

War, Resistance and Counter-Resistance in Modern Times

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Edited by

Francis Feeley

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P U B L I S H I N G

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OTHER BOOKS BY FRANCIS FEELEY

1. *Patriarchy in American Institutions: Language, Culture, and Politics of Liberalism*, ed., Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Cambridge, UK (2010).
2. *Le patriarcat et les institutions américaines : études comparées*, ed., l'Université de Savoie, Chambéry, Fr. (2009).
3. *Les mouvements pacifistes américains et français, d'hier et d'aujourd'hui*, ed., l'Université de Savoie, Chambéry, Fr. (2007).
4. *Ces truands qui nous gouvernent*, ed., French translation with new introduction of book by Jim Hightower, Éditions du Croquant, Grenoble, Fr. (2004).
5. *Cahier des Acts du Colloque, « Réflexions sur l'impact social des multinationals américains »*, ed., Center for the Advanced Study of American Institutions and Social Movements, San Diego, CA (2003).
6. *America's Concentration Camps During World War II: Social Science and the Japanese American Internment*, University of the South Press, New Orleans, LA. (1999), with a Preface by Howard Zinn.
7. *And The Wisdom to Know the Difference, Conversations with Residents of Three Cities: San Francisco, CA, Paris, France, and Minsk, Belarus*, 1998, Quebec: World Heritage Press, Quebec, CA. (1998), with a Preface by Theodore Zeldin.
8. *A Strategy of Dominance: History of an American Concentration Camp in Pomona, California*, Brandywine Press, New York, NY. (1995).
9. *The French Anarchist Labor Movement and "La Vie Ouvrière," 1909-1914*, Peter Lang Publishers, New York, NY. (1991).
10. *Rebels with Causes: A study of French primary school teachers, 1880-1919*, Peter Lang Publishers, New York, NY. (1989).

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DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is dedicated:

to the memory of American-born peace activist, Furkan Dogan (1991-2010), and to the other eight members of the Gaza Freedom Flotilla who were murdered by Israeli military forces in international waters in the early morning hours of May 31, 2010 (in violation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization charter) while attempting to bring humanitarian aid to the 1.5 million men, women and children living in Gaza, still suffering under the illegal Israeli blockade, and to the many brave war resisters who stand against the murderous U.S. invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, especially to Daniel Ellsberg (born 1931), to *Wikileaks* founder and editor-in-chief, Julian Assange (born 1971), and to whistleblower Private First Class Bradley Manning (born 1987), who while serving as an intelligence analyst in Iraq, assigned to a support battalion with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division was arrested and charged with the unauthorized use and disclosure of U.S. classified information, including the infamous “Collateral Murder” video of the July 12, 2007 airstrike in Baghdad.¹

I wish, also, to acknowledge the participants who contributed to our International Conference of “War, Resistance and CounterResistance” that was held on the Nanterre campus at the University of Paris on April 11, 2008.

My sincere appreciation goes as well to the following friends of CEIMSA-IN-EXIL (*The Center for the Advanced Study of American Institutions and Social Movements*) who have steadfastly lent critical support over this past decade to my investigations from Grenoble, France into the political realities of our times during the “New World Disorder”, also known as “neo-liberal globalization.”

¹ For a historical perspective of American whistleblowers, see Amy Goodman’s interview with Daniel Ellsberg on *Democracy Now!*, 30 March 2010, “Our President Is Deceiving the American Public: Pentagon Papers Whistleblower on President Obama and the Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq,” http://www.democracynow.org/2010/3/30/our_president_is_deceiving_the_american, visited on 7 August 2010

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—Francis Feeley
Professor of American Studies
The University of Grenoble
August 2010

PREFACE

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF WAR, RESISTANCE AND COUNTER-RESISTANCE IN MODERN TIMES

FRANCIS FEELEY

Without justice, there can be no peace.
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

The existential experience of *being-for-itself*, is affected by our knowledge of the past, which in turn influences our understanding of the present and thereby to a great degree determines our planning for the future. The conference upon which this book is based was organized in May 2008 at the University of Paris X in Nanterre. Its purpose was to bring scholars and activists together in an effort to come to terms with past episodes of anti-war resistance in the United States and in France. More precisely, the objective of this meeting was to bring together a mix of personal testimonies and academic analyses that would deepen our understanding of the forces of war and of various manifestations of resistance that have occurred from time to time in the histories of these two nations. The intention of this book is to demonstrate how resistance movements have often given rise to counter-resistance measures employed mostly by state agencies to stifle the self-realization of certain groups and to promote the self-realization of other organized interests.

We were privileged to have among the participants at this conference figures who have lived through political repression at one time or another in their lives and who were able to give personal testimony to the nature of political forces when they have been mobilized by capital to protect investment opportunities in times of crisis. The vested interests in warfare are not always obvious, and any war resister must take into account the dangers which such interests represent to individuals and to society. For this reason, we attempted to initiate at this conference discussions on the

level of personal motivations and specific encounters with pro-war forces, as well as presentations on the economic and cultural contexts that have been both cause and effect of past wars.

