



Letter from your Executive

Dear Fellow VANA Members in BC:

Since our last update the United States and Britain have attacked and defeated Iraq in a three-week war. There is a universal sense that world stability has been violated and that a widely respected taboo has been broken. To launch a war of aggression, ruled the judges at Nuremberg in 1946, "is the supreme international crime." The US and UK stand accused of this, for whatever else history will say about this war, it will not say that Iraq attacked them. To PM Chretien's credit Canada did not "participate" in this war. Your president sent out six media releases opposing this war. They were sent widely to the media, the peace movement and to each Liberal, NDP and Bloc Quebecois MP. His media release of 25 March: "Canada right to avoid this lawless war," appears below.

A peace march and rally in Vancouver on 15 March was followed by one at the US Consulate on Wednesday 19th, the day war broke out. A focus for this rally was the Peace Camp immediately behind the Consulate. Read the description of this camp below.

VANA member Carl Stewart who served with the Princess Pats in Croatia spoke about his experiences there at our member's meeting on Monday 24 March. A summary of his excellent presentation appears below.

As the smoke and dust of this war clears, what are prospects for the future? The views of a peace-loving Israeli journalist Uri Avner, and a veteran British journalist, Robert Fisk, who remained in Baghdad during the bombing appear below.

Our VANA BC members meeting at 1:30 on Monday 28th April in the Fireside Room of the Unitarian Church, 49th Avenue & Oak Street Vancouver, will also consider 'what are the prospects for the future?' and what is VANA's best role now. We hope to persuade Helen Caldicott to appear at this meeting. Don't miss an interesting discussion and the chance to meet this deservedly famous peace activist.

Dr. Helen Caldicott, an Australian pediatrician, one of the world's most passionate and effective anti-nuclear weapon activists since the 1970's, will speak in Vancouver on Monday 28 April, 7:30 p.m. at St Andrews Wesley Church (Burrard at Nelson). She founded Physicians for Global Responsibility, and is a nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize. Her award winning National Film Board film "If you love this planet" was followed by her books "Nuclear Madness," "Missile Envy," and recently by "The New Nuclear Danger." Come early to avoid disappointment. Do keep sending in your news, information, articles, writing, questions, beefs and bouquets. They are always welcome and will be included in future updates.

Best wishes,

Your exec.

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Media Release
Tuesday, March 25, 2003
Canada right to avoid this lawless war; Cellucci is wrong

Veterans Against Nuclear Arms congratulates Prime Minister Chretien for deciding that Canada "will not participate" in the U.S. led war against Iraq.

"Canada is right to avoid this lawless war," said David Morgan, National President of VANA.

The UN Security Council has not authorized this use of force. It therefore openly breaks the UN Charter, signed by the US. This Charter is the "supreme law of the land." (Art. VI, clause 2, US Constitution) Regarding UN Security Council Resolution 1441, currently cited by the Bush administration as a green light for war, US **Ambassador to the UN, Negroponte**, stated on 8 November 2002: **"This resolution contains no**

hidden triggers and no automaticity with respect to the use of force."

American Ambassador to Canada, Paul Cellucci said today **"a lot of people in Washington are upset"** with Canada for not backing the U.S.-led attack on Iraq. **"Security trumps trade,"** said Cellucci, hinting reprisals.

"A lot of people in the world, in Canada and also in the U.S.A. are upset with the Bush administration," said Morgan, **"for launching this cruel, lawless and dangerous war. Our Prime Minister is quite right to keep us out of it. Ambassador Cellucci should be summoned by Ottawa to explain his intrusive, impertinent and unacceptable remarks."**

The easier the victory the harder the peace

Counter Punch April 10, 2003 (Abridged)

"Christian fundamentalists and Jewish neo-conservatives... will control Washington almost without limits."

By Uri Avnery

Uri Avnery is an Israeli journalist.

After the end of hostilities in Iraq, the world will be faced with two decisive facts:

First, the immense superiority of American arms can beat any people in the world, valiant as it may be.

Second, the small group that initiated this war--an alliance of Christian fundamentalists and Jewish neo-conservatives--has won big, and from now on it will control Washington almost without limits.

The combination of these two facts constitutes a danger to the world, and especially to the Middle East, the Arab

peoples and the future of Israel. Because this alliance is the enemy of peaceful solutions, the enemy of the Arab governments, the enemy of the Palestinian people and especially the enemy of the Israeli peace camp.

