

# The Pharmacotic War on Terrorism

## Cure or Poison for the US Body Politic?

*Larry N. George*

IN JOHN Ford's 1934 saga of love, war, and capitalism, *The World Moves On*, Mary Warburton (played by Madeleine Carroll) sums up the meaning of the First World War in a sentiment that is as old as war itself. 'War', she states, 'is a disease, homicidal mania on the grand scale brought on by fear and jealousy.' Mary's tirade draws on a common metaphor in anti-war discourse from Aristophanes to Tolstoy: war as an acquired illness, an affliction of the body politic with its own symptomatology and epidemiology, but with no known cure. In Goethe's words, 'war is a disease in which the juices that serve health and recovery are wasted to nourish something alien and unnatural' (Goethe, 1999). Tory philosopher Michael Oakeshott stressed how the pervasiveness of what we would refer to today as 'rational choice' political decision-making leaves certain societies particularly susceptible to this disorder:

War is a disease to which a rationalist society has little resistance; it springs easily from the kind of incompetence inherent in rationalist politics. But it has certainly increased the hold of the Rationalist disposition of mind on politics, and one of the disasters of war has been the new customary application to politics of its essentially rationalist vocabulary.

Walter Benjamin and Michel Foucault would likely sympathize with Oakeshott's curmudgeonly diagnosis of the bellicose side of what Foucault has called the 'blackmail of the Enlightenment'.

Three years after Ford's film opened, in one of the most consequential public addresses of the 20th century, Franklin Roosevelt elaborated on the

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analogy between war and disease. Seeking to mobilize a still largely isolationist American public against the growing threat from Japan, Germany and Italy, Roosevelt's historic 'Quarantine' speech compared the expansionist militarism of these countries to an 'epidemic' that would have to be 'quarantined'. 'War is a contagion', he told his Chicago audience. 'When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in a quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease' (Dallek, 1979: 148). The appeal of this simile has persisted down to our own time: in a recent address on US policy in the Middle East, Robert Fisk, the respected Beirut-based correspondent for the London *Independent* warned simply 'War is a disease, and we have caught it' (Fisk, 2002).

It is easy to see how war could be regarded as an affliction, a contagious disease, or an epidemic that must be quarantined. But war has also often been viewed, paradoxically, through an opposite analogy – as a remedy or medicine for restoring what Randolph Bourne (1964) called 'the health of the State'. From the Assyrian palace reliefs at Nimrud and Nineveh (Bersani and Dutoit, 1985) to Pericles' Funeral Oration, Machiavelli's *Art of War*, Hegel's paean to the 'Kriegstaat' (Hegel 1962; Kaufmann, 1970; Schroeder, 2000; Shapiro, 1997; Taylor, 1975; Verene 1971; Walt, 1989), Theodore Roosevelt's manly Americanism and 20th-century fascist war-worship, war has been praised as existentially ennobling, culturally edifying and politically salutary. In this tradition of thought, which culminated in the militaristic public culture of Nazi Germany (Berlin, 1991; Herf, 1984; Stern, 1961; Theweleit, 1987; Waite, 1952), war is seen as an invigorating tonic for the political community, a stimulus to public virtue, and a cure for both the disorders ostensibly afflicting welfare state socialist societies – sloth, idleness and the encroachment of effeminateness and domesticity on the public realm – as well as for the bourgeois 'infirmities' of selfishness, complacency, hedonism and decadence. Anthropologist Catherine Lutz has explored this topic in her fascinating research on the growing divergence between the elitist, increasingly monastic culture of US army bases and the perceived social, cultural and political decay of neighboring civilian communities (Lutz, 2002). Randolph Bourne's unfinished critical essay, 'The State' provides perhaps the best-known commentary on these 'medicinal' effects of war and militarism. 'War is the health of the state', Bourne wrote:

It automatically sets in motion throughout society those irresistible forces for uniformity, for passionate cooperation with the Government in coercing into obedience the minority groups and individuals which lack the larger herd sense. . . . Loyalty – or mystic devotion to the State – becomes the major human value. (Bourne, 1964: 65–72)

The drug of war can also be addictive, particularly for certain kinds of politics. A society that continually prepares for, and regularly engages in

warfare generates permanent institutions and associated political interest groups that depend on militarism for their survival and perpetuation. Military themes, symbols, images and heroic narratives increasingly permeate the political culture of such states. Patriotism comes to be represented symbolically in the form of military images and war tropes – flags, battle anniversaries, war memorials and militaristic anthems – and its opposite with dissent against the nation's recurring wars. The governments of such states are drawn to war as a means for displacing domestic political problems and increasing the authority and resources of the state. As Bourne puts it:

In times of peace, we usually ignore the State in favor of partisan political controversies. . . . The State is reduced to a shadowy emblem which comes to consciousness only on occasions of patriotic holiday. . . . The republican state has almost no trappings to appeal to the common man's emotions. With the shock of war, however, the State comes into its own again. . . . The moment war is declared, the mass of the people, through some spiritual alchemy, become convinced that they have willed and executed the deed themselves. They then, with the exception of a few malcontents, proceed to allow themselves to be regimented, coerced, deranged in all the environments of their lives, and turned into a solid manufactory of destruction. . . . toward whatever other people may have . . . come within the range of the government's disapprobation. (Bourne, 1964: 69)

In a similar vein, Jean Bethke Elshtain observes that:

War retains the power to incite parts of the self that peace cannot seem to reach. . . . Our deeply rooted conviction, sustained by veterans of battle fronts and home fronts and transmitted to others is that wars – good wars that unite us – offer a communal endeavor, the sharing of sacrifice and danger. Modern society appears to have found no other way to initiate and sustain action in common with others on this scale. (Elshtain, 1995: 10)

Both modernizing and postmodernizing states periodically find irresistible the temptation to draw on the uniquely restorative and politically unifying power of war.

War, then, is at one and the same time poisonous, medicinal and addictive. It is both a contagious disease of the body politic and an addictive drug with a unique capacity to temporarily restore political health. The polysemous ancient Greek word *pharmakon* strangely captures all of these apparently contradictory senses and meanings: remedy and addictive drug, medicine and poison (Derrida, 1981: 61–171; Burke, 1989: 294–302; Burkert, 1983, 1985: 82–4, 2001; Frazer, 1922: 624–86; Liddell, 1889: 1593–4). This suggests an illuminating trope for interpreting the political function of war: war functions like a *pharmakon* for the body politic. War is, in this sense, *pharmacotic*.

Modern wars are *pharmacotic* in a second sense, as well – they

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resemble, in many ways, collective ritual sacrifices. More precisely, wars are commonly structured like the Ancient Greek sacrificial ritual of the *pharmakos*. As the prevalence of human sacrifice in early human societies becomes ever more widely acknowledged by contemporary ethnographers, for example, it should be no longer shocking that at the locus of the originary emergence of Western democracy in ancient Greek city-states, specially designated human victims, known as *pharmakoi* (sing. *pharmakos*) were ritualistically sacrificed by being killed or expelled from the *polis*. Such sacrificial rituals were generally associated with religious holidays – and particularly the Thargelia (the Day, as Diogenes Laertius points out, on which Socrates was born [Derrida, 19???: 134]). These ritual purgings had a politically cathartic and unifying function – to ‘cleanse’ and ‘purge’ these societies of internal disorder and remove troublesome dissenters (such as Socrates) and other political ‘impurities’, to frighten restless political minorities, and to restore the authority and legitimacy of the polity over its members (Burkert 1985; Derrida, 1981: 128–34; George, 1993; Vernant and Vidal-Naquet, 1990). Derrida’s account of this process is, in the wake of September 11, almost too prescient:

The city’s body proper thus reconstitutes its unity, closes around the security of its inner courts, gives back to itself the word that links it with itself within the confines of the agora, by violently excluding from its territory the representative of an external threat or aggression. That representative represents the otherness of the evil that comes to affect or infect the inside by unpredictably breaking into it. (Derrida, 1981: 133)

War, collective scapegoating, human sacrifice and other forms of unanimous victimage may be usefully understood as comprising a single category of politically generative and originary collective *pharmacotic* human behavior. Like these other forms of unifying violence, war is both a response to collective danger and an expression of collective fears. Don Hazen, for example, has made an explicit analogy between one psychological dimension of war and the experience of paranoia:

People become paranoid when they feel threatened. When we are afraid, we seek comfort by trying to pin the blame on a perceived aggressor, and we rationalize any behavior that makes us feel safer. Paranoid people feel justified in their cruelty. In a paranoid vision there exists no moral wrong. Protection justifies all other acts, no matter how violent or prejudiced. It is in this environment that racism and zero-tolerance mentalities thrive. (Hazen, 2001: 126)

Jack Katz concludes his illuminating study *Seductions of Crime*, with a suggestive comparison between the violence of Bernhard Goetz and international pharmacotic violence (Katz, 1988: 323–4). Like the pharmacotic ritual, modern war generates political legitimacy, unanimity and obedience by exciting mass psychological responses (Keen, 1986). These reactions

take on forms similar to individual psychological responses to traumatic events, such as catharsis, projection, reaction formation, condensation and of course aggression.

