

Conclusion

The Real Axis of Evil

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Long before North Korea announced, in October 2002, that it possessed nuclear weapons, Bush's infamous "axis of evil" speech was a clear sign that his administration had made North Korea a target.¹ In early 2002, the U.S. not only labeled North Korea part of an "axis of evil," it also threatened to use nuclear weapons against it.² In the first year and a half of the Bush presidency, there were no serious talks between the U.S. and North Korea. Moreover, under pressure from right-wing congressmen, the Bush administration reevaluated the 1994 U.S. agreement with North Korea, known as "The Agreed Framework."³ Although most Americans remain completely unaware of it, in 1994 the U.S. came very close to bombing North Korea unilaterally. "The Agreed Framework" narrowly averted a new Korean War that, in the estimation of the U.S. military commander in Korea, would have killed more than the three million people who lost their lives from 1950–1953.⁴

Alongside its looming war against Iraq and hostile actions against North Korea, Bush and Co. are today waging wars in Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Colombia; they arm Israel and permit it to overrun and destroy Palestinian towns and cities; they are encouraging the revival of German and Japanese militarism; they are attempting to overthrow the Chavez government in Venezuela; they have withdrawn from the International Criminal Court, scrapped the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and the Kyoto protocols, refused to sign a new international protocol to the 1972 biological warfare treaty, and have dramatically increased military spending. Most ominously, Bush adopted a new "first-strike" strategic doctrine, replacing decades of U.S. policies based on "deterrence" and "containment."

When I say Bush and Co., I do not refer only to one man and his administration; it is the *system* that is the problem. No matter who sits in the White House, whether George Bush or Bill Clinton or someone else, militarism has long been and will surely remain at the center of U.S. foreign policy and economic development. The U.S. Congress has been little better than Bush: among other things, it rejected the nuclear test ban treaty signed by 164 nations and has fully endorsed Bush's foreign policy on every issue. With Congressional funding, the U.S. now has over 250,000 troops in 141 countries—and it is seeking new bases and attempting to install more troops in places like

Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. In Northeast Asia, 100,000 U.S. troops are stationed indefinitely.

In a phrase, military madness defines the mentality of leading U.S. decision-makers. It would therefore be irresponsible to regard recent military threats emanating from the White House as empty gestures. The world desperately needs a viable peace movement capable of mobilizing millions of people across the globe in order to stop U.S. military madness before it gives rise to perpetual new wars. In the following remarks, I hope to clarify the historical character of this disease and recommend a possible cure.

The Historical Pattern of Violence

Before they became organized as nation-states, white European settlers in America committed genocide to steal the land of indigenous peoples. Beginning in the sixteenth century, peripheral areas were rapidly assimilated into a capitalist world system based in Europe. Whether in what is now Mexico, Peru, or the U.S., the pattern was generally the same: besides massacring tens of millions of Native Americans, European colonialists enslaved tens of millions of Africans to build up their new empires. Estimates of the number of Africans killed in the slave trade range from 15 to 50 million human beings, with tens of millions more enslaved and harshly exploited. From its earliest days, the U.S. practiced biological warfare. Lord Jeffrey Amherst, after whom towns in Massachusetts, New York, and New Hampshire were named, was celebrated because he devised a scheme to rid the land of indigenous people without risking white lives. He gave Native Americans blankets carrying the smallpox virus, thereby wiping out entire villages under the guise of providing assistance. In the century after the American Revolution, nearly all native peoples were systematically butchered and the few survivors compelled to live on reservations. Have people in the U.S. apologized for and renounced such violence? Unfortunately, the answer is no. Indeed, towns are still named for Amherst, and one of the fanciest restaurants near prestigious Amherst College is today called the "Lord Jeff."

