

New Solutions



Community, a solution for saving the environment and conserving resources with equity for all.

Peak Oil, Peak Empire

As Peak Oil approaches, tensions are already building in the world. China appears to be a threat to our "national security" since they are consuming more and more energy. Japan speaks of taking more of a leadership role in Asia even if it means rearming. Russia is accused of backing off from the free market economy. India says a pipeline from Iran is necessary for its "national security." Donald Rumsfeld says we will be in Iraq another 12 years.

Wars are supposedly based on issues of freedom and goodness, but in reality they are mostly based on the desire for more land and resources. "Oil wars," when they occur, are different only because occupation of land is not as relevant as actual control of the resources.

Inequity is increasing via the modern form of colonialism we call "globalization." When Peak Oil occurs, wars of national energy liberation are highly likely unless we allocate the remaining fuels based on a concept of fair trade rather than free trade. This requires a fundamental change in American values. Unless the tremendous inequity in fossil fuel usage (which in today's world equates to wealth) is addressed, conflict is inevitable.

Funding America's Prosperous Way of Life

Peak Oil will be a challenge far beyond any that mankind has ever faced. Previous *New Solutions* papers on Peak Technology and Peak Economy have challenged the general societal belief in unlimited growth in markets, "driven" by technology. This paper questions another belief – that we are a highly moral nation offering a beacon of hope for those who aspire to freedom and justice.

When the U.S. was attacked on 9/11, President Bush announced that people hate us because of our freedom. Another possibility is that they hate us for the way we and all other colonial powers have plundered and murdered them for their resources – thereby depriving them of their freedom and wealth. Our disproportionate consumption of oil is just one of the ways that this imperialist bent has been manifested. Our vaunted prosperity, assumed to be deserved because of our superiority, may be nothing but the tribute that conquerors historically exact from those they subjugate.

Our purpose is not to criticize or moralize about the country's past or blame current leaders or institutions. Rather it is

to explain our history and traditions in terms of the way we relate to ourselves, to other people and to the natural world. This is necessary so we can fully understand the implications – both to ourselves and others – of our high-energy way of living, which is protected by our high energy weaponry.

A person with newly diagnosed heart disease learns that the path to health is based on changing pleasurable habits and patterns that have been harmful. Only after

making changes does he or she become aware that the so-called "pleasures" of poor eating habits and bad lifestyles actually obscured the pleasures of good health. This is the situation we find ourselves in today – addicted to the pleasures derived from cheap and abundant resources and blind to the consequences. It is important that people in the U.S. acknowledge the validity of the feelings of hatred and fear towards our county by so many of the people of the world. This awareness may help direct us to change our actions. Like an alcoholic who finally sees the truth, the motivation for family, health and friendship provides a reason to overcome the addiction.

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Peak Empire

President Bush claims we are good and Osama bin Laden says we are evil. Bin Laden argues that his Arab world has been exploited for decades by western powers. A review of modern empires gives some credence to his view.

Recorded history shows a consistent pattern of stronger nations controlling weaker ones. The Roman Empire was content to control an area around the Mediterranean in close proximity to Rome. The more recent Dutch Empire extended to Indonesia, which they controlled from the early 1600s to 1946. The Spanish Empire focused its conquests in South America, beginning with an assault on the Maya and Aztec civilizations, and included the distant Philippines. But it was the British Empire that established control on a worldwide basis.

The extent of England's colonialism was celebrated by the slogan "The Sun Never

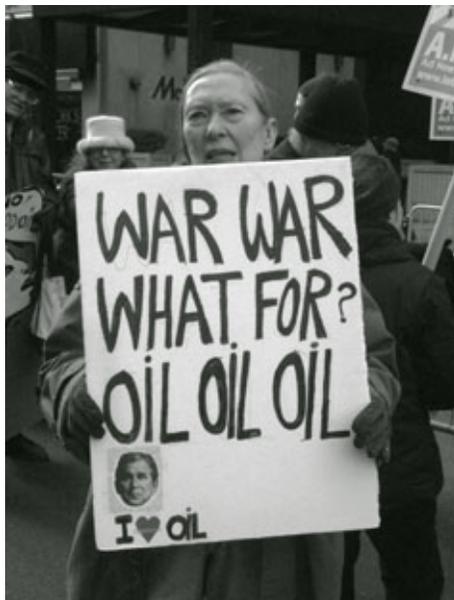


Photo: John Morgan



The British Empire in the Early 20th Century

Sets on the British Empire.” It represented what was possible with a conquering attitude, advanced weaponry and a lack of scruples.

In 1900, Britain had the largest empire in world history, dwarfing preceding empires in size and numbers of people exploited. With a population at that time of 37 million people, Britain controlled and exploited one-fourth of the population of the world (440 million people) and 12 million square miles of the earth’s land surface. Fifteen years later, at the end of World War I, Britain took more territory from the Ottoman Empire, particularly parts of today’s Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) nations,* the facts on which Osama Bin Laden bases his claim.

How can the numbers of people colonized, the extent of the control and the duration of this empire be understood? One way is by considering the countries occupied and the years they were under British control. Figure 1, at right, is a list of British-controlled countries with their independence dates. Most were occupied in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Many British today view their period of Empire with nostalgia and pride. However, for the countries occupied, the period of British rule was extremely painful. This occupation by force was justified as performing a civilizing role, helping “inferior

barbarians and savages” become civilized people.

Britain was the leading nation in terms of colonizing the world, but other European nations were equally voracious if not as effective. Spain and Portugal decimated and

enslaved the whole continent of South America and much of Central America, killing tens of millions of people. Although Britain was far and away the most formidable colonizer, France was a close second, conquering and controlling much of North Africa as well as what was called French Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia). The French Empire in Northern Africa included the countries of Algeria, Morocco, Tripoli, Mauritania, Libya, Niger, Mali, Chad, Central African Republic, Gabon, and the Republic of the Congo. King Leopold of Belgium, writes historian Adam Hochschild in his book *King Leopold’s Ghost*, established a rule of terror that would culminate in the deaths of 8 million indigenous people in the Congo from 1885 to 1909. The Netherlands (current population 16 million) controlled and exploited Indonesia (current population 238 million) from the early 1600s to 1949.