This is not, of course, to suggest that individual and collective pharmacotic violence and war are symptoms or expressions of mental illness (although some have proposed just such a diagnosis.<sup>1</sup> The process of pharmacosis is, rather, a contagious *political* condition that afflicts many, if not most communities, facing similar challenges (Levin, 2002). The political symbolization and narrativization that accompany war tap into the same deep cultural reservoirs of embodied archetypes and collectively experienced meanings that fed ancient rituals of collective victimization, demonization and ultimately human sacrifice itself (Girard, 1977; Zweig and Abrams, 1991). Pharmacotic wars create political power out of that aspect of the collective unconscious that is structured not, as in Lacan's formulation, like a language, but rather, as in the words of Phillippe Sollers, like a lynching (McKenna, 1992: 5).

War sanctifies politics. It enables governments to breach the wall separating the realm of the holy from the profane world of everyday politics. War sacralizes political struggles by transubstantiating the blood shed by compatriots and enemies, as well as by innocent scapegoats and demonized dissenters, into various kinds of fungible political power. Belief in an omniscient, omnipotent and mysterious deity conspires with what Derrida calls the 'mystical foundations of political authority' to render political cultures that have developed within monotheistic religious communities particularly susceptible to this process (Appleby, 2000; Armstrong, 2001; De Vries, 2002; Derrida, 2002; Juergensmeyer, 2000; Marty and Appleby, 1993). This is particularly so for political communities like the contemporary United States and many Islamic states, which have inherited both a long history of political violence, and a public rhetoric and political culture imbued with the symbolism of profound religious commitment, but which are experiencing secular trends towards diminishing enthusiasm for ancestral faiths, articulated with periodically resurgent fundamentalist attempts to reimpose theocratic authority over the political community (Al-Azmeh, 1993; Ali, 2002; Beinín and Stork, 1997; Berkovitch, 1978; Berlet and Lyons, 2000; Campbell, 1992; Dumm, 1999; Esposito, 1999; Esposito and Voll, 2001; Euben, 1999; Huband, 1999; Majid, 2000; Morris, 2001; Ruthven, 2000; Shadid, 2001; Viorst, 2001).

Pharmacotic sacrificial violence is also *mimetic*: a parallel process unfolds in the community of the designated enemy, typically leading to escalating cycles of violence and counter-violence. In some cases, one side is vanquished, and the impulse driving the pharmacotic war is cathartically resolved for the victorious polity, while the humiliation, political derangement and material consequences of the defeat of the other community sow the seeds for future pharmacotic violence. In other cases, the conflict can persist indefinitely, with each side reciprocating the belligerence of the other, through iterated, escalating cycles of ritualized demonization,

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victimization and scapegoating, punctuated by periodic incidents of actual large-scale pharmacotic bloodshed. Emmanuel Goldstein's fictional treatise 'The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism', which describes the logic behind the perpetual, ritualistic wars among Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia in George Orwell's *1984* (1999: 146 ff) imaginatively illustrates this reciprocal process – a dialectic that Mary Kaldor (1990), among others, recognized operating in the Cold War struggle between East and West, as well. Some highly militarized societies, including most famously the Aztecs, have sometimes actually maintained a state of essentially permanent artificial war against the remnants of already defeated enemy armies, both in order to preserve the martial vigor of their warrior castes, and to provide victims for pharmacotic sacrifices (Clendinnen, 1991).