In 1848, the U.S. annexed almost half of Mexico with the aim of expanding "Anglo-Saxon democracy" and "Manifest Destiny." Even though dozens of U.S. soldiers were executed under orders of General Zachary Taylor for refusing to fight against Mexico, U.S. expansionism accelerated. At the end of the nineteenth century, as manufacturers looked for international markets, the U.S. (led by men experienced in the Indian wars) conquered the Philippines. Six hundred thousand Filipinos perished from the war and disease on the island of Luzon alone. William McKinley explained that "I heartily approve of the employment of the sternest measures necessary." The director of all Presbyterian missions hailed the slaughter of Filipinos as "a great step in the civilization of the world."⁵ For Theodore Roosevelt, the murders in the Philippines were "for civilization over the black chaos of savagery and barbarism." In 1900, Sen-

ator Albert Beveridge of Indiana summarized the colonialist mentality: "We are the ruling race of the world. . . . We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee, under God, of the civilization of the world." One cannot help but wonder precisely what idea of "civilization" he had in mind.

Although Mark Twain and the Anti-Imperialist League stood in opposition to U.S. policy, imperial ambitions were far too strong. Between 1898 and 1934, U.S. Marines invaded Honduras seven times, Cuba four times, Nicaragua five, the Dominican Republic four, Haiti and Panama twice each, Guatemala once, Mexico three times, and Colombia four times. In 1915, over 50,000 Haitians were killed when U.S. troops mercilessly put down a peasant rebellion.⁶ Marines were sent to China, Russia, and North Africa—in short, wherever the masters of U.S. imperialism needed them.

With the Great Depression of 1929, militarism became more than an instrument of colonial conquest: it emerged as the primary solution to stagnation in the world economy. Since 1948, the U.S. has spent more than \$15 trillion on the military—more than the cumulative monetary value of all human-made wealth in the U.S.—more than the value of all airports, factories, highways, bridges, buildings, machinery, water and sewage systems, power plants, schools, hospitals, shopping centers, hotels, houses, and automobiles. If we add the current Pentagon budget (over \$346 billion in fiscal 2002) to foreign military aid, veterans' pensions, the military portion of NASA, the nuclear weapons budget of the Energy Department, and the interest payments on debt from past military spending, the U.S. spends \$670 billion every year on the military—more than a million dollars a minute.⁷ The U.S. military budget is larger than those of the world's next 15 biggest spenders combined, accounting for 36 percent of global military expenditures.

Although the main problem is obviously the U.S., nearly two-thirds of global military spending today occurs outside the U.S. Japanese and German militarism are being revived, while in South Korea the military budget has increased by 12.7 percent for 2003 to more than \$14 billion.

American Militarism and Asia

Bush's "axis of evil" is entirely in Asia. This is no accident. Lest we forget history, it is in Asia where in the last half century the U.S. slaughtered over five million people in regional wars so distant from the U.S. (and Russian) mainlands that historians refer to this period as the "Cold" War. In just three years, somewhere between three and five million people were killed in Korea, the vast majority of them innocent civilians. Although thousands of civilian refugees were massacred and the U.S. employed biological weapons,⁸ it still will not admit to nor apologize for these actions. Instead it moved the killing fields to Indochina, where it used more firepower than had been used in all previous wars in history combined, killing at least two million people and leaving millions more wounded or made refugees. Chemical warfare, euphemistically

called Agent Orange, was systematic and deadly: over 20 million gallons of Agent Orange were sprayed on Vietnam. For every man, woman, and child in South Vietnam, the U.S. dropped more than 1000 pounds of bombs (the equivalent of 700 Hiroshima bombs), sprayed a gallon of Agent Orange, and used 40 pounds of napalm and half a ton of CS gas on people whose only wrongdoing was to struggle for national independence.⁹ The kill ratio in these two Asian wars was about 1000 times that of wars in Central America and perhaps just as high for the more than 200 other U.S. military interventions during the "Cold War."