Fig. 1: Former British Colonies and Their Independence Dates

Africa	
Egypt – 1950	Malawi – 1964
Sudan – 1956	Tanzania – 1964
Ghana – 1957	Zambia – 1964
Nigeria – 1960	Gambia – 1965
Sierra Leona – 1961	Botswana – 1966
South Africa – 1961	Swaziland – 1968
Uganda – 1962	Zimbabwe – 1980
Kenya – 1963	Namibia – 1990
Asia	
Australia – 1901	Sri Lanka – 1948
New Zealand – 1907	Bhutan – 1949
Nepal – 1923	Malaysia – 1963
India – 1947	Maldives – 1965
Burma – 1948	parts of China
Middle East	
Cyprus – 1961	Qatar – 1967
Tran Jordan – 1961	Oman – 1967
Palestine – 1961	Aden – 1967
Kuwait – 1961	Yemen – 1967
Bahrain – 1967	
Worldwide	
Canada – 1867	Solomon Isl. – 1978
N. Borneo – 1963	Filbert Isl. – 1984
Guyana – 1966	Nassau – 1984
Fiji – 1970	Pitcairn Isl. – 1984
Tonga – 1970	Brunei – 1984
W. Samoa – 1978	

The Just Rule – Saving Souls and “Free Trade”

It is the nature of aggressive empires to see themselves as benefactors and saviors of the people whom they conquer. When reviewing the British colonization of the Indian subcontinent, Asia, Central America, and the Middle East, an important dimension to consider is the colonialist mentality. How did the British justify their subjugation, killing and exploitation of other peoples?

Even before Darwin wrote about survival of the fittest, the Industrial Revolution was used by Western countries as an argument for their intellectual superiority. But in addition to this, there was a growing idea of moral superiority, including the conceit that if they were not superior, God would not have “given” them the colonies. Thus, Britain saw its destiny in becoming an imperial power as raising the level of civilization in backward nations, a destiny pre-ordained by God. From this spiritual base came the concept of a “just rule.”

This was expressed in writings of the time. For example, Brigadier General John Jacob, in a communication from the early 1800s, asserted: “We hold India, then, by being in reality, as in reputation, a superior race to the Asiatic; and if this

* Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Qatar, Indonesia, Socialist Peoples Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Nigeria, Ecuador and Gabon.

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natural superiority did not exist, we should not, and could not, retain the country for one week. If, then, we are really a morally superior race, governed by higher motives and possessing higher attributes than the Asiatics, the more the natives of India are able to understand us, and the more we improve their capacity for so understanding, the firmer will become our power. Away then with the assumption of equality; and let us accept our true position of a dominant race.”

“Free trade” was the second justification for Britain’s (and other European powers’) control of weaker nations. History is replete with descriptions of Britain’s military expeditions to “keep trade routes open.”

Today, “free trade” is the favored argument, as the belief in racial and cultural superiority would simply not be accepted by most people. And military intervention has been replaced by trade embargoes and other mechanisms to maintain control over weaker nations. The 10-year-long embargo on Iraq is the latest example of such control – and it is definitely “about oil.”

Superior Character or Superior Weaponry?

Britain fought the Battle of Omdurman in 1898 against a Muslim army in Sudan. Using the technology of the machine gun, the British killed 20,000 Muslims in the battle. Forty-eight British soldiers were killed. Winston Churchill reported, “Thus ended the Battle of Omdurman – the most signal triumph ever gained by the arms of science over barbarians.”¹

“One Brit is worth two Frenchies or a Hundred Wogs” is an old expression from British colonial days. It refers to the value Britain placed on the lives of people from different cultures at that time. The quote implies that the life of one Brit, that is – an Englishman, is worth the lives of two Frenchmen (Britain’s historical competitor). And a life of an Englishman is worth 100 “Wogs,” a derisive term for the darker-skinned people of Africa and Asia.

Another expression is “Life is cheap in the Orient,” meaning oriental lives are less valuable – much less valuable – than white peoples lives. These expressions are representative of a deep racial prejudice that sees a separation between the white races (United States, England and Continental Europe) and the “dark races” (African, Oriental, East Indian, Native American, Arab and mixed, e.g. Mexican, Central American and South American).

Japan proposed a clause on racial equality at the 1919 Paris conference after World War I which read, “The equality of nations being a basic principle of the League of Nations, the High Contracting Parties agree to accord, as soon as possible, to all alien nationals of States members of the League equal and just treatment in every respect, making no distinction, either in law or in fact, on account of their race or nationality.” Their proposal was defeated.

The British Foreign Secretary, Lord Balfour, had this to say about the clause: “The notion that all men were created equal was an interesting one, but I do not believe it. You could scarcely say that a man in Central Africa was equal to a European.”

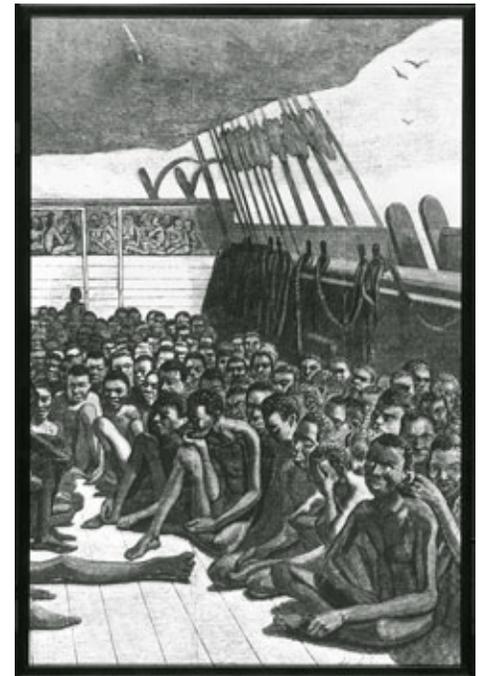
It was not simply superior weaponry that defeated the native peoples in their own land. Rather, it was the willingness to use this weaponry to slaughter very large numbers of people. Some scholars have noted that killings were based on the fact that the other races were viewed as inferior. But more astute observers have suggested that it is necessary to define other people as inferior to justify killing them, taking their land and resources, and enslaving them for profit.

The British were the founders of the slave trade between Africa and the Americas. This horrible and shameful time in our history could only be justified by assuming Africans were not people – thus they could be treated as animals for profit. Today we have even greater superiority in weapons, but our arguments are only a bit more subtle – we are bringing “freedom and democracy” rather than “civilization.” However, Peak Oil and history will expose this charade.