The introduction to this book presents an overview of what is commonly thought to constitute part of the democratic tradition within the United States of America, starting at the very beginning of the national experiment, at the time of the American Revolution. From the very beginning of the Republic, the disturbing presence of war-resistance represented a perspective from which we can better understand some of the contradictions embodied in the political economy of the United States. Today, war continues to be profitable for a few investors, and devastating for the rest of humanity

Gilles Vachon, in the first chapter of this book, describes his childhood experiences, between the ages of eight and thirteen, during the Second World War. He shares his memories of what happened within his family during the upheaval of bombardments, migrations, physical mutilations, social constraints, vicious persecutions, underground existence, political attacks, etc., etc. . . . In this powerful first-hand account one can see the everyday impact of the war and the Nazi occupation on all social structures, including families, in the mixed milieu of both working class and middle class families where he lived. "First it was barely visible," he recounts, "then the effects became full blown." Vachon goes on to explain, in his essay, how the new stress in French families led to the adoption of a policy by the majority of the French nation to turn their backs on the victims of repression, and to ignore the mounting injustices which occurred routinely all around them. The immediate post-war period in France saw the settling of accounts from this sordid past, and a positive energy developed for political commitment to a new future, one with a united with a European community united against Fascism, both Communist and non-Communist, unlike the social experiences in Cold-War America.

In the second chapter the American political refugee, George Brown, describes his experiences of resistance and counter-resistance while growing up Black in the Eastern part the United States of America. Here, he recounts an episode from his life in prison, when in 1969 he planned to break out in order to join the revolutionary *Black Panther Party for Self-Defence* and contribute to bringing justice and equality to oppressed Americans. Brown had spent much of his life going in and out of prison, and his prison break in 1972 represented a commitment to resistance at a new level. The Panther Party Platform, which attracted so many Black youths, presented a socialist agenda by which an entire generation of

American minorities was much influenced, until a fierce and well-organized police repression all but destroyed the roots of this resistance.

The third chapter of this book is a description by Francis Feeley of the transnational economic interests behind the contemporary national security state in America. In February 2008, Stephen Lendman wrote in his review of Jonathan Cook's book, *Israel And The Clash Of Civilizations* that, "Israeli technology firms pioneered the homeland security industry, still dominate it, and it's made the country the most tech-dependent in the world and its fourth largest arms exporter after the US (far and away the biggest), Russia and France. The US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is one of its biggest customers for high-tech fences, unmanned drones, biometric IDs, video and audio surveillance gear, air passenger profiling, prisoner interrogations systems, thermal imaging systems, fiber optics security systems, tear gas products and ejector systems and much more." Naomi Klein in her new book, *The Shock Doctrine, the Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, confirms Lendman's thesis and provides additional information on the Israeli security industry's reach around the world since September 11, 2001, concluding that, "The extraordinary performance of Israel's homeland security companies is well known to stock watchers, but it is rarely discussed as a factor in the politics of the region." This essay offers an evaluation of the political economy of the U.S. Homeland Security policy since 9/11 and an analysis of the likelihood of vested interests to actually seek reduction of the international terrorist threat.

In chapter 4, Patrick Litsangou offeres a comparative description of media coverage of military conflicts presented in the so-called *mainstream* media and in the *alternative* media of America. This essay is an analysis of resistance in the new alternative media to official coverage of U.S. military conflicts in the mainstream media. The weblog ("blog") of Dahr Jamail, an independent American journalist working inside Iraq, is used to examine this historic fact in U.S. media development. The contents of reports that he began sending from Iraq shortly after the second U.S. invasion quickly became a regular source of information in the United States, describing political situations, but above all giving valuable information about the socio-economic context of the U.S. military operations inside Iraq. Dahr Jamail's blog aimed at providing American public opinion as well as the international community with an understanding of this war, opposed to that generated by the established American media, which was almost always loyal to political and corporate powers in Washington, D.C., as far as U.S. policy in Iraq was concerned.

Peterson Nnajofofor in chapter 5 discusses the corporate strategies of US petroleum companies in the Niger Delta and the resistance movements

that these brutal strategies have give rise to, such non-violent movements as was led by Ken Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni leaders in an attempt to save their region and its environment from the ravages of these transnational corporations which are seeking only to maximize their profits in the region, at all costs. Their corporate strategy requires a complex engagement in the politics of counter-resistance, which eventually would cost Saro-Wiwa and many other non-violent resisters in the region their lives.

The final chapter of this book is an attempt by Anthony Wilden to outline new strategies for resistance, taking into account the histories of counter-resistance. “The Strategic Envelopment,” as Wilden calls it, is one strategy which represents an *indirect method* aimed at disarming the enemy rather than attempting to crush him in a frontal confrontation, using sheer force. This military/political strategy, perfected by Napoleon Bonaparte, takes into account the important difference between *opposition* and *contradiction*, the former constituting confrontation between two forces *at the same level of abstraction*, while the latter represents a dialectical interaction *at different levels of abstraction*.