East Asia's importance as a market for military goods has been increasing dramatically. After the end of the Cold War, when demand for such products leveled off in North America, Western Europe, and the former Soviet Union, arms suppliers looked to other markets. U.S. arms exports rose from \$8 billion in 1989 to \$40 billion in 1991, while British arms exports rose nearly 1000 percent from 1975 to 1995 (when they reached \$4.7 billion). In 2001, global military spending (conservatively estimated) rose two percent to \$839 billion, 2.6 percent of world GNP or about \$137 for every man, woman, and child on the planet. According to the International Institute for Strategic Studies: "Between 1990 and 1997, East Asia's share of global defence imports by value almost tripled, from 11.4 percent to 31.7 percent. In 1988, only 10 percent of U.S. arms exports went to the region. By 1997, this had increased to 25 percent."¹⁰ Within East Asia, South Korea's share of military spending in 1997 (\$14.8 billion) was nearly as large as the combined total spending of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand.¹¹ In the wake of the Asian financial crisis, military buildups were delayed, but Malaysia's recent purchase of three French submarines for \$972 million, South Korea's decision to acquire 40 F-15s for \$4.23 billion and its rapidly increasing military budget are indications of military spending taking off in the region. According to Kim Kook Hun, a major general and director of the South Korean Defense Ministry's arms control bureau, 7 of 17 countries in the world with nuclear weapons or weapons programs were in the Asia/Pacific region, as were 16 of 28 with missile programs, 10 of 16 with chemical weapons, and 8 of 13 with biological weapons.¹²

Even more alarming is the revival of Japanese militarism. Japan's annual military spending is now second only to that of the U.S., amounting to some five trillion yen (about \$40 billion), and the international deployment movement of its military (banned since 1945) has resumed. In April 2002, Ichiro Ozawa, leader of Japan's second largest opposition party, stated that Japan could easily make nuclear weapons and eventually become stronger than China. Shinzo Abe, deputy chief cabinet secretary, publicly explained that Japan could legally possess "small" nuclear weapons, while Yasuo Fukuda, chief secretary of the Japanese cabinet, said that Tokyo could review its ban on nuclear weapons. Rather than reaping a peace dividend with the end of the Cold

War, East Asia is poised for what could become a regional nuclear arms race and massive buildup of conventional military forces.

The need for global peace movements is strongly indicated by the above dynamics. Without massive and militant peace movements, political elites cannot be kept from using military spending in order to prevent global stagnation, aggrandize national power, and enrich large defense contractors. One countertrend can be found in the Filipino example of expelling the U.S. from its huge base at Subic Bay, an important trendsetter for anti-militarism movements. But as we watch U.S. troops conducting military operations in the Philippines today, we must reflect upon the urgent need to cure the disease of military madness beyond temporarily addressing the symptoms. To be strategically effective, popular movements will have to inject a longterm vision into moments of crisis. Seemingly necessary for the dynamism of the existing world system, militarism is a scourge that squanders humanity's vast resources and threatens to destroy hard-won popular gains and victories. The impetus for militarism resides in the capitalist world economic system, and it is there that peace movements must focus if a cure for the disease is to be found.

The Imperial Crusade

The key recognition here is that the real axis of evil is composed of the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. Like their predecessors in the colonial world, these global institutions masquerade as bringing people more freedom and rights. "Free" trade, IMF "bailouts" and World Bank "assistance," however, too often mean more poverty for people at the fringes of the world system—not more freedom. Historically there is an inverse relationship between the expansion of prosperity and democracy in the core of the world system and the growth of poverty and dictatorship in the Third World, a dialectic of enslavement meaning that greater "progress" in Europe and the U.S. spells increasing misery in the periphery.

Conventional wisdom holds that increasing core democracy should mean more enlightened policies towards the Third World and improvement in the conditions of life for all human beings. One exponent of such conventional wisdom is Francis Fukuyama, who argues that we have reached the "end of history"—that contemporary European/American political institutions are the desired endpoint of human development. Fukuyama believes that the battle of Jena in 1806 (when Napoleon defeated the Prussian monarchy) marks the consolidation of the liberal-democratic state, and that "the principles and privileges of citizenship in a democratic state only have to be extended." For Fukuyama, "There is nothing left to be invented" in terms of humanity's social progress.¹³

For Fukuyama, the spatial extension of the principles of the French Revolution means that the rest of the world will likewise experience human progress.