The American Empire

After the American revolution of 1776, colonists continued with the British policies of genocide, slavery and conquest. Over the next two centuries the U.S. killed 8-10 million Native Americans² and took their lands, leaving a small number today either dispossessed or living in poverty on government-controlled reservations.

The U.S. in its Southern states and the British in their Central American colonies enslaved or killed more than 28 million Africans,³ moving them from Africa to be worked to death in horrible conditions using torture and murder to maintain obedience. This period of slavery lasted from 1621 to 1865.⁴



Britain initiated the slave trade in the Americas, which would last for nearly 250 years.

In the mid-19th century (1846-1848), the U.S. attacked Mexico and seized half of its territory. The U.S. expanded further into the countries of the Pacific, including the forceful “opening up” of Japan by Admiral Perry in 1853. This encouraged Japan to take a similar move of “opening up” China in the next century, which eventually led to World War II in the Pacific.

In the late 19th century (1896), the U.S. declared war on Spain, subsequently conquering Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto

Rica, Guam and Midway, and leading to the U.S. becoming a major colonial power in the Pacific. In the same year the U.S. seized Hawaii. During the Philippines Insurgency (1899-1902), an independence effort by the native people, 220,000 Filipinos were killed while 4,234 Americans died.⁵

The U.S. also participated in and signed the Treaty of Berlin in 1896, which divided the continent of Africa among the major European powers, probably one of the most destructive acts in human history.⁶

Towards the end of the 19th century, the U.S. supported Britain in what is euphemistically called the “opening up” of China. In 1900, the United States also played a significant role in suppressing the Boxer Rebellion in China by using its military resources still deployed in the Philippines.

By the beginning of the 20th century the huge populations of China, India, Indonesia and Africa, as well as smaller nations, were under the control of European powers and the U.S. At the beginning of the 20th century, within the huge territories of Asia and Africa, Japan and Thailand were the only unoccupied nations in Asia, and in Africa, only Ethiopia and Liberia were unoccupied. This is a testament to the power and aggression of the U.S. and Europe.

The conquered world was stable for a few decades and Western powers seemed content to maximize their tribute – “free trade.” One example of such free trade was the selling of opium *to* the Chinese *by* Britain. When the Chinese objected and tried to stop the practice, Britain attacked and occupied parts of the country until the ban was lifted.

Today, “opening up” is called globalization and is more frequently achieved by financial pressure and control than by military actions. And globalization is based on access to cheap fossil fuels.

The Two World Wars

Competition to control the world led to continuous shifting of the European power structure, with frequent renegotiation and reformation of allegiances. World War I began in August 1914 with the assassination of an occupying country’s

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leader by a citizen of a subjugated one, and by 1917 the European powers were at a stalemate, with a huge number of battle casualties. The stalemate ended when the U.S. decided to support Britain and France against Germany and entered the war in early 1917.

The entry of the U.S. ultimately led to peace negotiations in November 1918. As the Ottoman Empire had sided with Germany, the conquering nations divided it into a number of smaller Arab nations. Until this time, this was the one area of the globe that had escaped European control. Thus, however, the oil resources of the Arab nations passed into European hands and the long era of Middle East conflict began.

Within two decades war began again, first with Germany and then Japan. The immediate cause of the Pacific war with Japan was the U.S. embargo on oil and scrap steel enacted in July 1941. Tensions between Japan and the Western Powers had been building since World War I, when Britain and the U.S. insisted that Japan build fewer warships than the U.S. or Britain. Japan had studied the imperialist methodology of the U.S. and Britain and was emulating them successfully. Dangerously, however, they had begun to encroach on territories controlled by Britain and the U.S. Specifically, the U.S. was attempting to limit Japanese expansion after that country’s successful colonization of Manchuria, parts of China and Indochina.

The embargoes on scrap steel and oil were a dire threat to Japan’s national interest, with much greater impact than an embargo against the U.S. by the Middle East would have been. It is not surprising, then, that Japan responded as they did. The true surprise was that the U.S., while expecting war with Japan, had assumed that the initial attacks would be in the Philippines, not Hawaii.⁷

Most of the allied casualties of World War II were in Europe. Although the European war was billed as the U.S. and Western Europe against Germany, most of

the fighting was actually between Germany and Russia. More than two-thirds of the German troops killed in the war were on the Eastern Russian front. Russia suffered 20 million dead while the U.S., Britain and France’s combined deaths totaled about 1 million. It is rare to see due credit given to Russia for its participation in winning this war.

That the Germans were barbaric in their approach to war is well documented. Less well-known is the barbaric role of the Japanese, initially in China and Korea, and later in the lands of Southeast Asia. China estimates that 25,000,000 Chinese were killed during the period of Japanese occupation of the Asian continent.⁸ Japan invaded China in 1937, with oil and steel supplied by the U.S. and Britain for four years (until the embargo of July 1941). Some historians suggest that 300,000 to 500,000 Chinese were killed in a single week during the Rape of Nanking.⁹

In spite of the horrors of the war suffered by China and Russia at the hands of Japan and Germany, the U.S. and other Western Powers began the Cold War with Russia based on ideological differences. Germany and Japan, on the other hand, were transformed from enemies to friends and top priority was given to help restore these countries to their previous positions in the economic power structure.

Struggles for Independence

As a result of World War II, the European powers were weakened and many of the colonized nations were able to gain independence, including Indonesia and India, two major Moslem and Hindu countries. Other colonized nations, such as Kenya and Algeria, had to fight for more years to obtain freedom from Britain and France. In much of colonized Africa and Asia, Wars of National Liberation began, which inevitably led to independence but with horrible casualties on the part of the colonized and minor ones on the part of the colonizers.

The struggles lasted for decades, the most notable one for the U.S. being Vietnam. France was unable to keep control of Vietnam and the U.S. stepped into the breach for reasons which, even

today, are not clear. The Vietnamese construed it as U.S. support for the European colonizing nation they had fought for so many years. By any analysis, it was an attempt by stronger nations to maintain colonial control for as long as possible.

Today, colonial interest is no longer in Southeast Asia but has shifted to the Middle East. And the issue is not so much colonial control as control of oil. But the same kind of brute force and coercion is the means to this end.

The Kill Ratio

During the Vietnam War, it was common to hear the number of Viet Cong or North Vietnamese killed that day reported on U.S. national television and newspapers. Presumably this was to encourage the American people to support the war, the number of dead being a sign of progress.