By way of conclusion, I have attempted to synthesize the lessons in this book and to suggest how the personal experiences and political analyses presented here might point toward a new level of understanding of the so-called *forces of order* which attempt to control social change, while often failing to take into full account the origins of *change* which they are confronting. This dynamic between *forces of change* and *forces of order* is nowhere more apparent than during periods of war, when conflicts arise between resistance and organized counter-resistance in society.

Whenever *change* comes from below, as a result of massive economic and political dislocations of tectonic dimensions, and law and order are commanded within the social hierarchy from above, the result *ipso facto* is the formation of tactics of resistance and counter-resistance, each in pursuit of the realization of incompatible strategies. These tactics, like their strategies, exist always as an integral part of a vision of the future, and they aim to channel the social forces which have been awakened in a specific direction, away from objectives which might favor the interests of one social class over those of another.¹ Today’s context of “the U.S.

¹ For a discussion of epistemologies related to the study of war and peace movements, see *Les mouvements pacifistes américain et français, hier et aujourd’hui*, Francis Feeley, ed. (Université de Savoie, 2007). For a discussion of recently published information on the vast expansion of the military-industrial-national-security complex at the start of the 21st-century USA, see Laura Flaunders’ interview with Professor Greg Mitchell on GritTV, 19 July 2010, “Top Secret

Imperial Project” in western Asia is only the latest example of the cycle of violence caused by class struggles in response to capitalist expansion. Once again we see the pattern of resistance and counterresistance to imperialist wars.

INTRODUCTION

A LOOK AT RESISTANCE IN THE AMERICAN DEMOCRATIC TRADITION

FRANCIS FEELEY

As this book goes to press in the summer of 2010, we are feeling the fallout of two catastrophic events, among many others, which promise to build social movements of increasing resistance around the world. I am speaking of the Israeli attack on the Gaza Freedom Flotilla on the night of May 30-31 in international waters some one hundred kilometres off the coast to Gaza: this illegal and unprovoked attack by Israeli Defence Forces on the Turkish boat, Mavi Marmara, resulted in the death of nine Turkish citizens and serious injuries of many more peace activists. It has introduced an institutional crisis within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), whose purported *raison d'être* since its creation in 1949 has been to protect its member nations from aggression.¹ (Turkey, like the United States, is a charter member of NATO, while Israel has no status in this Organization.) The second event which promises to give rise to social movements of increasing resistance is the British Petroleum Corporation's oil spill, which began shortly before 10 p.m. on April 20 with a massive methane explosion at the Deepwater Horizon offshore drilling rig, killing eleven workers and injuring more than a dozen others. This BP oil rig was located in the Gulf of Mexico, some 50 miles offshore, not far from the Mississippi Delta, and more than 4,000 feet beneath the sea.

¹ "The Images Israel Didn't Want Seen: Video and Photographs from the Gaza-Bound Aid Flotilla," *Democracy Now!*, Amy Goodman, Producer, June 10, 2010, http://www.democracynow.org/blog/2010/6/10/the_images_they_didnt_want_seen_video_and_photographs_from_on_board_the_mavi_marmara, visited June 30, 2010. Also, see Iara Lee and Srdjan Stojiljkovic, "Israeli Navy Attacks Gaza Freedom Flotilla," *Cultures of Resistance*, n.d., <http://www.culturesofresistance.org/gaza-freedom-flotilla>, visited on June 30, 2010.

Each of these two crises assures the growth of democratic social movements whose aim will be to resist the abuse of political and economic power. Members of NATO --and particularly the government of Turkey-- are finding themselves deeply involved in Palestinian resistance against Israeli aggressions. Likewise, grassroots movements in Louisiana, Florida, and other affected states find themselves joining in solidarity with Native American resistance in Alaska and in the costal states of the American northwest, as well as Africans living in the Niger Delta, whose interest it is to develop strategies, tactics and logistics necessary to defend themselves from corporate abuses of power which they have suffered at the hands of transnational petroleum companies.²

In this collection of essays we will discover the logic of war resistance and counterresistance as a parallel development to imperialist economic growth. Today, new technologies provide a hope for imperialist interests, which aim at a more thorough control of society, in a future where all wealth is privatized and divided unequally and where new modes of “security & surveillance” produce self-censorship and complicity on the part of the victims. Nevertheless, as we shall see in the following pages, such a *dystopia* where colonization of the human mind, with constant exposure to ideological indoctrination, is not without contradictions. It would seem that reliance on technological innovations is not a sound basis for optimism in an imperialist future.