Evidence abounds, however, that the extension of those principles has resulted in just the opposite—increasing dependency and poverty for the Third World. The American and French revolutions helped propel the nascent world system centered in Europe into a framework of international domination, concentrating military power in nation-states and accumulating the world's wealth in the hands of giant corporations and banks. The worldwide penetration of the economic and political system produced by the American and French revolutions has, to be sure, resulted in rapid economic development and some of the most important forms of political liberty that our species has enjoyed. For a majority of its people, the U.S. is arguably the freest society in the world. The dialectical irony of history means that it is simultaneously a white European settler colony founded on genocide and slavery as well as on freedom and democracy. But one must ask: what are the costs of living in such a society? Slavery in the Third World? Ecological devastation? Military madness?

The dynamic of increasing political democracy in the North coinciding with intensified exploitation in the South has a long history. French colonialists in Vietnam provided a particularly graphic example when they placed a copy of the same statue of liberty that France gave to the U.S. atop the pagoda of Le Loi in Hanoi. Le Loi was the national leader who in 1418 had helped defeat the Mongols when they invaded Vietnam. Today he is still regarded as a national hero, a man whose mythology includes Hoan Kiem (Returned Sword) Lake, where the golden turtle that gave him the magical sword he used to drive the Mongols out subsequently reappeared to reclaim the sword—a story not unlike that of King Arthur in British folklore. The placing of a statue of liberty on Le Loi's pagoda certainly was an affront to the Vietnamese, one symbolizing how the spatial extension of the principles of the French Revolution can be brutally offensive to the Third World.

French colonialism was indeed brutal and deadly: Indochinese recall that dead human beings fertilize each tree in the country's vast rubber plantations. During the great war against fascism, French exploitation of Vietnam was intensified. In a famine from 1944 to 1945, at least a million and a half and possibly two million Vietnamese starved to death in the north (where the population was less than 14 million), at the very time rice exports to France were fueling its liquor industry—in blatant disregard for human life in the midst of the war against “fascism.” In American popular culture, President John Kennedy is often associated with the word “Camelot” and remembered for his beautiful wife. Tragically, it was he—one of the most “liberal” U.S. presidents in history—who ordered massive use of Agent Orange in Vietnam. Similarly, the strongest French imperial expansionists were staunch anti-clerical “progressives” who regarded themselves as ideological heirs of the French Revolution. They were “enlightened” liberals, much the way John Kennedy and members of his administration were “enlightened” liberals who believed they

were carrying on the tradition of the U.S. revolutionary heritage and Manifest Destiny.

As minister of education, Jules Ferry defied the Catholic Church in France by making education universal, secular, and obligatory, but he was later the first French prime minister to make intensification of colonialism his overriding platform. Ferry believed that it was France's duty to civilize inferior people, and on May 15, 1883, a full-scale expedition was launched to impose a protectorate on Vietnam.¹⁴ Conservatives in France objected to this colonial expansion. As Vietnam disappeared, subsumed under the names of Tonkin, Annam, and Cochin China, even the identity of the Vietnamese people was attacked, as the French referred to them as Annamites. Here we can see the spatial expansion of the liberal values of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution—values that became the basis for France's “civilizing mission” (“*mission civilisatrice*”) just as the American Revolution was later turned into “Manifest Destiny.” It was the same French troops, bringing with them “civilization,” who in 1885 burned the imperial library at Hue, which contained ancient scrolls and manuscripts and was a repository for thousands of years of wisdom.

In 1831 Alexis de Tocqueville, a disciple of the French Revolution and author of *Democracy in America*, watched in Memphis, Tennessee, the “triumphant march of civilization across the desert,” as he put it. As he observed 3,000 or 4,000 soldiers drive before them “the wandering races of the aborigines,” that is, those Native Americans who were lucky enough to survive “Jacksonian democracy” (named after a man who ordered his men to exterminate “bloodthirsty barbarians and cannibals”), Tocqueville was duly impressed that Americans could deprive Indians of their liberty and exterminate them, as he put it, “with singular felicity, tranquility, legally, philanthropically, without shedding blood,” and most importantly “without violating a single great principle of morality in the eyes of the world”—the European world, one should say. “It was impossible,” Tocqueville said, “to kill people with more respect for the laws of humanity.”¹⁵ Fukuyama's spatial extension of the liberal principles of the French and American revolutions could not be more eloquently enunciated.