In retrospect it was said that this had a negative effect on the support of the war by the public – that many viewers began to realize the brutality of the war. However, at that time, Americans were somewhat less sensitive to the killing of darker-skinned races, racism still being rampant in this country. Martin Luther King began to relate the exploitation of African Americans in the U.S. to exploitive wars abroad... some have suggested this as one reason for his assassination.

In recent times, the policy of reporting enemy casualties has been abandoned by the government and military strategists. Only the number of U.S. casualties is viewed as significant – the official position is that enemy casualties are unimportant. This is a highly suspect rationale since good intelligence and standard military practice require that enemy casualties be noted to measure the effectiveness of various military strategies and tactics.

It is however, a wise policy, since racism has declined somewhat in the U.S. in recent years and wars in general are harder to sell to its citizens. However, inflicting maximum casualties is still the primary military strategy, particularly effective against poorly armed people in the third world.

After World War I the leading British statesman, Lloyd George, when arguing

Figure 2: Historical Kill Ratios

1885-1909	Congo vs. Belgium (no Belgian deaths reported)	8,000,000/?
1898	Sudan vs. Great Britain	400/1
WWII	China vs. Japan	30/1
WWII	Russia vs. Germany	7/1
1950-63	Kenya vs. Great Britain	500/1
1954-62	Algeria vs. France	30-50/1
1960s-70s	Vietnam vs. U.S.	43-70/1
1965	Indonesia vs. Indonesia (U.S. backed)	500,000/?
1989	Panama vs. U.S. (extraction of Noriega)	130/1
1991	Iraq vs. U.S. (First Gulf War)	425-600/1
1991-2001	Iraq vs. U.S. (blockade)	500,000/0
2001	U.S. vs. Terrorists (World Trade Center Bombing)	152/1
2003-05	Iraq vs. U.S. (Second Gulf War to date)	80/1

against some military limitations, wrote in secret that, “We have to reserve the right to bomb the niggers.”¹⁰ Today the British and the U.S. continue to reserve the right to bomb Islamic people in oil-producing nations.

The Battle of Omdurman, mentioned earlier in this paper, resulted in the deaths of 20,000 Muslims and 48 British soldiers. The ratio of killings, which we refer to as the “kill ratio,” was about 400 to 1. This was not exceptional in those days. The British used artillery and machine guns

against spears and arrows. The kill ratio shows both the technical superiority and the brutality that made it possible for the British to rule so much of the world. Instead of the glory of battle and the heroic exploits of individuals, this stark number shows the inhumanity of the victors.

Modern Kill Ratios

It has been argued that war is less brutal today or even that war is more humane. Our weapons are now “smart” and we use “surgical strikes.” We are led to think that somehow our weapons distinguish between terrorists and non-involved citizens. Thus, one might think that the example of Omdurman is too far in the past to represent “modern” warfare. A more recent example is the British role in Kenya, one of the last major occupied countries of their empire. (Also see Figure 2 above.)

Kenya gained its independence in 1963 after a decade-long revolution. Recent books such as Caroline Elkins’s *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain’s Gulag in Kenya* and David Anderson’s *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* tell what happened during this particularly bloody anti-colonial war. The resulting deaths were divided into 63



In 1962, British troops flew into Nairobi, faced with a rapidly deteriorating security situation. They declared a state of emergency and began rounding up suspected Mau Mau “terrorists.” This cartoon, by Leslie Gilbert Illingworth, demonstrates how colonial powers dehumanize insurgents seeking independence. In this case, the Mau Maus are depicted as a snake, attacking “baby” Kenya.

British soldiers and 32 British settlers versus 50,000 natives (with 1,000 hanged) resulting in close to a 500-to-1 kill ratio.¹¹ These books reveal the astonishing depths to which the British sank to forestall the inevitable demise of their imperial enterprise.

The first part of World War II can be viewed as colonial-style empire-building invasions of third world countries, China by Japan and Russia by Germany. These aggressor nations were attempting to replicate the success of other European countries and the U.S. in controlling and exploiting poorer nations.

Japan instituted the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere as a justification for its aggression while Germany extolled the Thousand Year Reich with its racial purity overtones. Both aggressor nations killed civilians in the tens of millions as well as millions of defending soldiers. The kill ratio for Japan's aggression in China was about 30 to 1 and for Germany in Russia about 7 to 1.¹²

The most recent of the post-World War II major wars, the Vietnam War, had deaths of 2.5 to 4 million depending on whether Cambodia and Laos are included. American deaths of 57,000 yield a kill ratio of 43-70 to 1.

Small, so-called "police actions" show similar ratios. In 1989, the U.S. invaded Panama to overturn the dictator Noriega, a long time CIA "asset." A U.S.-based independent Commission of Inquiry, headed by former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, estimated the number of Panamanian civilian casualties at more than 3,000. There were 23 Americans killed, a kill ratio of 130 to 1.¹³

North African examples of high kill ratios include the revolutionary war for Algeria's freedom (1954-62) between occupier, France, and occupied Algeria. 600,000 to 1,000,000 Muslims were killed versus approximately 20,000 French, a kill ratio of about 30-50 to 1.¹⁴

Belgium may hold the record for the highest kill ratio ever, one comparable to the Jewish Holocaust. Eight million Congolese were killed between 1885 and 1909, and it is not known whether any Belgium soldiers died at all (although one can assume some did).¹⁵

Kill ratios for the Netherlands during their centuries-long occupations of Indonesia are not available. However, the U.S. C.I.A. supported the overthrow of Indonesian president Sukarno by Suharto in 1965, which led to a blood bath exceeding 500,000 killed. Since this was a situation of armed soldiers slaughtering defenseless civilians, a high kill ratio can be forecast. The C.I.A. participated by providing names of suspected Communist party members to the death squads.

The Latest Kill Ratio – Iraq

For those who think these statistics for the killing of dark-skinned races are in our past, one need only analyze Iraq. Iraqi casualties can be evaluated in three periods. The first was the 1991 attack on Iraq by the Allied coalition, primarily U.S. and Britain. Note that the combined populations of the coalition nations supporting the anti-Iraq coalition were in excess of 500,000,000 against an approximate population of 24,000,000 Iraqis, a country in debt and with a decimated military exhausted by the 10-year Iran/Iraq war of the 1980s.