Ruling class tactics have historically included counter-resistance measures such as the time-tested tactics of “divide and rule,” of course; but also of punishing the working class using military and paramilitary tactics of police and management control, and other coercive forces used when necessary in order to stabilize intrinsically unstable social relationships. This has been going on for thousands of years, since the appearance of civilizations. But what are today’s objectives and how are they being pursued by means of warfare? The tactics are easily identifiable. They include, but are not limited to, economic violence such as unemployment, job insecurity, and poverty; the financial violence of

² “BP Oil Spill Threatens Future of Indigenous Communities in Louisiana,” *Democracy Now*, Amy Goodman, Produce, June 7, 2010, http://www.democracynow.org/2010/6/7/bp_oil_thrill_threatens_future_of, visited June 30, 2010. For a critique of the “double standard” policy of petroleum companies in the US and Nigeria, see *Human Rights Report* on “Corporate Social Responsibility and Global Poverty,” 4 June 2010, at http://humanrights.change.org/blog/view/in_the_niger_delta_disbelief_at_the_response_to_bps_spill, visited on 25 August 2010.

creating dependency and obedience by imposing a system of “debt-slavery”; the judicial violence of arbitrary imprisonment and indifference to prisoner abuse; the political violence of institutionalizing “self-censorship”; the psychological violence of manufacturing “needs” and manipulating “desires” in support of the status quo; and the usual physical violence of inflicting military mobilizations and police interventions on our private lives. These contemporary forms of violence --the highly visible, like the less visible-- can be understood as crystallizations of human relationships that are necessary aspects of our modern political economy.

At the beginning of the last century the British socialist H. G. Wells was among the first to ask the question: "Does the Grand Strategy of capitalism depend on war?" At the beginning of this century, socialists have revised this question to read : "Are corporations constantly waging war on the rest of us by implementing tactics to accomplish their Grand Strategy, which targets mankind in order to extract a maximum of private profits." From Baghdad to Paris, France, from the Niger River Delta to Gaza we can now acknowledge the question being asked by hundreds of millions of people: "Do we exist to serve the economy? Or does the economy exist to serve us?" This is the capitalist paradox, worldwide: born on the battlefield of class warfare, we cannot help but learn the strategies, tactics and logistics of those who would dominate us and destroy our humanity. There is no escape from this battlefield to which we are born, nor from its lessons for survival.

The United States of America was created in a furnace of imperialist expansion, and throughout American history wars have given rise to resistance movements which were repeatedly met, in turn, with state-led tactics of repression. At the time of the American War of Independence, only one-third of the approximately 3.5 million people living in the 13 colonies supported the war; one-third was indifferent to the outcome, and wished only to avoid losing their lives, while the remaining third of the population were openly opposed to the war and wished to remain colonies under British protection. Among the latter group of Americans was the governor of New Jersey Colony, William Franklin, the son of Benjamin Franklin. History, we are told, is written by the victors: William Franklin was disowned by his illustrious father, and expunged from history, before the end of the war. As a *persona non-grata* in the new Republic, the

former governor of New Jersey Colony took up residence in England, where he lived for the remainder of his life.³

In class warfare as well, resistance and counterresistance is recorded in American history. At the time of the United States Constitution, vigorous debates occurred (between 1787 and 1791) over the ratification of the new government, revealing an array of strategies and tactics which ultimately constrained the power of the ruling class merchants and property owners, whose objectives involved depriving most working Americans of their human right to self-defence. Daniel Shays' rebellion in western Massachusetts was the most famous of these popular post-war resistance movements. It aimed at challenging the new monopoly of power which threatened ordinary citizens in the recently formed American Republic. Movements such as Shays' provided the context in which the consolidation of political power was attempted by the new national elite, who had gathered in Philadelphia, between 25 May and 17 September 1787, to participate in the formation of a new government. The conservative authors of the U.S. Constitution found themselves in the midst of social class warfare and were obliged to launch a counter attack, in the form of public debates, to resist the democratic sharing of political power. For three-and-a-half years the "Federalists," as they called themselves, were forced to confront the "Anti-Federalists" until a compromise was reached in 1791 which allowed Rhode Island and North Carolina to finally join the other states to ratify the federal Constitution of the Republic of the United States of America. The document now necessarily included the famous "Bill of Rights." In this case, the elitist counter-resistance movement won a victory over the democratic movement, whose slogan was "No taxation without representation!" But still the conservative American political elite, who were intent on resisting the decentralization of political power in the fledgling Republic, had to accept a compromise. This political confrontation of resistance and counter-resistance produced the famous *Bill of Rights*, the first 10 Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, which most notably included the guaranteed freedoms of speech, religion, the press, and the right to assemble peacefully. These amendments were ratified along with the Constitution and became national law only in 1791.⁴

After the beginning of the French Revolution, French citizens living in the United States were forced to flee the country due to Federalist persecution. It was decided that the U.S. should be quarantined against "the revolutionary virus" carried by French citizens. In 1798, the passage

³ Virginia Bernhard, et al., *Firsthand America, A History of the United States*, 3rd edition (St. James, New York, 1993), p.117.

⁴ Howard Zinn, *People's History of the United States* (New York, 1995), pp.90-99.

of the *Alien and Sedition Acts* made it much more difficult for foreigners to become U.S. citizens. This legislation also empowered the President of the United States to deport “any alien” from the country, and in time of war “to imprison without charges any foreign citizen living in the United States.”

The *Sedition Act* also provided for fines and imprisonment for “anyone speaking, writing, or publishing with intent to defame the President of the United States or other members of the U.S. government.” Federalist judges closed down many Republican newspapers and jailed and fined some 70 American citizens under this Act. The grandson of Benjamin Franklin, Benny Franklin Bache (1769-1798), whose mother was Sarah Franklin Bache and whose uncle was William Franklin, the British loyalist, had inherited his grandfather’s printing equipment and library. In 1790, seventy years after his famous grandfather began publishing his first American newspaper, *The New England Courant*, Benny Bache created his own paper, *The American Aurora*, in which he defended the French Revolution and attacked the conservative Federalist Party in defense of the Jeffersonian Republican Party.