In the name of civilization and liberal democracy, the British destroyed the communal ownership of village land in India, structures that had sustained local culture for centuries, a communal tradition surviving invasions by Persians, Greeks, Scythians, Afghans, Tartars, and Mongols but which could not, as Fukuyama would insist, resist the perfection of the liberal principles of the British state. Under British enlightenment, large estates developed and peasants were turned into sharecroppers. In 1867 the first fruits of British liberalism appeared: in the Orissa district of India alone, more than one million people died in a famine. Such famines were hardly indigenous to India, with its “backward” traditions (according to European values), but were brought by

the “enlightened” liberalism of European democracy, through the spatial extension of the principles of “democratic” capitalism.

Under the direct influence of its great revolution, France proclaimed a crusade against Algerian slavery and anarchy and, in the name of instituting orderly and civilized conditions, was able to break up Arab communal fields of villages, including lands untouched by the “barbarous” and “unenlightened” Ottoman rulers. As long as Islamic culture had prevailed, hereditary clan and family lands were inalienable, making it impossible for the land to be sold. But after fifty years of enlightened French rule, the large estates had again appeared and famine made its ugly appearance in Algeria.

Civilization or Barbarism?

I have indicated how European capitalist “civilization”—particularly its most “enlightened” forms—systematically slaughtered native peoples and created a centralized world system that demands militarism as a key organizing principle. If this were simply history, we could all breathe a sigh of relief. But these tendencies are today stronger than ever. According to the United Nations, in the 1990s more than 100 million children under the age of five died of unnecessary causes: diarrhea, whooping cough, tetanus, pneumonia, and measles—diseases easily preventable through cheap vaccines or simply clean water. UNICEF estimates that up to 30,000 children under the age of five die of easily preventable diseases *every day* in the Third World.¹⁶ Kofi Annan declared in 2001 that as many as 24,000 people starve to death every day.¹⁷ Altogether one billion people are chronically malnourished while austerity measures imposed by the IMF have resulted in a drop in real wages in the Third World and declining gross national products in many countries. While 70 percent of the world’s wealth is in the hands of 20 percent of its population, one in ten human beings suffers starvation and malnutrition.

Despite—or more accurately, because of—the spatial extension of liberal values in the period after World War II, there were four times as many deaths from wars in the forty years *after* World War II than in the forty years before it. While the world spends something like a trillion dollars a year on its militaries, one adult in three cannot read and write, one person in four is hungry, the AIDS epidemic accelerates, and we are destroying the planet’s ecological capacity to sustain life. The absurdity and tragedy of such a world is made even more absurd and tragic by the profound ignorance and insensitivity of the wealthiest planetary citizens regarding the terrible plight of human beings in the periphery.

In such a world, of course, there can be no lasting peace. As long as the wretched of the earth, those at the margins of the world system, are dehumanized, branded as terrorists, and kept out of decision-making, they have no alternative but to carry out insurrection and wage war in order to find justice. In order to remedy this irrational system, a crucial task is to redefine what civi-

lization means. We know what it is not for the billion or more “wretched of the earth” for whom increasing planetary centralization and dependence upon transnational corporations, militarized nation-states, and the international axis of evil mean living hell. With the passing of time it becomes more obvious that this same “civilization” squanders humanity’s wealth, destroys traditional cultures wholesale, and plunders the planet’s natural resources.

The structural violence of an economic system based upon short-term profitability is a crisis that all peace and justice movements will have to address. Even if some of the above irrationalities of the present system are reduced, the structural contradictions of the system will inevitably be displaced to other arenas. As long as vast social wealth remains dominated by the “enlightened” and “rational” principles of efficiency and profitability, there will be militarism, brutal degradation of human lives along with unbridled destruction of the natural ecosystem; there will be mammoth socially wasteful projects, for example tunnels in the Alps and Pyrenees, bridges connecting Denmark and Sweden or Prince Edward Island and the Canadian mainland, redundant World Cup stadiums—rather than constructive use of humanity’s enormous social wealth. A few hundred multinational corporations today control this social wealth through the most undemocratic of means and for ends benefiting only a small minority. According to the logic of “enlightened” neoliberal economics, these corporations must either grow or die. Only a fundamental restructuring of the world system can lead us toward an ecologically viable life-world, one in which we decentralize and bring under self-management the vast social wealth of humanity.