Reports of this attack referred to the air war against the retreating defeated Iraqi troops as a "turkey shoot." In an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on May 30, 1991, a Greenpeace report by Peter Bahouth and William Arkin estimated Iraqi deaths to be between 146,000-206,000, compared with 343 Allied troops, for a kill ratio ranging from 425 to 1 to 600 to 1. The state of hostilities continued for the next 10 years as the U.S. and Britain patrolled and bombed the northern and southern no-fly zones in Iraq.

The second period, and a major cause of casualties between the 1991 war and today's, was the blockade of Iraq. This led, according to the U.N., to an additional 500,000-1,000,000 deaths resulting from the economic sanctions imposed following the first Iraq war. In May of 1996,

We might suggest that the reason we are the most powerful is because we can achieve the highest kill ratio in history. It certainly does not show that the U.S. is the kindest or the fairest nation in history.

60 Minutes aired an interview with Madeline Albright, who at the time was President Clinton's Ambassador to the U.N. Correspondent Leslie Stahl said to Albright, "We have heard that a half million children have died. I mean, that's more children than died in Hiroshima. And – and you know, is the price worth it?" Madeline Albright replied "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price – we think the price is worth it." No American or British citizen died from this blockade.

In October 2004, the British medical journal *Lancet* published a report that estimated approximately 100,000 extra Iraqi deaths occurred since the second invasion of Iraq.¹⁶ There had been approximately 1,200 deaths of American soldiers up to that point. This gives a kill ratio of about 80 to 1. Combining the 1991 deaths, the deaths from the embargo, and the deaths as reported by *Lancet* gives a total in the range of more than a million compared to a few thousand American and Allied deaths. This may be one of the highest kill ratios in history and reflects the power of air weaponry against third world countries, coupled with the destructive power of economic blockades.

Kill Ratio Implications

What are we to think about these numbers? From one perspective, they show the superiority of the weaponry of colonizing nations, both in the East (Japan) and in the West (Europe and U.S.). They attest to the fact that the U.S. is now the most powerful nation on earth and probably the most powerful nation in history, where powerful means the ability to deploy extremely destructive weaponry efficiently anywhere in the world. We might suggest that the reason we are the most powerful is because we can achieve the highest kill ratio in history. It certainly does not show that the U.S. is the kindest or the fairest nation in history.

The most powerful nation is typically the most brutal. The U.S. has shown that, like the older colonizing powers such as Britain and France, it is not above using torture. (Those horrified by the scenes from the Abu Ghraib prison should hearken back to the tiger cages and Phoenix program

of Vietnam.) Torture is part of intelligence gathering, which is part of war, and all colonizing nations have practiced it. The scenes of torture described in *Imperial Reckoning: The Untold Story of Britain's Gulag in Kenya* show the value system of the British.

Naomi Klein, in a June 7, 2005 *Los Angeles Times* article entitled "Torture's Part of the Territory," references a conversation from the Gillo Pontecorvo film *Battle of Algiers*. A French officer, Col. Mathieu, finds himself in a situation familiar to top officials in the Bush administration relative to Iraq torture issues. Mathieu is being grilled by journalists about allegations that French paratroopers are torturing Algerian prisoners. He neither denies the abuse nor claims that those responsible will be punished. Instead, he tells the reporters, who work for newspapers that support France's continued occupation of Algeria, that torture "isn't the problem. The problem is the FLN [National Liberation Front] wants to throw us out of Algeria and we want to stay.... It's my turn to ask a question. Should France stay in Algeria? If your answer is still yes, then you must accept all the consequences."

His point, as relevant in Iraq today as it was in Algeria in 1957, is that brutality and torture are required to occupy a nation against the will of its people. Those who benefit from such an occupation cannot morally separate themselves from the torture that is required.

Matthew White, the author of the Web site "Death Tolls for the Man-made Megadeaths of the Twentieth Century,"¹⁷ which lists the casualties of historical wars, notes that it might be considered macabre to keep track of the killings of people of one nation against another. However, he notes that this is a measure of our inhumanity to each other and, rather than be avoided, needs to be faced.

Part of facing the facts is to be honest about history, about the extent and brutality of Western nations (including the U.S.) toward poorer nations. We like to think that this has ended. But we must consider large kill ratios and understand how such slaughter is accomplished with high technology weaponry. We must consider the huge disparity in income and

wealth in the world today and see how it relates to past colonialism, both the obvious practices of the past and the more subtle ones of the present. And we must face the truth – the objective of Western nations continues to be the excessive accumulation and use of the finite wealth of the world.

We in the U.S. may not be rich because we are smart and work hard – rather we may be rich because we are ruthless. And because we have long consumed oil at a rate several times higher than the rest of the world, and reaped the rewards that our use of that oil brings.

Terrorism Re-evaluated

The shock of the World Trade Centers was to some extent a shock that the kill ratio could be reversed. In this case, 19 dark-skinned people killed 2,900 mostly white people. This is a 152-to-1 kill ratio, not too dissimilar to the normal ratios of the whites over the darks. And it was an attack on the U.S. itself, not a guerilla attack against U.S. troops in some foreign land. Our government's response was that those responsible for the attack had to be punished vigorously. Negotiation was out of the question as it might call into question the feudal kingship in Saudi Arabia, armed and supported by the U.S. since 1945, when 15,000 princes were given iron control over their 23 million people.

It should be no shock that 15 of the 19 hijackers were citizens of Saudi Arabia. But Saudi Arabia is important to our interests because of its oil, so attacking them would not be wise. Instead, reportedly because they supported terrorism and harbored Osama bin Laden, the U.S. attacked Afghanistan, a third world nation that had already suffered horribly. And next in our supposed war on terrorism, we attacked and "conquered" Iraq. The dead in these wars number in the hundreds of thousands.

Just how many Westerners have been killed by terrorists? In 1979, fifty-two American citizens were taken hostage in Iran and held for 15 months. In 1983, 63 people were killed in a suicide bombing attack at the U.S. embassy in Lebanon. In the same year, also in Lebanon, another suicide bombing attack killed 241 U.S. Marines.



Americans were shocked on September 11, 2001 to discover that terrorists could achieve the same high kill ratios we are used to inflicting in our wars.

In late 1983 a third suicide bombing attack killed 5 people at the American embassy in Kuwait. In 1984, also in Lebanon, a truck bomb attack killed 24 people at a U.S. embassy annex. Two Americans were killed in late 1984 during the hijacking of a Kuwait Airlines flight. Another American was killed the next year during the hijacking of a TWA flight from Athens to Rome. Also in 1985, an American was killed during the hijacking of a cruise ship, the *Achille Lauro*. Later that year airports in Rome and Vienna were bombed, killing 20 people.