In 1798, Benny Bache wrote a series of articles which were critical of President George Washington, who had emerged from the war as the richest property owner in the Republic. He wrote that President Washington, at the time he was commanding General of the Continental Army during the War of Independence, had “secretly collaborated with the British.” In another article, he wrote that: “If ever a nation was debauched by a man, the American nation has been debauched by Washington.” Under the articles of the “Sedition Act,” Benny Franklin Bache was arrested. He died in prison in 1798 while awaiting trial, at the age of 29.⁵

The legal rights of U.S. citizens were suspended at the time of the French Revolution for reasons of “national security,” and again during the War of 1812 Federalist Party opposition to the English, who were at war with Napoleon, created a counter-resistance within the United States. This war, which ended only in 1814, was not (as usually depicted in American textbooks) just a war against the English for survival, but a war for expansion of the new nation, into Florida, into Canada, into Indian territory. The War originated with the maritime policies of Great Britain and France during the Napoleonic Wars. In 1806 Napoleon tried to prevent neutral countries from trading with Britain. England retaliated with orders to prevent neutrals from trading with France. The result was a drastic fall in U.S. trade. The U.S. declared war against Britain in June 1812, after it

⁵ Warren Agee, *Introduction to Mass Communications* (New York, 1997), p.112.

was reported the British Admiralty was interfering with American ships on the high seas and pressing American sailors into the British navy. The British were also supporting Indian uprisings in the west, which was hindering U.S. expansion. The U.S. was unprepared for this internal conflict, but saw no alternative than to resist British imperialist provocations.⁶

The war ended with the Peace of Ghent, signed on December 22, 1814, the terms of which were essentially a return to the *status quo* before the war. Two weeks later, however, Andrew Jackson, unaware of the peace agreement, defeated British troops at the Battle of New Orleans. Some of the far-reaching effects of this last instance of resistance to British aggressions include the appearance of a new national military identity in the U.S. against the British, a new surge of expansionism into Indian territories, and a growing level of home manufacturing, following the trade embargo imposed by the British and French.⁷

The Napoleonic Wars in Europe gave rise to a new surge of imperialist expansionism in North America, as European-Americans removed indigenous people from their homelands, in the name of “national security.” The Mexican War of 1846-48 was a continuation of this movement westward, armed now with the new ideology of “Manifest Destiny.” The American imperialist project on the North American continent incurred resistance time and time again throughout the 19th Century, but repeatedly this macro-resistance was overcome by an overwhelming counter force of repression, which in turn gave birth to a variety of forms of micro-resistant activities. Henry David Thoreau’s classic essay, “On Civil Disobedience” (1849) speaks to the recognition of individual conscience -- that “march to a different drummer”-- and the transcendental “duty of conscientious citizens”. . . “to stop the machine” when it was “working injustice.” Eventually, the Republic of Mexico was conquered by the United States military and this defeat was formally acknowledged by the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (1848), which ceded all of northern Mexico, 50% of its entire homeland, to its Yankee neighbor. But paradoxically, at a cultural level, a myriad of micro-resistant elements began to proliferate after this military “victory” of power over justice.⁸

Later, during the American War of Secession (1861-65), resistance and counter-resistance is again seen in the opportunism of President Abraham Lincoln, whose commitment to abolishing slavery was compromised by

⁶ Bernhard, et al., *op. cit.*, pp.216-225.

⁷ Zinn, *op. cit.* pp.125-126.

⁸ See Félix Guattari, *Molecular Revolution, Psychiatry and Politics*, trans. from French by Rosemary Sheed (New York, 1984).

pragmatic considerations for improving the advantages of American industrialists after the war. Meanwhile, the Second Empire of France, under the leadership of the French Emperor, Louis Napoleon, maintained French troops in Mexico to protect the unpopular Holy Roman Catholic Emperor of Mexico, Maximiliano, and his wife, the Empress Carlota, from social revolution led by the indigenous revolutionary Benito Juarez. The French-Mexican imperial alliance with the Confederacy was a European gamble against a Republican victory over the reactionary southern Democrats. The resistance of the Confederacy against the consolidation of a “new industrial capitalist order” found a willing ally in the French Empire. But at another level, resistance in Europe to French imperial ambitions in North America would serve to unite and eventually industrialize the new state of Germany under the strategies of Otto von Bismarck.⁹