If we allow ourselves to indulge in a brief moment of utopian speculation—today more difficult than ever in the aftermath of the carnage of September 11—few people would disagree with the idea of totally abolishing weapons of mass destruction—not just nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons but also so-called conventional ones like fighter jets, bombers, landmines, artillery, and economic sanctions. Acting strategically, global peace movements will have to be directed toward the abolition (not just the reform) of military power around the globe. In a world where even peaceful means of transportation are turned into weapons of mass destruction, nearly everyone would consider such a proposition foolish, but with major weapons systems in the hands of governments, how else can the powerless fight back? Only through universalization of the non-military forms of conflict resolution will humanity’s future fate improve beyond the abysmal reality it currently faces. Of course the destruction of world military power would undoubtedly send the global economic system into a calamitous depression—which is all the more reason for people to discuss this issue as part of the need to develop a completely different world system.

Popular strength resides in forging a new international civil society that can delegitimize militarized nation-states and socialize predatory transnational

corporations. The transformation of Eurocentric capitalist civilization requires nothing less than an international movement, with lessons from past liberation movements central to this project. A few years ago, Vo Nguyen Giap, military commander of Vietnamese forces against the French and Americans, summarized the reasons why the Vietnamese were able to defeat the U.S. Among those, the anti-war movement that developed inside the U.S. was prominent. For years Vietnamese leaders cultivated this movement until it grew into a force with which they were able to coordinate their battlefield tactics.¹⁸

Building an International Peace Movement

While the need for constraining U.S. military power has never been more urgent, many peace and anti-war movements around the world support the war against "terrorism." The German Greens, founded upon the principle of pacifism, served a key role in legitimating the NATO war against Yugoslavia and the U.S. war in Afghanistan, to say nothing of endorsing the first foreign deployment of German combat troops since Hitler. Historical parallels can be found in the German Social Democrats' support of the Kaiser in World War I and in the French Communist Party's support for the war in Algeria. In the U.S. many progressives naïvely accept the Bush administration's comparison of bin Laden with Hitler, a distorted view that makes virtually any military offensive seem reasonable. Incredibly, the main U.S. opposition to Bush's plans for war against Iraq comes from the Joint Chiefs of Staff—the top military elites in the Pentagon who have waged "a determined behind-the-scenes campaign" to question "Iraq hysteria" among senior Bush administration officials.¹⁹

The Bush administration now possesses a unique window of opportunity to have its way with the world. Not a single government besides Iraq registered any opposition to the war in Afghanistan. While many nations do oppose escalation of the war to Iraq, it is likely they will fall in line once the U.S. carries out its unilateral military actions. For eleven years the U.S. and Britain have steadily bombed Iraq, and if their new levels of military aggression bring a quick and easy victory, it follows that Bush and Co. would become so filled with triumphal euphoria that taking on such countries as North Korea might be a thinkable next step. Russia and China might acquiesce to U.S. militarism, particularly since they would probably be left untouched while Japan and South Korea (China's main regional competitors) would be military targets. Throughout the past century war has been the primary solution to stagnation in the world economy. With the high-tech sector appearing to have run its course, Japan and Germany in the economic doldrums, the stock market suffering its biggest losses in decades, and industries everywhere contracting, what mechanism besides war is there for renewed growth?

The U.S. could have responded to September 11 in a manner quite different than it has. Why not withdraw troops from Saudi Arabia and compel justice for Palestinians? Neither of these measures would create any great hardship for

the U.S. Could it be that the U.S. economy, dependent more than ever on war for its health, demands military action? I am reminded of the Sean Connery movie, *The Rock*: Taking over Alcatraz Island, a group of army officers aims weapons of mass destruction at San Francisco, demanding \$100 million for destitute families of servicemen who sacrificed their lives in various secret wars. Although millions of people might be killed, the authorities never even discuss paying the \$100 million (a relatively paltry sum). At the present historical juncture, it similarly appears that the U.S. government has never condescended to take into account the grievances of others—despite the horrific dangers a new war poses for people around the world.