In 1986, two people were killed when a bomb was detonated at La Belle, a discotheque in West Berlin known to be popular with off-duty U.S. servicemen. A Turkish woman was killed, and nearly 200 others were wounded. In 1988, a PanAm flight from London to New York exploded with a bomb, killing 270 people. The bombing of New York's World Trade Center in 1993 killed six people. In 2000, the *USS Cole* was attacked by suicide bombers, killing 17 people. And in 2001, the September 11 attack killed approximately 3000 people.

The total terrorism deaths for U.S. citizens in the last 22 years is, then, about

3,700 people. A popular estimate for the number of people killed by violence in the world in the 20th century is 188 million,¹⁸ an average of 1,880,000 per year or 38,000,000 in a 22-year period. This total is comprised of conventional wars, civil uprisings and the actions of colonial nations against native peoples.

The difference between this and deaths by terrorism is immense. The only conclusion one can draw is that international terrorism as a threat is highly overstated. To most of the world, the real threat is the actions of the developed countries, with their advanced arsenals and their global economic interests. In Iraq, terrorism began after more than a decade of subjugation to the U.S. and with casualty numbers in the millions. Terrorism comes as a response to the powerful nations seeking their oil. And as we focus on other oil nations such as Iran and Venezuela, they become more terrified.

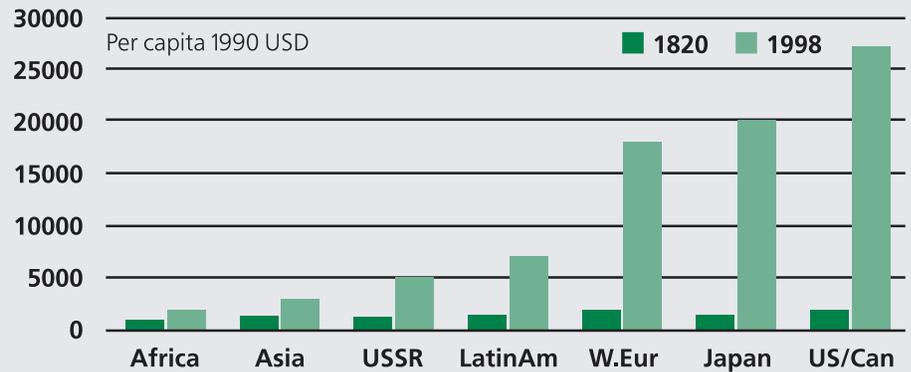
The Essential Argument

The actions of developed nations which have inspired the suicide bombers constitute our modern form of colonialism – globalization. Globalization, guised as free trade, is supposedly helping underdeveloped countries achieve a higher standard of living, creating a better world for all... yet reality paints a different picture.

In our *New Solutions* report on economic growth (NS5) we included a chart (see Fig. 3) based on information from a book by Jeffrey Sachs¹⁹ that showed the allocation of the world's wealth in 1820 and in 1998. In the 1820s there was relative equity. In 1998 the inequity is extreme. In that report we also noted that between 1960 and 1999 the world income distribution changed dramatically with the top 20 percent of the population taking 70 percent of the income in 1960 and 89 percent in 1999. The corresponding percentages of income for the bottom 20 percent were respectively 1.4 percent and 2 percent. The rich are getting richer – faster!

In 1820, European and U.S. powers did not have a monopoly on power and weaponry was still limited. But now weaponry is so advanced that the U.S.

Fig. 3: Wealth by Region 1820/1998



could destroy the whole planet in an afternoon. Blinded by greed for wealth, power and glory, the Western powers have essentially conquered the rest of the world, if not through their military might, then through their control of the world economic structure. Thus, they have destroyed the once relatively equitable distribution of income.

...the myth of helping poorer, weaker countries develop is simply a cover for continuing economic colonialism

In an article entitled “The Polarized World Of Globalization,”²⁰ written for *Z* magazine, May 27, 2005, Vandana Shiva takes exception to Thomas Friedman’s rosy depiction of globalization in his recent book *The World is Flat*. Friedman argues that globalization is a leveler of inequity and notes three periods of improvement, beginning in 1492 with the voyages of Christopher Columbus. Shiva, however,

sees it another way:

“For us in India the first wave of globalisation was driven by the first global corporation, the East India Company, working closely with the British government, and did not end until 1947 when we got Independence. We view the current phase as a recolonisation, with a similar partnership between multinational corporations and powerful governments. It is corporate-led, not people-led. And the current phase did not begin in 2000 as Friedman would have us believe. It began in the 1980s with the structural adjustment programmes of World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposing trade liberalisation and privatization, and was accelerated since 1995 with the establishment of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) at the end of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement of Trade and Tariffs.”

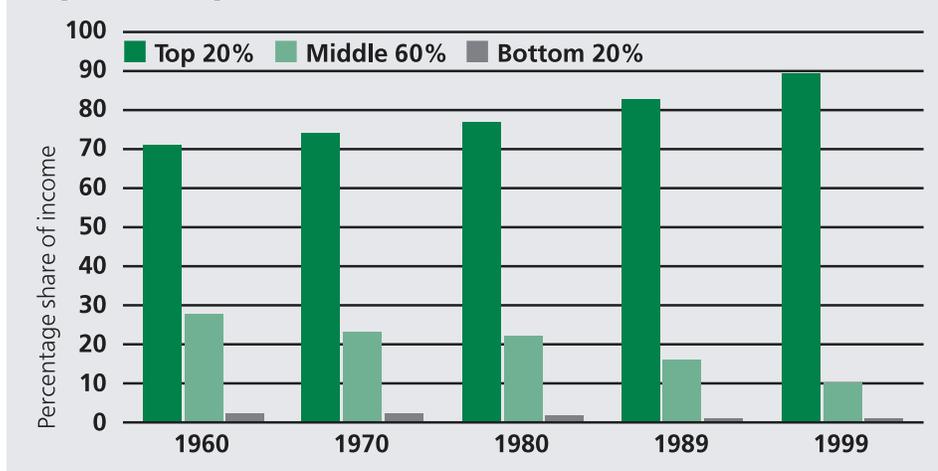
Many people suggest that aid should be provided to the developing world until they become developed like us, as if this were actually possible. Yet, if 20 percent of the people eat 80 percent of the pie, what pie would the other 80 percent of people eat to attain the same level of satiation? In addition, those who promote such aid do not comprehend that past development has little to do with industrialization but much to do with weaponry.