At the end of the 19th Century, again an imperialist war—the Spanish-American War (1898)—brought with it resistance and counter-resistance movements, as the American nation became divided --nearly 50-50-- between pro- and anti-Imperialist forces. National figures as diverse as multimillionaire philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, literary satirist Mark Twain, and philosopher William James spoke against this imperialist project abroad; while pro-war propagandists, such as newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst and western artist Frederick Remington brought images of glory to the minds of the American public, promoting “heroes” of this imperialist campaign, such as Teddy Roosevelt (of “San Juan Hill” fame) and Admiral George Dewey (the Battle of Manila Bay). The pro-war advocates were joined by other intellectuals, like U.S. Navy Captain Alfred Mahan and Presbyterian Pastor Robert E. Speer, and also by many politicians, such as Indiana Senator and presidential hopeful Albert Beveridge and the U.S. President himself, Republican William McKinley. Resistance and counter-resistance during this war, at the turn of the century, was a battle for the hearts and minds of the American people. This battle was fought in the media, in the public schools, and in churches across the continent.¹⁰

At the time the United States entered the First World War in April 1917, socialists in America were already organizing war resistance movements. In response to this anti-war sentiment, Congress passed the Espionage Act in June 1917, which provided for a \$10,000 fine and up to

⁹ Robert Lerner, *Western Civilizations, Their History and Their Culture* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1993), pp.771-772 & pp.795-797. See also, Edward McNall, et al., *World Civilization*. vol. 2 (New York, 1986), pp. 1068-1071.

¹⁰ see Zinn, *op. cit.*, chapter 12, “The Empire and the People.”

20 years in prison for anyone convicted of disloyalty or opposition to the draft. The Sedition Act of May 1918 was passed the following year as an amendment to the Espionage Act. It extended the 1917 law to forbid the use of "disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language" in reference to U.S. government officials, the national flag, or the U.S. armed forces during the war. It also allowed the Postmaster General to deny mail delivery to anyone protesting government policy during this war.

Eugene Debs, the American Socialist Party leader, received a sentence of 10 years in 1918 for his anti-war activities and served time in prison, from 1918 to 1921. Some nine hundred pacifists were imprisoned during the war, and another 2,000 people were tried under these laws. There were four famous free speech cases brought before the courts in this period.¹¹

Schenk vs. U.S. (1919)

The socialist Charles Schenk was arrested in Philadelphia in 1917 for distributing 15,000 leaflets denouncing the military draft and the war. His defense was based on the 1st Amendment right of free speech and the 13th Amendment guarantee of protection against "involuntary servitude," but after he was arrested, he was tried and found guilty of violating the Espionage Act. He was sentenced to six months in jail.

His lawyers appealed the court's decision at the level of the Supreme Court, where the unanimous decision was written by Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, who judged that Schenck was not protected by the First Amendment: "The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing a panic The question in every case is whether the words used are used in such circumstances and are of such a nature as to create a clear and present danger that they will bring about the substantive evils that Congress has a right to prevent."

Kate Richards O'Hare (July 1917)

The socialist Kate Richards O'Hare was sentenced to five years in Missouri State Penitentiary for delivering a speech in North Dakota in which she was reported to have said: "the women of the United States

¹¹ Eric Foner & John A. Garraty, eds., *The Reader's Companion to American History* (New York, 1991), "Conscientious Objection and "Conscription", pp. 214-217.

were nothing more or less than brood sows, to raise children to get into the army and be made into fertilizer.”

The U.S. vs. Eugene Debs (1918)

Chief Justice Holmes again upheld the government’s case, believing Eugene Debs’ words against the war were “a clear and present danger.” Debs served 3 of his 10-year sentence before receiving a pardon by President Harding in 1921.

Jacob Abrams vs. The U.S. (1921)

Jacob Abrams, a Russian immigrant and a professed anarchist, was arrested in New York City with four others for handing out leaflets in New York City urging workers not to produce arms that could be used to suppress the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Oliver Wendell Holmes and Louise Brandeis dissented from the majority conviction. Holmes wrote the minority view: In an eloquent argument, Holmes defended “the free market of ideas” and opposed the government’s 20-year prison sentence for Abrams.¹²

Following the historical dialectic of resistance and counter-resistance imminent to the context of the Second World War, we discover immersing events which serve to illustrate “the unity of opposites,” where pacifist resistance can be found side by side with pro-fascist opposition to U.S. entry into the war. The New England pacifist and poet Robert Lowell (1917-1977) went to prison for his opposition to this war, at the same time that Walter Tegal, Chief Executive Officer of David Rockefeller’s Exxon Corporation, was severely interrogated by the Senate Special Committee Investigating the National Defense Program.

Fred Korematsu vs. U.S. (1944)

Another example of resistance to U.S. war strategies was an action taken by Fred Korematsu, who was arrested in the San Francisco Bay Area for not reporting to a detention center on the West Coast. As an American citizen of Japanese ancestry he was required by martial law to forfeit his civil rights during the war and to retire to a compound totally enclosed by barbed wire and guarded by armed U.S. soldiers for an indefinite period of time. He contested this violation of his civil rights, but his arrest was

¹² See Zinn, *op. cit.*, chapter 13, “The Socialist Challenge”.

upheld by the Supreme Court in 1944. His conviction was not overturned until 1983, when the U.S. Congress voted that he, like thousands of other Japanese Americans, should receive a financial compensation for this violation of their liberties.