It is no accident that peace movements in 2002 are strongest in Korea and other regions of Asia. From their recent experiences, the Korean people understand the urgent need for peace and the strategic importance of fighting militarism. A non-Islamic country with a citizenry deeply sensitive to issues of war and peace, Korea has a voice that speaks to governments and activists everywhere.

Instead of relying on "liberal" governments to constrain U.S. militarism, people can use extraparliamentary tactics to isolate the U.S.—just as earlier international groups and movements turned the apartheid regime in South Africa into an international pariah. Wherever in the world Bush or senior U.S. officials travel, protests should be as militant and massive as possible. Grass-roots rebellions in Argentina, Mexico, and Nigeria reflect the high level of consciousness people in many countries have developed and are ready to act upon.²⁰ In this context, far-reaching protests can help unleash a global peace offensive that will compel governments to stop war by raising their costs and disrupting domestic tranquility.

In the U.S., where regime change is most desperately needed to prevent use of weapons of mass destruction and fight militarism, an extraparliamentary opposition was galvanized by the Seattle anti-WTO protests. Although reactionary forces now command overwhelming majority allegiance, vital countertrends have appeared, as seen in the 200,000 or more people who marched in Washington at the end of October along with the great popularity enjoyed by such critics as Michael Moore and Noam Chomsky. Gradually breaking with the ideological and organizational power of reaction will necessarily proceed from small steps to giant leaps.

Since 1968 the international character of popular movements has been recognized as a primary factor in their emergence and impact. Two more examples of the spread of movements across borders, involving a process of mutual amplification and synergy, can be found in the disarmament movement of the early 1980s in the U.S. and Europe and in the wave of democracy movements in Asia in the mid and late 1980s.²¹

From a handful of nuclear disarmament protesters in the 1970s, an enormous peace movement changed world history in the 1980s, helping end the Cold War and alter the global balance of power. Movements grew from years of

grassroots initiatives in a variety of arenas,²² spreading rapidly and bringing hundreds of thousands of people into the streets of New York, Paris, London, Rome, Brussels, and Bonn. The situation in northeast Asia today is very similar to that of Europe in the early 1980s, when the U.S. and the USSR stationed intermediate range Pershing and SS-20 nuclear missiles in the region. Such new missile deployment meant that the U.S. and USSR could have fought a "limited" nuclear war in Europe without either country being directly engaged in military hostilities. The emergence of the Green Party in Germany and the presence of huge protest movements helped Gorbachev convince Russian generals that Western Europe would not attack them, allowing the USSR to change peacefully, release its East European buffer states, and take the initiative to end the arms race.

Today in northeast Asia, a regional war could be waged without directly involving the U.S. In a worst-case scenario, U.S. policymakers could opt to initiate a "limited" war in which Koreans would fight other Koreans. Minimal U.S. casualties would make such a war more palatable to the American public.²³ So long as the U.S. exercises operational command over the South Korean armed forces, the outbreak of war is more likely, especially given Bush's "first-strike" policy. (There are very few other nations that permit their military to be governed by a foreign power.) Demanding Korean control of its own military forces could unite nearly all Koreans and would encourage North Korean leaders to reengage the South in dialogue while sending a message to the U.S. that war in Korea is totally unacceptable.

Whatever short-term demands peace activists make, popular movements in Korea will inevitably have a significant international role to play. Koreans have long inspired other countries in Asia. In building the Korean movement for democracy in the 1980s, leaders sought to find ways to unite people in the struggle—and the answer was to call for direct presidential elections. In June 1987, after hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets for 19 consecutive days, that demand was realized. Movements for democracy soon blossomed in many Asian countries: Burma in 1988, China in 1989, Tibet, Taiwan, and Nepal in 1990, and Thailand in 1992. These struggles were related to each other and today are all treated as manifestations of "people power," a term coined during the Filipino revolution of 1986, itself inspired by the Kwangju Uprising in Korea in 1980. If there is something people everywhere can learn from prior waves of social movements, it is that actions mutually amplify each other in different parts of the world.