The essential argument is contained in the OECD myth that the rich powerful countries (18 percent of the world population), are attempting to help the poorer countries (82 percent of the world population) to become developed (e.g. wealthy like the OECD) by innovation,

What is Peak Oil?

- Peak Oil is the year in which oil production reaches its maximum.
- Peak oil is the point in time at which half the oil in the world will have been burned.
- After that year there will be a continuous decrease in production until all oil has been consumed.
- Peak oil does not mean “running out of oil,” but rather a steadily decreasing supply, increasing costs and major changes to the lifestyle to which we have become accustomed.

Fig. 4: Change in World Income Distribution



free trade and loans. Yet every year, through the actions of the IMF and the World Bank, the poor get poorer. Figure 4 illustrates the rapidly increasing inequity.²¹ In fact, the myth of helping poorer, weaker countries develop is simply a cover for continuing economic colonialism. The hypocrisy is shown by the aid figures of the colonial nations relative to the other nations that are now being globalized rather than colonized. Globalization is the control of the world economies through the power of the IMF and World Bank and the WTO.

Richer countries only pay lip service to aiding developing countries (see Figure 5 at right). The total aid that the 22 wealthier OECD nations gives is \$80 billion, or about \$24 per person per year for those receiving the aid, the 5 billion people in the Rest of the World. Yet the same rich group spends \$756 billion on weapons or about \$150 per person for those in the Rest of the World. Since the cold war is presumably over, this level of expenditures seems a bit high to battle a few tens of thousands of poorly funded terrorists. However, it is a cheap price if one views it as the way to control the rest of the world.

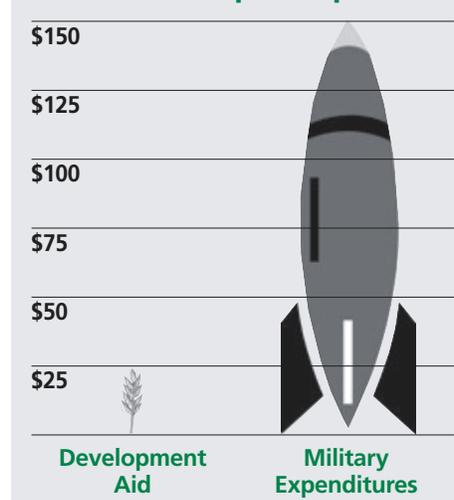
Noam Chomsky, in his book *Year 501—The Conquest Continues*, agrees with Friedman in picking the year 1492 as the beginning of a major change in the world. But whereas Friedman argues that this was the beginning of a major stage of improvement, Chomsky, like Vandana Shiva, sees it as the beginning of the exploitation of most of the people of the

planet. He particularly shows how the economic policies of the U.S. decimated many countries in Latin America.

Chomsky also exposes the strategies of the World Bank, WTO and IMF in attaining the classic aims of colonialism in a more subtle way under the rubric of globalization. And he calls attention to the creation of a Third World environment for some in the United States, as “free markets” run amuck, destroying jobs, lives and savings, and increasing inequity via the process of vicious competition. In his latest book, *Hegemony or Survival*, Chomsky points out the tremendous dangers that are coming ever closer as this “economic” conquest continues.

Another extremely important book,

Figure 5: Expenditures by OECD Nations to the Rest of the World per Capita



It is one thing to watch Americans on TV driving SUVs while the viewer in the third world walks or rides a bicycle. It is another when the same viewer may no longer be able to afford cooking fuel or fuel to run irrigation pumps or buy food.

Confessions of an Economics Hit Man, by John Perkins, former economist for an international consulting firm, exposes the way U.S. intelligence agencies and multinationals cajole and blackmail foreign leaders into serving U.S. foreign policy and awarding lucrative contracts to American business. Perkins explains how he created bogus economic projections in order to convince foreign governments to accept loans from the World Bank and other institutions to build dams, airports, electric grids, and other infrastructure which they could not afford. The loans were given on condition that construction and engineering contracts went to U.S. companies.

The deals were supported by bribes to foreign officials. But it was the taxpayers in the foreign countries who had to pay back the loans. When governments could not repay the loans, the World Bank or International Monetary Fund would take charge of the country’s economic system, dictating everything from its spending budget to security agreements and even its United Nations votes. Perkins notes that it was a clever way for the U.S. to expand its “empire” at the expense of Third World citizens. By thus explaining the huge debt burdens that many poor countries cannot handle and pointing out the manipulation involved, Perkins destroys the fiction that the poorer countries were responsible for getting themselves into debt.

When Peak Oil arrives, the poorer countries will be hard-pressed simply to survive, much less pay back debts incurred by trickery. How do we think they will respond?

Peak Conflict

Peak Oil will fundamentally alter world politics. Already, competitive demand for oil is heightening tensions, as seen in the U.S. Congress’ recent blocking of China in its efforts to acquire Unocal, the large U.S.

oil company. The Bush administration has also been attempting to cast Venezuela's popular president, Hugo Chavez, in a villain's cloak, as Chavez speaks out against the expansion of "free trade" in South America and considers giving China preference over the U.S. for the purchase of Venezuelan oil.

The huge inequities in world energy consumption are also fueling international tension. Matthew Simmons, author of *Twilight in the Desert*, says the two main drivers for future energy demand are Prosperity and Poverty. Prosperity is "us," the 1 billion people who use 85 percent of modern energy. Poverty is "them" – the 3 billion people who use the other 15 percent and 2 billion people who use almost none.²² Simmons warns of the U.S.'s complacency about Peak Oil and the present inequities, pointing out the potential for worldwide destruction from thermonuclear war.²³

When oil shortages become severe, resource wars between the wealthier countries and the poor ones are possible, even likely. The world view of the privileged powerful industrial nations – us – will become increasingly unsupportable, and a vicious competition for fossil fuel resources will begin. As resources decline the poor will experience the results first (and may already be doing so). The existing inequity has been barely tolerated because people hoped there might be some small improvement in the future. But when that hope is removed because the end of oil is in sight, pent-up resentments will almost certainly generate more violence.