It does not dream only about an American empire, in the style of the Roman one, but also of an Israeli mini-empire, under the control of the extreme right and the settlers. **It wants to change the regimes in all Arab countries. It will cause permanent chaos in the region, the consequences of which it is impossible to foresee.**

(continued on page 3)

Avneri (continued from page 2)

The neo-cons will cause a long period of chaos in the Arab and Muslim world. The Iraqi war has already shown that their understanding of Arab realities is shaky. Their political assumptions did not stand the test, only brute force saved their undertaking.

Some day the Americans will go home, but

we shall remain here. We have to live with the Arab peoples. Chaos in the Arab world endangers our future.

Wolfowitz and Co. may dream about a democratic, liberal, Zionist and America-loving Middle East, but the result of their adventures may well turn out to be a fanatical and fundamentalist region that will threaten our very existence.

VANA member Carl Stewart: With Princess Pats in Croatia

“Are you still there?” Carl’s buddies called from inside the bunker after a mortar round nearly killed him when he was caught in the open at their road block near Split in Dalmatia. This was one of the incidents described by VANA member Carl Stewart who spoke at our monthly meeting in Vancouver on Monday 24 March.

Carl was sent to Croatia with the 2nd Battalion of the Princess Pats in January of 1993 for a six-month posting as part of the United Nations UNPROFOR mission. The average age of his buddies was 22. Few of them understood the Serb-Croat conflict. Language training, from tapes, was basic: “Stop or I shoot;” and “Open your trunk.”

They flew to Zagreb in Croatia and then moved by bus about 100km east near the town of Daruvar in the “Bejela Triangle” area. Also in the area were Portuguese, Nigerian, British, US and French forces with UNPROFOR. The civil war had passed through this area, leaving it under Croat control, but there were still Serb patrols and ambushes. The Princess Pats manned check points, searched for weapons and tried to intervene in conflicts, but were usually “too late.”

Then the Princess Pats were asked by the UN to move next to the port of Split on the Adriatic Sea. This was a far more “active” area. Their sand-bagged check point was often crossed by mortar and return artillery fire between Serb pockets and the occupying Croats. Most houses nearby were

damaged and the area was heavily mined. Mine clearance was one of his unit’s duties.

Carl described four “Reality Checks” that brought home the surrounding tragedies and dangers. First, while their section was patrolling in the Bejela Triangle area a truck carrying 20 police was ambushed. There was only one survivor. This also showed the dreadful civil war cycle of loss, hatred and fear.

Second, he saw the curled steel shrapnel from a mortar round in the walls of a troop trailer and later on, the wounds this shrapnel made on two French Canadians, except where protected by their flak jackets.

Third, he was nearly killed by a mortar round at the company bivouac near Split, as described above. Fourth, the awful motivations in a civil war emerged in similar answers to his question to several Croats and Serbs: “Why fight?”. Their answer: “Family members killed.” Massacres, wanton destruction and well pollution by both sides added to this grim civil war picture.

“Was UNPROFOR just a ‘band-aid?’” Carl was asked in the question period. “We went as peace-keepers, but there was no peace to keep,” replied Carl. “Nevertheless, in the areas we covered, the locals liked our presence. We did foot patrols in section strength. One-third of the houses were
(continued on page 4)

Croatia (continued from page 3)

occupied and the people very friendly towards us. We were invited into homes and offered so much plum brandy that we had to pick a 'designated drinker' for these visits."

Following his service, Carl studied criminology at Langara and obtained his B.A. at Simon Fraser U. He then did post-graduate work in economic development. He is currently a bus driver in

Vancouver.

Significantly, Carl first heard of VANA through our website and saw our banner at a peace march. We will pursue the possibility of attracting other veterans of Carl's age and experience into VANA.

Carl's well organized talk, his shrewd observations and his modest and good -humoured manner made this a valuable and warmly received event for us all.

A new colonial oppression

Robert Fisk:- 17 April 2003 (Abridged)

"America's war of 'liberation' may be over. But Iraq's war of liberation from the Americans is just about to begin."

It's going wrong, faster than anyone could have imagined. The army of "liberation" has already turned into the army of occupation. The Shias are threatening to fight the Americans, to create their own war of "liberation".

At night on every one of the Shia Muslim barricades in Sadr City, there are 14 men with automatic rifles. Even the US Marines in Baghdad are talking of the insults being flung at them. "Go away! Get out of my face!" an American soldier screamed at an Iraqi trying to push towards the wire surrounding an infantry unit in the capital yesterday. I watched the man's face suffuse with rage. "God is Great! God is Great!" the Iraqi retorted.

"Fuck you!"

