

ANOTHER STUPID WAR

THE
FORECAST
IS HOT!

*"Will all great Neptune's ocean this blood clean from my hand?
No; this my hand will rather the multitudinous seas incarnadine,
making the green one red murder."*

—Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, II.ii—

REVOLUTION
AGAINST
WHITENESS

SURREALIST
WOMEN

Those who defiantly survive police-state violence tend to develop a wracking, dark humor. In 1970, our friend and surrealist co-worker Haifa Zangana* was jailed in Saddam Hussein's horrendous Qasir al-Nihaiya political prison as an enemy of the State. In her grim but poetic memoir, Haifa recalls the taste of blood in her mouth and the sight of blood on her thighs, the hot tears she shed for friends executed by security police, and the cool gorgeous springs of water in her ancestral homeland of Kurdistan that were plugged silent with cement by Hussein's troops. Yet today, she says with a tough, sad chuckle, she finds herself (objectively at least) on the side of the dictatorship that tortured her and against the Western governments who vow to "liberate" Iraq.

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We understand Haifa's wise and bitter smile. At present, the people of Iraq are confronted by the prospect of a Bush-league emperor's ambition to depose their CIA-appointed despot through a U.S. invasion and military occupation, a scheme we are supposed to believe is motivated by moral indignation and high-minded righteous regard for democratic principles. Such malevolent hypocrisy would almost be funny if the implications were not so catastrophic. Since 1968, Hussein's Ba'athist regime—an unrelenting torturocracy—has been showered with support of all kinds, including massive shipments of weapons and incalculable U.S. tax dollars. After Kuwait, the U.S. effectively rehired Hussein to continue butchering anti-State separatists, feminists, and anti-capitalists in order to "stabilize" the region for exploitation by globalized capitalism. U.S. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice proclaims that attacking Iraq now will aid "the march of freedom"; tellingly, Rice is the first such Advisor with a 136,000-ton Chevron Corporation oil tanker named after her.

George Bush and Saddam Hussein are not exactly Tweedledee and Tweedledum, but the similarities between them—ideologically, morally, and as figureheads of State—far outweigh the differences. Indeed, the Executive Branch of the Bush-Cheney regime and the ruling circle of the Ba'ath Party are clearly the most tender and intimate of enemies. We are not surprised to learn that portions of a recent televised speech by the most ignorant President in U.S. history, in which he expressed his "feelings" about "Iraqi culture," were in truth lifted almost verbatim from a 1990 speech by none other than Saddam Hussein, who was then directing his own invasion of Kuwait. And we would not be surprised to learn that Saddam Hussein has in turn plagiarized juicy bits of double-talk from speeches by one or another U.S. President.

Make no mistake: The proposed "regime change" in Baghdad is solely about replacing a fractious death-squad subcontractor with a more passively compliant one. A New World Order "police action" aimed at Iraq would provide U.S. capital with easy access to twenty- two percent of the world's available petroleum, meaning less dependence upon the doddering feudal oil oligarchy of Saudi Arabia. In our era of turbo-globalized and genocidal capitalism, the oil extraction industries are one of the hinges on which international class relations turn. Any bombs that fall on the people of Iraq in the next few months will also be a dire "message" pointed at petroleum workers in such places as the Caspian Sea basin, Angola, Nigeria, Colombia, and Venezuela. It is no accident that the "interim" government in Afghanistan that replaced the Taliban ruling clique is led by a former consultant to the Unocal oil company who is protected round-the-clock from assassination by a contingent of U.S. Green Berets.

Carnage apologists, militarist demagogues, war profiteers, and their fundamentalist Christian cheerleaders charge that those who are unable or unwilling to fathom the hateful logic of their policies are plainly guilty of the terrible crime of being "unrealistic." For our part, as surrealists, we readily affirm that we *despise* the so-called "realism" that is based solely on the clumsy hypocrisy, swaggering boorishness, and ecocidal greed of a few cowardly billionaires along with their political/ military/ journalistic yes-men. Quite simply, a "realism" sustained by nothing more than shamelessly arrogant celebrations of degradation, persecution, and miserabilist obfuscation deserves only con-tempt, scorn, and ridicule.

We say: Neither ruling-class war nor imperial peace! The grubby, counter-revolutionary opportunism of "realistic" realpolitik is no excuse for industrialized mass murder. When the U.S. government's stooges of Capital try to blackmail us with the pseudo-choice of being "either with us or against us," we wholeheartedly *refuse*. In this as in all intercapitalist rivalries, we support neither side. Heeding our imaginations, we pursue an alternative set of terms. We do our best to ignore the flags and sneer at the superstitious calls for some war god's blessings, and focus instead on our solidarity with the working people of Iraq.

With sorrow, but also with anger, Haifa Zangana reminds us that siding with the oppressed "does not mean we are unaware of the complexity of the situation."

Unalterably opposed to yet another sleazy capitalist oil war, we uphold the tried and true values of *class* war: the self- emancipation of the workers of the world from wage-slavery. To quote one of the oldest and soundest watchwords of the workingclass movement: *The real enemy is in "our own" country!* And despite that enemy's penchant for euphemistic pseudonyms ("free enterprise," "globalization," etc.), his true name is Capitalism.

We say:

No to Bush's war-plans and globalization's death industry! *No* to the outlawing of workers' movements! *No* to "austerity programs" and the "structural readjustment" dictates of the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank! *No* to misery and miserabilism in all their forms!

Yes to revolt! *Yes* to freedom now! *Yes* to international workingclass solidarity! *Yes* to life, imagination, the Earth—and their marvelous possibilities!

* Born in Baghdad in 1950, Haifa Zangana was active during the 1970s in the Paris-based Arab Surrealist Movement in Exile, whose journal, *Le Désir libertaire* (Anarchist Desire) was banned in all Arab countries. More recently she has maintained close ties to the Surrealist Movement in the U.S. Her first book, *Through the Vast Halls of Memory*, appeared in 1991 but is now out of print. As writer and collagist she is represented in Penelope Rosemont's *Surrealist Women: An International Anthology* (University of Texas Press, 1998).