It is one thing to watch Americans on TV driving SUVs while the viewer in the third world walks or rides a bicycle. It is another when the same viewer may no longer be able to afford cooking fuel or fuel to run irrigation pumps or buy food. When life spans are suddenly reduced, as occurred in Russia after its first oil peak in 1987 (the lifespan of an average man decreased from more than 70 to 59), people will perceive Western lifestyles not as simply reducing their own lifestyle but as reducing their life span!

This cannot but lead to unrest. At this point the rich world will have to make the choice of sharing the shrinking resources or

taking an ever increasing share of the smaller amount in order to maintain their "standard of living." Currently the second option seems to be the preferred choice.

In 1976, as oil prices began to soar (just four years before the maximum price of \$94, in 2005 dollars, per barrel was reached), Paul Erdman wrote a book called *The Crash of '79* a fictional account of war in the Middle East. The climax of the book occurred when atomic weapons were used making the oil fields in Saudi Arabia inaccessible, leading to the collapse of the world's economy and financial system.

Although fantasy, a real life possibility is suggested by the recent book entitled *Secrets of the Kingdom: The Inside Story of the Saudi-U.S. Connection* by Gerald Posner. Posner suggests that the Saudi oil fields and facilities are already mined with explosives and Radiation Dispersal Devices, which emit low radioactivity that can contaminate the sites for decades.

What appears to be the strategy of madmen, when viewed from the popular perspective of the U.S. as the beneficent leader of the free world, is far less extreme when viewed from the perspective of

We assume that we will prevail in any conflict that may arise because of our overwhelming military power and our willingness to use it.

countries occupied by Western powers for many decades. Similar protective measures might be taken by Iran, another country targeted as part of the "Axis of Evil" by the U.S. Certainly Iraq, with hundreds of thousands dead from attacks and embargoes, has little loyalty to Western countries and might wish that it had mined its fields when it had the chance.

The world could continue on its current path for some time, were it not for the coming of Peak Oil. After all, during the cold war we lived for decades with the thought that the planet and all life could be destroyed by a glitch in a radar device or computer system or even a random act from some madman. It is representative of our own state of mind that we have allowed such a situation to prevail for so

long. But maybe it was not some form of insanity but rather a calculated risk to support a way of life that required we live in constant risk of annihilation.

George Kennen,²⁴ who in the late 1940s held a prominent position in the U.S. State Department, testified to Congress behind closed doors in 1949 as follows:

"We have about 50 percent of the world's wealth but only 6.3 percent of its population. In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships which will permit the U.S. to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security. To do this, we will have to dispense with all sentimentality and daydreaming.... We need not deceive ourselves that we can afford today the luxury of altruism.... We should cease talk about vague and... unreal objectives such as human rights, the raising of the living standards and democratization.... The less we are hampered by idealistic slogans, the better."

For the United States and its allies such a philosophy allowed us to live in a material paradise while the rest of the world struggled in poverty. But this is no longer possible. Scientists all over the world are becoming more vocal about climate change. In somber tones they note that it seems to be caused by "human activity," a euphemism for the increasing use of fossil fuels which are the basis of climate change and most other environmental degradation.

American's attitude of righteousness and arrogance blinds us to the danger of the situation. We assume that we will prevail in any conflict that may arise because of our overwhelming military power and our willingness to use it. When our "bunker buster" nuclear weapons are available we may comfortably sit at home and destroy the most hardened sites of our enemies while remaining out of their reach.

But the next war may well be different. Consider the casualties in Western countries which would result from a nuclear attack by terrorists in the Middle East on the Saudi oilfields, refining facilities and shipping facilities. Such casualties would not be the direct result from the weapons used, but would occur as a result of the

disruption of basic life support systems. Could the U.S. and Europe survive a winter without fossil fuels to heat their homes? Would the industrial food system continue to function? Would there be mass starvation in the U.S. and other affected countries? Would the resulting economic chaos lead to another Great Depression? Consider the stock market plunge from 10,000 to 8,000 and the effect on the U.S. economy following 9/11, an attack which directly affected only a few thousand people.

Such a prospect seems horrifying and possible only by madmen. But in war all actions are those of madmen. Is it not madness to have nuclear weapons that can destroy all life, ready to fire at a few minutes notice? This is the strategy of Western nations. Would the poor people of the world consider destruction of the Saudi oil infrastructure to be evil or simply good tactics against what they perceive as a powerful merciless foe? Would people who are concerned about the future of the planets ecosystems possibly view this as a way to end the destruction of the planet by Western lifestyles? Suicide bombers are abhorred in the West precisely for the reason that these discrete, seemingly-random individual actions, which don't have to involve massive high technology, are one of the few instances in which we are personally vulnerable.

Armageddon is a mythical battle predicted to occur in the Middle East which will be followed by a thousand years of peace. A battle in that part of the world that destroys the fossil fuel resources would certainly eliminate the prospect of world-wide wars, since such wars could not be fought without fossil fuels, and might thus save the world's ecological systems.

A Different Path

What shall we do? Although the obvious question, it is perhaps the wrong one. The more significant question is "Who shall we become?" If we have a perspective that our country is the leading light of freedom, the best country in the world (or maybe even in history), and that any resistance to our goals comes from evil people (typically dark-skinned people in faraway places), then we are in grave danger.

We must give up the beliefs that ours is the best of all possible worlds, that inequity is the natural state of mankind, that wealth is our birthright, that war is an extension of diplomacy, and that the environment will always provide limitless sources of materials, and pollution will not negatively affect the planet or our lives. If all our efforts continue to be focused on keeping our "economy" (a.k.a. our pursuit of money) booming, then the situation is hopeless.

However, if we look at the brief colonial history summarized here and actually consider the meaning of the kill ratios discussed, then we have the chance of becoming something other than a nation of mere consumers.

There is still time to become a nation with new values. The world needs a different kind of citizen – one no longer addicted to the consumption patterns made possible by cheap oil.

We should seriously consider that, like the British Empire, we have reached the peak of our exploitation of people and resources and it is time to change. We might regret the inevitable reduced living standard (how much money we make), but we can rejoice that the suffering of billions caused by Western imperialism will now decrease and that our own culture, currently based too much on greed and hatred, can evolve to something higher and more laudable.

We have had our day in the sun and our record is not a good one. There is still time to become a nation with new values. The world needs a different kind of citizen – one no longer addicted to the consumption patterns made possible by cheap oil. Peak Oil provides an opportunity for all of us to face the truth of what we have been doing whether we like to admit it or not. It is time for all nations to meet and determine a better future for the planet.

– Pat Murphy

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