Forging strategic goals means to insist upon outlawing weapons of mass destruction, above all nuclear weapons, and to secure a pledge of no first-strike by the U.S. As movements grow and mature, the role of conscious elements within them must be to keep *longterm* goals at the forefront: a nuclear-free world; a world free of weapons of mass destruction; a world where peace and justice can freely exist; demilitarization of the U.S. and other economies; the

use of vast social wealth for human needs rather than for profits of giant transnational corporations; development of autonomous regions where people can freely choose how to use their resources. Together the people of the world can accomplish these goals, but only on a foundation of international solidarity and cooperation.

Notes

1. On November 25, 2001, the Sunday *New York Times* featured a story entitled "After the Taliban, Who? Don't Forget North Korea."
2. In March 2002, a Pentagon review of U.S. nuclear policy recommended that the U.S. threaten to use nuclear weapons against seven countries—including North Korea.
3. North Korea agreed to shut down and eventually dismantle its nuclear weapons program. In return, the U.S., Japan, and South Korea agreed to provide the North with two light-water nuclear reactors for generating electricity. These reactors were never built.
4. See "Engaging North Korea," by Jimmy Carter, *New York Times*, October 27, 2002, wk13.
5. Noam Chomsky, "The United States and Indochina: Far From an Aberration," in Douglas Allen and Ngo Vinh Long (editors), *Coming to Terms: Indochina, the United States and the War* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991), 165.
6. See the illustrated book by Joel Andreas, *Addicted to War: Why the U.S. Can't Kick Militarism* (Oakland, CA: AK Press, 2002).
7. *Ibid.*, 39.
8. International Scientific Commission on Biological Warfare in Korea and China, *Report, 1952*. Available from Koreatruthcommission@yahoo.com
9. *Vietnam Documents*, edited by George Katsiaficas (New York: ME Sharpe, 1992), 146.
10. Tim Huxley and Susan Willett, *Arming East Asia* (International Institute for Strategic Studies/Oxford University Press, 1999), 23.
11. *Ibid.*, 15.
12. Michael Richardson, "Fears spread that other Asia nations will seek nuclear arms," *International Herald-Tribune*, June 6, 2002, 5.
13. See his article "The End of History," *Foreign Affairs* 1988, 5.
14. See *Greater France, A History of French Overseas Expansion*, Robert Aldrich (New York: St. Martin's, 1996), 98.
15. See Chomsky, *op. cit.*
16. "UN Says Millions of Children Die Needlessly," by Elizabeth Olson, *New York Times*, March 14, 2002, 13.
17. "'Time to Act' on Hunger, Annan says," *International Herald-Tribune*, June 11, 2002.
18. We all owe Vietnam a debt for helping preserve the principles of liberty and democracy. It was their sacrifice and resistance that preserved the idea of national independence, and it was the resistance to the war inside the U.S. that both helped preserve principles of individual liberty and prevent direct U.S. military intervention in Central America in the 1980s. If the truth about U.S. massacres during the Korean War had been known, how many Vietnamese lives would have been saved?
19. Thomas E. Ricks, "Military trying to head off Iraq strike," *International Herald-Tribune*, May 25–26, 2002, 1.
20. See Amory Starr and Jason Adams, "Anti-globalization: The Global Fight for Local Autonomy," *New Political Science* 25:1 (March 2003).
21. These are examples of what I call the "eros effect." See www.eroseffect.com
22. For a full analysis, see my book *The Subversion of Politics: European Autonomous Social Movements and the Decolonization of Everyday Life*, published in 1997.
23. Here is one pragmatic reason why keeping U.S. troops in Korea may actually serve as a deterrent to war. The U.S. would be less likely to use weapons of mass destruction in Korea if it were to mean many American soldiers would also die in the ensuing conflict. Paik Nak-chung first brought this insight to my attention.