The Americans have now issued a "Message to the Citizens of Baghdad", a document as colonial in spirit as it is insensitive in tone. "Please avoid leaving your homes during the night hours after evening prayers and before the call to morning prayers," it tells the people of the city. "During this time, terrorist forces associated with the former regime of Saddam Hussein, as well as various criminal elements, are known to move through the area ... please do not leave your homes during this time. During all hours, please approach Coalition military positions with extreme caution ..."

So now – with neither electricity nor running water – the millions of Iraqis here are ordered to stay in

their homes from dusk to dawn. Lockdown. It's a form of imprisonment. In their own country. Written by the command of the 1st US Marine Division, it's a curfew in all but name.

"If I was an Iraqi and I read that," an Arab woman shouted at me, "I would become a suicide bomber." And all across Baghdad you hear the same thing, from Shia Muslim clerics to Sunni businessmen, that the Americans have come only for oil, and that soon – very soon – a guerrilla resistance must start. No doubt the Americans will claim that these attacks are "remnants" of Saddam's regime or "criminal elements". But that will not be the case. Marine officers in Baghdad were holding talks yesterday with a Shia militant cleric from Najaf to avert an outbreak of fighting around the holy city. I met the prelate before the negotiations began and he told me that "history is being repeated". He was talking of the British invasion of Iraq in 1917, which ended in disaster for the British.

Everywhere are the signs of collapse. And everywhere the signs that America's promises of "freedom" and "democracy" are not to be honoured. "America, yes, it got rid of Saddam. But Iraq belongs to us. Our oil belongs to us. We will keep our nationality. It will stay Iraq. The Americans must go."

The people of Baghdad are asking who is behind the destruction of their cultural heritage: the looting (continued on page 5)

Fisk (continued from page 4)

of the archaeological treasures from the national museum; the burning of the entire Ottoman, Royal and State archives; the Koranic library; and the vast infrastructure of the nation we claim we are going to create for them.

Why, they ask, do they still have no electricity and no water? In whose interest is it for Iraq to be deconstructed, divided, burnt, de-historied, destroyed? Why are they issued with orders for a curfew by their so-called liberators?

It's easy for a reporter to predict doom, especially after a brutal war that lacked all international legitimacy. But catastrophe usually waits for optimists in the Middle East, especially for false optimists who invade oil-rich nations with ideological excuses and high-flown moral claims and accusations, such as weapons of mass destruction, which are still unproved. So I'll make an awful prediction. That America's war of "liberation" is over. Iraq's war of liberation from the Americans is about to begin. In other words, the real and frightening story starts now.

Lightning-War

In nineteen-forty Hitler's wild success in war
from Poland to the Pyrenees
demolished Belgium, France in six short weeks
of techno-war, jumped trenches and barbed wire
made cautious German Generals look like fools
his lightning-war that terrified the world
gave him conceits to be its Emperor.

In two-oh-three George Bush's wild success
from Kabul to the ruins of Baghdad
his heavy bombing brought cheap victory
his techno-war demolished his small foes
and made his cautious generals look like fools.
The lightning and the thunder of his wars
woke up the world and brought back memories
in Europe, Russia and America itself:
"Trample the rights of others," Lincoln warned
***"and you become fit subjects for
the first cunning tyrant to rise among you."***

David Morgan, 16 November 2002, North Vancouver."

The Peace Camp behind the U.S. Consulate in Vancouver.

Since Friday 14 March a Peace Camp organized by the **Stopwar.ca** coalition has maintained a continuous 24 hour presence at a small park on Hastings Street, Vancouver, immediately behind the US Consulate. VANA members have attended large rallies, candle light vigils and on-going "honk-

for-peace" placard demos at all hours at this Peace Camp. Like the peace rallies of which they are a part, the Peace Camp's message is in no way anti-American. A placard seen there reads: "Canadians are true friends of the American people in refusing to support this lawless war."

On the Light Side

Order in court:

Q: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for pulse?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for blood pressure?

A: No.

Q: Did you check for breathing?

A: No.

Q: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

A: No.

Q: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

A: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

Q: But could the patient have still been alive nevertheless?

A: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law somewhere.

VANA MEMBERSHIP

To renew your membership in or to join VANA, please fill out the form below and send, along with a cheque payable to VANA, to Shayle Duffield, RR#1 Z-46, Bowen Island, BC V0N 1G0. The dues are \$30, \$20 of which go to the national office and \$10 to the branch. (You can use the enclosed addressed envelope)

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Code _____

City _____ Prov _____

Email Address _____