Like other forms of collective violence, the enactment and performance of politically sanctioned military operations abroad, and particularly of symbolically charged wars against sacralized and demonized enemies, attracts otherwise disunited compatriots or coreligionists into a powerful, if transient, symbolic community. Such violence is both cathartic and politically *originary* – it can give rise to new political bodies, or rejuvenate and reanimate declining ones. Periodic performances of such ritualistic violence literally 're-create the community by reenacting a process of community disintegration and regeneration, through a unanimous victimage' (Hamerton-Kelly, 1987: 127). Indeed it is this theme, perhaps more than any other, that runs through the blood-soaked narrative train of Western political literature from Homer to Shakespeare to Tom Clancy: war, more than any other human enterprise, can channel political division and civil strife into sacred patriotic unanimity. As Aeschylus recounts, Athena's parting lesson for her beloved eponymous *polis*, in the concluding scene of the Oresteian Trilogy: 'The blood of man till dust has drunk its fill; let all together find joy in each other; and each both love and hate with the same mind as his blood brother; for this heals the wounds of mankind.' Or, in René Girard's paraphrase, 'Unanimous hatred is the greatest medicine for a human community' (Hamerton-Kelly, 1987: 126).

Pharmacotic violence, then, is collective violence energized by transcendental rage and performatively enacted against demonized internal scapegoats and external enemies in order to seek restoration of righteous political and sacred order. Such violence is not infrequently tolerated, encouraged and sometimes even orchestrated for political purposes by both authoritarian and democratic governments (De Vries and Weber, 1997; Der Derian, 2001; Dumouchel, 1998; Ehrenreich, 1997; Golsan, 2002; O'Connell, 1995; Riches, 1986; Tritle, 2000). Because all wars are accompanied to some extent by such politically unifying effects, war is today the quintessentially *pharmacotic* human political activity. Some wars, however, are more pharmacotically driven than others, so that we might usefully refer to wars that derive their primary motivating energy and power from the politically orchestrated desire to shed sacrificial blood for symbolic purposes – such as vengeance, purgation, the termination of collective

existential humiliation or the experience of existential impotence, the extinction of collective existential rage – as *pharmacotic wars*. Such wars permit governments to draw on the singular capacity of sacralized bloodshed to unify political communities and generate fungible political power, by orchestrating symbolically charged military operations against demonized foreign enemies, while scapegoating real or constructed domestic threats to internal security.

In pharmacotic wars, ‘symbolic’ factors such as heroic victories and defeats, ritualized ideological struggles, politicized religious conflicts, and other contests involving the affective identities, psychological dispositions and symbolic allegiances – the ‘hearts and minds’ – of allies and adversaries, take precedence over geostrategic, economic, or other traditionally understood ‘interests’ as stakes of the war. Although prolonged pharmacotic wars can aggravate internal political, economic and social problems, in the short term they typically strengthen executive power, while creating unparalleled political advantages and opportunities for governing parties, coalitions and officials. The temporary patriotic unity generated by such wars can be exploited in order to enhance support for incumbents, distract the public from governmental incompetence, corruption or misbehavior, pass controversial laws and implement controversial programs, silence political opponents and dissidents, reward favored constituencies, and to accomplish other partisan or parochial goals. So common are such practices that, in recent years, the abuse of the ‘rally round the flag’ syndrome by US presidents and other political figures for ideological, partisan or other politically self-interested ends has become something of a popular cliché (as in the 1998 Barry Levinson film, *Wag the Dog*’.

But wars, especially protracted pharmacotic wars, can also be extremely dangerous for an incumbent government, and for the polity as well. Wars waste lives and treasure, and while a nation may for a time be willing to expend these in pursuit of victory over a hated foe, unless that enemy continues to pose a clear and present threat to the nation’s people or interests, popular support for incurring those costs will tend to weaken over time. As it does, unless victory is assured or a satisfactory end to the conflict is negotiated, the lives and resources already consumed in the war will increasingly be counted against the government. The patriotic fervor generated by the war, fleeting in the best of times, can quickly begin to dissolve or even reverse, and if the war becomes sufficiently unpopular the government and its actions may even become stigmatized by association with it. In some cases, popular opposition to a war may become intense enough that a leader, a party, a government, or an entire political system may fall.

The persistence of pharmacotic violence into the 21st century reminds us that all modern polities are politically descended, however distantly, from communities that practiced sacrificial pharmacotic rituals, and suggests the extent to which those communities remain *haunted* (Brown, 2001; Derrida, 1994) by the originary structuring effects of those practices. The

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simultaneous pharmacotic exploitation of domestic scapegoating practices and war against demonized foreign enemies has of course been prevalent in contemporary authoritarian polities, from Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, to apartheid South Africa, to the 1970s military dictatorships of Chile and Argentina, and, more recently, a number of states in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and the Balkans, to name only some of the most obvious examples of the phenomenon. In all of these states, repressive governments shore up their power by symbolically identifying various internal scapegoats with their own political enemies, both at home and abroad, and then periodically demonizing and punishing these pharmacotic victims, while intermittently waging real or virtual wars against designated external foes. In recent decades such practices have become common in many countries throughout the Islamic world, as both religious regimes, as well as secular capitalist and state socialist governments, have sought to placate domestic opponents and resist encroachments from external rivals through such means. The result – manifested in recent years with exponentially escalating consequences – has been a cycle of increasing internal political discontent fueling a range of revivalist Islamist movements in several countries, including several – like Al Qaeda, Hamas and the Taliban – which are currently engaged in highly symbolic, calculatedly provocative pharmacotic violence of their own.