The chronology of U.S. war continues into the second half of the 20th Century, as does the series of related resistance movements which in turn were met with repressive counter-resistance tactics by the state. In light of this dialectical movement, we recognize the so-called “McCarthy Era” (1950-54) as a counter-tactic to defeat electoral candidates of the Democratic Party, which was accused of being “soft on Communism,” of “loosing China” in 1949, and of accepting U.S. defeat at the end of the Korean War, because Democratic President Harry S Truman refused to use the Atomic bomb on China. President Truman had resisted expanding the Korean War into China, and instead, in April 1951, he removed the popular Republican General Douglas McArthur as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Japan. It is in this context that McCarthyism can be understood as a political tactic of counter-resistance to the less militarist Democratic Party which resisted expanding the Korean War into China, and which attempted to contain McCarthyism by launching an anti-organized crime campaign led by Senator Estes Kefauver, a Tennessee Democrat, to distract attention from Republican Party anti-Communist attacks.¹³

In the Vietnam War era, once again war resistance was met with repressive state tactics. Within public schools and universities, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) began organizing as early as 1960. Very quickly resistance within the Armed Forces appeared and expanded rapidly after 1961. The threat of disrupting the U.S. “war machine” rapidly gave rise to repressive counter measures. Police informants and *agents provocateurs* were sent in again and again to disrupt the anti-war movement. The government spared no expense in issuing the best pro-war propaganda money could buy, but the various liberation movements at the time seemed impervious to sophisticated attempts to shape U.S. public opinion in support of this war, which was widely perceived as a criminal conspiracy. The counter resistance took a steep turn to the right when police violence escalated to conspiracies to commit murder on a national level. Both the CIA and the FBI became involved in tactics of domestic

¹³ Michael Schaller, et al., *Present Tense, The United States Since 1945* (Boston, 1996), pp. 88-89.

intervention, far beyond simply gathering information on movement supporters.¹⁴

Between 1965 and 1975, the federal government was faced with more than 100,000 draft resisters. Some 22,500 of these draft offenders were indicted, of whom 8,800 were convicted and 4,000 served time in federal prisons. After 1968, the Supreme Court redefined the criteria for conscientious objector status to include non-religious moral and ethical objections, and the number of CO exemptions grew in relation to the number of inductees, from 8 percent in 1967 to 43 percent in 1971, and 131 percent in 1972. Between 1965 and 1970, 170,000 American men were classified as conscientious objectors.¹⁵

The most common resistance to the draft during the Vietnam War era was evasion. Of the 26.8 million young men who were of draft age between 1964 and 1973, 16 million, (60 percent) did not serve in the military. Of those who avoided service, 15.4 million received legal exemptions or deferments, and something like 570,000 evaded the draft illegally. Among these draft evaders, 360,000 were never caught, another 198,000 had their cases dismissed, 9,000 were convicted, and 4,000 served time in prison. In addition, some 30 to 50,000 young men fled into exile, largely to Canada, Britain, and Sweden.¹⁶

During the 1972 election campaign, President Nixon reduced draft calls and stopped forcing draftees to go to Vietnam. On 27 January 1973, the administration announced it would stop drafting altogether. Compulsory draft registration was suspended by President Gerald Ford in 1975, and resumed only in 1980 by President Jimmy Carter in reaction to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. President Ronald Reagan extended compulsory draft registration to 1982, but more than 500,000 young men resisted registration and only a very few were prosecuted. For all practical purposes the All Volunteer Force (AVF) had made draft registration irrelevant. The AVF of around 2.1 million soldiers (including 775,000 in the Army) remained popular after the Vietnam War. It was believed that in the future the rate of American war casualties could be reduced with the help of advanced technology, but the civil controversy continues that the AVF is drawing disproportionately from lower socioeconomic groups, particularly people of color and immigrants. The rising cost of financing the AVF was also a factor in the 21st-century push by the neo-liberal

¹⁴ For a description of the planned police assassinations in this period, see Zinn, *op. cit.*, chapters 18 & 19.

¹⁵ Foner ed., *op. cit.*, p.218.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

administration of George W. Bush to privatize large sections of the American military.

From the start of these “democratic reforms,” which were introduced to stabilize the American military establishment, the danger of a police state was so broadly acknowledged that members of the U. S. Congress found themselves obliged to enact the famous Freedom of Information Act with the amendment in 1974, permitting any citizen to obtain records of all activities of police spying into their private lives. Resistance to U.S. imperialism had taken on a diversity of forms, from massive desertions from the military, and Draft resisters leaving the country in large numbers, to ideological struggles within major cultural institutions, such as media broadcasting, public education, and religious groups. Beginning in the 1960s, virtually every American citizen became implicated at some level with the anti-war dialectic. Involvement was unavoidable, and African American intellectuals found themselves at the vanguard of this resistance.

