tragic, and therefore untypical. The people who died in Washington and New York were not, for the most part, our 'own'. In fact, between a third and a half were Muslims. And while America is home to some of the world's poorest people, a third of families in Britain live in poverty. Where, amongst your daily diet of 'strangers', do the lives and experiences of these invisible people - our 'own' - appear? If you are tempted to believe what the hacks tell you, that so many desperate or poor people are worthless scum, and 'responsible' for the injustice in your life, it's likely that in fact you think very little of yourself. The world is not the 'dark' place they tell us it is, filled with the wickedness of 'humanity'. Most violence is organised, in defence of power, by a very small few, while amongst the many it is ordinary people who give their lives for change. Most people have a strong, instinctive sense of justice, a feeling that inequality, 'different' treatment, is wrong. The newsmakers see enough in us to recognise their task and the work which is necessary to achieve it. That task is to undermine the collective sense of our humanity, in favour, instead, of helplessness, that we do not apply to the society and communities in which we live, the knowledge we share with our neighbours of how and why the world is what it is.

These 'anti war' types just hate America

A Lie. The hacks cannot afford to acknowledge that imperialism is the cornerstone of world 'order', so they resort, instead, to treating any resisters as 'nutters'. Given our inclination to accept what they say, we proceed, once again, with our assumptions about the world without ever taking a moment to question them. Have you never wondered what it would take to be 'anti Arab'? As the question is never asked, clearly it takes a lot more than exterminating or starving them. Far from being victimised, poor misunderstood America is never judged here, by the standards reserved for

others. And nor is Britain so judged by those who are presented to us as 'critics' of it's foreign policy. When 'anti war' campaigners offer an 'alternative' solution to the 'problem' of 'Saddam' they're talking not about the survival of Iraq as a sovereign state with 'rights' as we enjoy them. They are talking the same language of moral autism as their 'opponents'. It's about 'us'... people whose rights are absolute and not the property of others to determine, debate or 'allow'. Yes, you hear government 'spokesmen' ridiculing their 'critics', but don't be conned into believing that what you are seeing is a 'debate' or that it has anything to do with the exercise of a 'freedom'. The supremacist idea is endemic here, disputed or challenged by no one. What you are witnessing is the opposite of argument, a fanatical and barmy notion of hegemony paraded as 'normality'. The non debate itself is propaganda, used to denigrate or deride other peoples as less 'free' or 'enlightened' than we. Or to extract, from another shameful crime, self congratulation and pride. With each moment that you are exposed to fake 'controversy' about 'mistakes', how to avoid hitting the 'wrong' target, harming the 'innocent', departing from our 'fine' tradition or provoking retaliation against us, it becomes harder still to stop and confront the shocking character of these 'rights'. Who, in our own country would count as a legitimate target? Certainly not Blair or members of his family! Which of our leaders historic crimes against the world would legitimise an attack upon us? And when was the last time we congratulated the IRA on hitting a 'military' target or using a 'warning' to minimise civilian casualties? 'An absence of any active sense of wrong' said Edward Pearce of the British people, which is the most depressingly true of all the indictments against us. As slaves of history's most savage and unaccountable power, the part of ourselves we have surrendered with the least resistance is the anger, the rage we should feel against those who 'lead' us.

We cannot change anything, so why bother?

A Lie. Strange isn't it that it's only in countries where the people enjoy 'freedom' that there's a widespread belief that change is impossible! While choosing to accept that our leaders wage war on a largely helpless world because they are 'threatened', somewhere hidden amongst the information we 'detach' is another eternal truth ... that they're not threatened by anyone. Indeed, we expect of them, as a 'right' that they will do what is criminal in others, waging war, without fear, no matter how remote or 'removed' the pretext. We watch the 'news' 'processed' and always in the same way. From a world 'we' rule, but about which we choose to know nothing, an issue 'appears'. Quickly, it turns into a momentum for a 'necessary' war which is then extended, concluded, packaged and forgotten until it is needed again. The outcome, bearing no resemblance to the 'cause', is always the same; the subordination of a small countries identity to a foreign interest. When their government is not 'replaced', their society, economy or defences are subject to 'controls', enforced by a colonial style 'order' of punishment and reward. And no matter how bold, consistent or clear the historical picture, we never choose to separate ourselves from the lie. We submit or collude and by choice, a totalitarian condition beyond a dictator's wildest dreams. But while they don't fear governments, they worry about us, which is why the primary instrument of control is not the law but propaganda. Sad it is, as John Pilger put it, that they have so censored our perception of how the world is managed, that they do not need to censor our freedom of speech. But an edifice built on a lie is always unstable. We could, if we wanted, challenge the circumstances prevailing in our society and in our world. For each of us as an individual, it's a matter only of will; a journey that begins with a single step. It means confronting reality as it is no matter how frightened or disheartened we may feel. Whatever benefit you are encouraged to believe you derive from shutting out the truth, it's an illusion. Resistance is fertile. Give it a try!

If equality is to be forever averted - if the High, as we have called them, are to keep their places permanently - then the prevailing mental condition must be controlled insanity.

George Orwell, 1984

Reading List

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"The struggle of people against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting."

Milan Kundera

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