But these sorts of pharmacotic scapegoating practices are also disturbingly common in nationalistic *gesellschaft* democracies, such as the postmodernizing capitalist political communities of the 21st-century global north, as well as within countries like China, Indonesia, Nigeria and many other rapidly, but unevenly modernizing nation-states of the global south. The political effects of this pattern are readily visible in the periodic incursions, and even occasional recent electoral victories, of far-right and quasi-fascist movements in Europe, India, Israel and elsewhere. Given its idiosyncratic political history, it should thus come as no surprise that the United States has periodically engaged in ritualized pharmacotic violence, both domestically and abroad, and that this violence has often taken forms peculiar to the US. Socially constructed around a puritanical and superficially communitarian political culture, and presided over by a state apparatus that is, in comparison with other developed capitalist states, relatively weak, decentralized and largely incapable of tempering the excesses or ameliorating the deleterious effects of the accumulating externalities associated with the country's under-regulated laissez-faire market economy, the history of the United States has been punctuated by periodic outbursts of lynchings, political scapegoating, race riots and uprisings, police repression of dissent, domestic terrorist movements, and recurring messianic wars (Bellesiles, 1999; Brown, 1975; Courtwright, 1996; Gottesman and Brown, 2000). This pattern of pharmacotic violence reflects a characteristic, although hardly unique, national predisposition towards what Richard Slotkin has called 'regenerative violence' as a temporary remedy for the country's recurring political afflictions and difficulties (Slotkin, 1973, 1985, 1992).

Ritualistic patterns of pharmacotic violence and war recur throughout American history and typically follow a prescribed scenario. The pharmacotic dimensions of US wars tend to unfold along the lines of tragic narrative, and in conformity with the deep structure of ritual pharmacotic sacrifice. This typically entails a prescribed scenario. The community faces a political crisis. A violent, symbolically resonant violation occurs (or is manufactured) – a Boston Massacre, a Fort Sumter, a *Lusitania*, a Pearl Harbor, a Tonkin Gulf, a September 11. Innocents perish, and other innocents are endangered. An external enemy is identified and demonized, and a punitive military operation is conducted against the designated foe by heroically narratized warriors. The nation's leaders are temporarily deified and placed beyond criticism. An internal scapegoat is identified and symbolically linked to the foreign enemy, and then persecuted, symbolically vilified and punished, while at the same time a potential victim (or 'scapegoat') from the home community is freed through heroic action or miraculously escapes harm.

Both the attacks of September 11 and the 'War on Terrorism' are, in this sense, already beginning to unfold pharmacotically. Although a full-scale pharmacotic war has not developed out of the present conflict, disturbing trends are nevertheless emerging. Perhaps the first symptom that a pharmacotic process was in play following September 11 was the spate of demonizing and scapegoating attacks directed against American Arabs and Muslims that immediately followed the terrorist attacks, and which were accompanied by calls for retaliation against Muslims, even Muslim civilians, abroad. As CAIR and other Muslim civil rights groups have long maintained, the cultural and psychological grounding that enabled and encouraged such attacks had been laid by years of almost unrelentingly negative depictions of Arabs, Muslims and persons of Middle Eastern origin generally in countless US television programs, popular novels and Hollywood films. These attacks included widespread incidents of vandalism, death threats and other hate crimes, violent assaults and even murders (Duncan Campbell, 2002). Thousands of verbal and physical assaults were directed against Arab- and Muslim Americans in the days following September 11. The media watchdog group Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR) quoted numerous instances of American public figures, writers, pundits and others calling for overwhelming, and often wildly disproportionate, retaliation against Muslims abroad, who were immediately assumed to be responsible as a group for the attacks (FAIR, 2001).