The *Black Panther Party for Self-Defense* was founded in northern California 1966 by Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton. It represented a cultural revolution in African American relations in the United States. During the anti-war movement it formally recognized Racism as a Counter-Revolutionary Strategy to Secure a “Permanent War Economy” in the United States since World War II. The famous “Ten Point Program” issued by the Black Panther Party in April 1967 reflected their determined resistance in the class warfare in which most African Americans were implicated. This defiant challenge to capitalist classes in America was perceived as a real threat to the very matrix of capitalist growth in the United States:

- We want power to determine the destiny of our black and oppressed communities.
- We want full employment for our people.
- We want an end to the robbery by the capitalists of our Black Community.
- We want decent housing, fit for the shelter of human beings.
- We want decent education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society.
- We want completely free health care for all black and oppressed people.
- We want an immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people, other people of color --all oppressed people inside the United States.
- We want an immediate end to all wars of aggression.
- We want freedom for all black and oppressed people now held in U. S. Federal, state, county, city and military prisons and jails. We want trials by a jury of peers for all persons charged with so-called crimes under the laws of this country.

- We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice, peace and people's community control of modern technology.

This political program, in conjunction with practical social service programs such as the Panthers' Free Breakfast for Children Program, constituted a positive socialist strategy which attracted great resistance by pro-capitalist forces, including infiltration, harassment, sabotage, and assassinations. In our discussion at the April 2008 conference on the Nanterre campus we attempted to place the Panthers' initial struggle against racism in its historical context and outline the evolution of this movement from 1966 until today.¹⁷

All would-be strategists learned important lessons following the U.S. military defeat in Vietnam. One lesson that was learned by U.S. military strategists was that *defeatism* at home must be brought under tight controlled, if not entirely eliminated. In the context of mass resistance to U.S. imperialist aggression, pro-war collaboration on the part of the U.S. media became an essential element in the new logistics designed to enable imperialist warfare. War Resistance within the United States during the Vietnam War had already given birth to a new genre of counter-resistance tactics: geopolitical wars would be fought increasingly by proxy armies.

Beginning in 1980, the longest war of the 20th Century had begun. It was fought between Iran and Iraq (1980-1988), both of whom were the “beneficiaries” of American “largess,” the entirely cynical strategy of weakening both sides of this conflict in order to create a power vacuum in the oil-rich region of the Persian Gulf which United States corporations could easily fill, with no U.S. casualties. This war which lasted nearly nine years resulted in a huge casualty rate, with the number of war dead in Iran and Iraq rising to almost 2,000,000.¹⁸

At this same moment in history, U.S. wars in Latin America were also fought by proxy. The covert wars against the people of socialist Nicaragua (1980-1988) fought by U.S. financed “Contras” and the American supported death squads in El Salvador (reported to have killed some 35,000 people between 1980, when Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated, and 1983) were both American wars fought by proxy. Once again a resistance movement emerged in the United States, and against it a counter resistance was orchestrated by U.S. government agencies. War-resistance tactics in the 1980s mobilized Hispanics of the American

¹⁷ Alphonso Pinkney, “Contemporary Black Nationalism”, in *Black Life and Culture in the United States* (New York, 1971), ed. by Rhoda L. Goldstein, pp. 243-262.]

¹⁸ Schaller, *op. cit.*, pp. 501-502.

Southwest as never before, in such anti-imperialist organizations as the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (C.I.S.P.E.S.).

Pro-imperialist ideological extremism in the 1980s within the ranks of the Reagan-Bush Administrations led to an enthusiastic extension of the *Nixon Doctrine* by turning U.S. military interventions increasingly toward air warfare, proxy armies, and more capital-intensive, high-tech weapons systems, which smaller, specialized units could operate. But despite the U.S. government's persistent imperialist innovations, grass-roots resistance continued and succeeded in preventing a full-scale U.S. invasion of Nicaragua or El Salvador. Nevertheless, this resistance came at a price, for counter resistance took the form of financial impoverishment, and more than ever before economic warfare, which included the cutting of social services, was conducted against the general population of America, reducing all forms of resistance, including simply self-defense, and giving rise to an increasingly apolitical culture of consumerism and nameless insecurities throughout the 1980s and 90s.

The U.S. military invasion of Granada in 1983, and the killing of the Marxist Prime Minister, Maurice Rupert Bishop were given very little attention in the U.S. media. Likewise, in 1989, U.S. media coverage of the U.S. military invasion of Panama was carefully censored. These so-called "wars" (which were actually more like laboratories for military experimentations involving a highly asymmetrical balance of forces) incurred popular wrath inside the countries affected, but with the help of "sanitized" media coverage within the United States, counter resistance had taken the offensive, leaving the American public ignorant of events and generally confused and apathetic.

However, it was the Gulf War of 1991 that prompted President George Bush (père) to publicly declare: "By God, we've kicked the Vietnam Syndrome once and for all!" Again, with indispensable help from the U.S. media, this imperialist aggression of the early 1990s was presented to the American public in virtual, video-game-style images. With the use of sophisticated techniques of psychological warfare, which dehumanized "the Arab enemy," an atmosphere was created in which public dissent became almost impossible. At the same time, the military halted all Conscientious Objector discharges in the military, forcing many U.S. soldiers to face court-martial.

Another counter-resistance tactics deployed by the state was the attempt to shorten imperialist wars. After 1996, with the introduction of the U.S. military "rapid dominance" doctrine (also known as "Shock-and-Awe"), U.S. imperialist leaders sought to end military confrontations quickly (usually at a considerable cost which they accepted as "collateral