This abuse of Arab-Americans and American Muslims follows Girard's description of the ritualized sacrifice of the *pharmakos*, which involved the projection of a specific set of characteristics on to the victim to be sacrificed as a scapegoat in order to restore the health and unity of the community. In Girard's account, the *pharmakos* – the surrogate victim – 'appears as a monster', as one who had once been, but is 'no longer regarded in the same way as other members of the community.' The *pharmakos* is typically a stranger living within the community who resembles or can be

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symbolically linked to the real (or perceived or constructed) threat to the community's unity and political integrity. Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, in a particularly appalling (although perhaps unsurprising, as disciples of fundamentalist sects which interpret the pharmacotic sacrifice of Jesus Christ from the viewpoint of a wrathful Old Testament God who demands regular propitiation for disobedience) rhetorical blunder, immediately sought to capitalize on the political fundraising and proselytizing opportunity created by September 11, by blaming pagans, abortionists, feminists, gays, lesbians and liberals for the attacks.

Since September 11, the Bush administration has been publicly pursuing a single-minded foreign military policy ostensibly designed to eliminate the threat of terrorism by destroying the infrastructure and disrupting the operations of terrorist organizations. In reality, however, the administration's emerging grand strategy entails a much more ambitiously reassertionist and unilateralist national security agenda – a program which increasingly appears to involve extending the 'war on terrorism' to include not only destroying Al Qaeda's Afghanistan bases, but also:

a long-term 'nation-building' US military presence in Central Asia, the policing of the region's oil fields and pipelines, and the establishment of at least new eleven US military bases there;

strengthening ties with the military dictatorship of Pervez Musharaf, thereby drawing the US further towards direct involvement in the nuclear tinder-box conflict over Kashmir-Jammu;

providing security for a pipeline from the Caspian Sea oil fields to the Arabian Sea, in order to bypass Iran;

US military involvement in the civil war in Georgia and the emerging Islamist rebellion in Uzbekistan, and perhaps other central Asian nations;

US involvement in, or at least support for, Moscow's repression of the Chechen rebellion and Israel's continued policy of expanding settlement and military occupation of the West Bank;

US involvement in the Philippine government's conflict with Islamist rebels;

increased US support for the Saudi royal family and other repressive, undemocratic regimes, whose policies are primarily responsible for the rise of Al Qaeda and other similar groups;

the transformation of the failed US counternarcotics program in Colombia (and, by implication, in Ecuador and Peru as well) into a front of the 'war on terrorism';

reversal of recent trends towards moderation and normalization of relations with North Korea and Iran;

an armed invasion of Iraq.

The last of these will likely lead to further regional instability, and will perhaps even precipitate a full-scale international war in the region. Virtually all of these policy options will increase, not decrease, the pharmacotic pressures towards further terrorist attacks against the US, including almost certainly attacks involving weapons of mass destruction at some point.

Even though President Bush's 'Axis of Evil' includes North Korea, and although it is clear that the administration seeks to capitalize on the popular anger and revulsion against terrorism to expand US military involvement into non-Islamic settings – most notably Colombia – the prominence of countries with predominantly Muslim populations in the list suggests how readily the 'war on terrorism' could evolve into a pharmacotic religious war – a *Glaubenskrieg*, or war between adherents of opposing faiths. Such a war would pit an American government more heavily influenced by overtly Christian political interest groups and more reliant on a religiously traditionalist and militantly theo-political rhetoric than any in modern US history, against a group of designated foes whose most prominent defining characteristic is not their resort to the tactic of terrorism, but their intensely Manichean version of Islam. If a pharmacotic religious conflict actually does emerge, the result will almost certainly be increased political and cultural polarization, both within the United States, and between the US and the Muslim populations of the world, around political positions and affiliations increasingly defined in religious terms. Any resulting conflict will be agnatic – that is, a violent confrontation among cultural cousins, anthropologically the most violent of antagonisms. Should such polarization along theo-political lines coincide with further terrorist attacks against the US, or with further US military operations within the Islamic world (particularly if either of these results in large numbers of civilian casualties), the pressures towards a pharmacotic catastrophe will likely prove overwhelming.<sup>2</sup>

### **Challenging the Momentum towards Pharmacotic War**

Fortunately, the political and social pressures that are currently driving both the United States and much of the Islamic world towards a potentially catastrophic pharmacotic war are probably not yet beyond recovery. But mounting a successful resistance to such a war will be difficult. It will have to involve not only substantive reforms on the part of both national governments and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), but sustained and concerted political pressures by a variety of groups and organizations operating outside the channels of ordinary politics, as well. While a precise listing of such institutional reforms and constitutive political pressures is still impossible, any such strategy would likely have to include, without being limited to:

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loosening the support of the US government for the repressive, authoritarian regimes currently ruling over large Islamic populations in countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, Pakistan and Indonesia;

withdrawing US military forces from Saudi Arabia;

reducing the dependence of the US economy on imported oil from the Middle East region (only political factors prevent the US from, for example, reinstating the ban on exporting Alaskan oil to the Far East, or adopting a program of energy conservation and alternative energy production to replace the share of US oil imported from the Middle East);

using the United States' diplomatic leverage in a more balanced way to push towards an equitable two-state solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict;

negotiating a more equitable system for distributing the profits from the global fossil fuel market;

substantially increasing US educational, medical, cultural and other humanitarian foreign assistance to the region, particularly that earmarked for nonmilitary state agencies and NGOs, while reducing US military ties to the region;

revisiting US attitudes towards moderate Islamist political organizations and groups (to be discussed below).

Such a program would, of course, mean the abandonment of the Bush administration's vision of a unilaterally constructed American global imperium within the framework of the much-touted Revolution in Military Affairs (Arquilla and Ronfeldt, 2001; Feher, 2000; Lesser et al., 1999; Mahajan, 2002; O'Hanlon, 2000; Sterling, 2002). As a result, the administration does and will continue to oppose each of these initiatives, and implementing any of them would likely require either a 2004 Republican electoral defeat, or else an improbable combination of a sudden and dramatic awakening of US public opinion and a firm commitment on the part of Democratic legislators to implementing such reforms. Unfortunately, the coalitional structure of American party politics also works against substantive changes in US Middle East policy, since any movement towards reform will be hampered by the influence of the pro-Israel lobby within the Democratic Party, and by the successful courting by the Republican Party of Arab- and Muslim Americans (who voted overwhelmingly for Bush in 2000) during the past decade – a trend which leaves both those groups politically isolated from potential progressive allies and vulnerable to manipulation by the administration. Political pharmacosis aggravates these difficulties, as the power and influence of the executive branch are enhanced by the short-term rallying effect provoked by the September 11 attacks and

President Bush's conduct of the 'War on Terrorism' to date (Kohut, 2002; Morin and Deane, 2002).

At the same time, however, it should also be recognized that, for the moment at least, the danger of a protracted war driven by pharmacotic cycles of violence is limited by several factors. First, notwithstanding short-term poll results, the US public remains profoundly indisposed to accept large numbers of sustained military, much less civilian, casualties, in a prolonged, nebulous conflict against an elusive and only vaguely defined enemy. The strategic implications of a pharmacotic war in the Middle East also obviously collide with other important US interests in that area. In addition, although George Bush currently enjoys a temporary opinion poll boost as a result of the pharmacotic energy generated by the events of September 11, large numbers of Americans continue to harbor significant doubts and reservations about his excessively religious rhetoric and his ties to the religious right. And although the administration has been somewhat successful in capitalizing politically on this pharmacotic support (Barnes, 2002; Cohen, 2002), Bush's own limited personal charisma and increasingly evident inattention to facts, his questionable electoral legitimacy, his embarrassing military record, and his still unproven long-term leadership capabilities continue to restrict his ability to fully exploit these events for narrowly partisan political ends. Such factors will make it difficult for his staff to nurture any cult of personality around him capable of tapping into images of pharmacotic heroism. The 'chicken hawk' personal military service records of most of the Republican leadership, who, like Bush, avoided military combat service during the Vietnam War through various means available only to Americans from privileged backgrounds, also undermines the American right's stature as potentially heroic pharmacotic war leaders (Berkowitz, 2002).

The large-scale incorporation of religiously, culturally and racially diverse immigrant populations into the United States population over the past three decades has also, for the moment, created a deep demographic cushion of multicultural diversity that will restrain any effort to impose any sort of racialized or overtly religious form of patriotic unity on the country. In addition, the growth patterns characteristic of the 1990s US economy significantly diminished the resentment and hostility that tends to accompany widespread unemployment, bankruptcy and recession, and which have typically provided the seedbed for organized mass scapegoating of vulnerable internal minority populations. (A protracted recession may, of course, reverse these reasons for optimism.) And, while jingoism and racism obviously remain political realities in the 21st-century United States, the most likely constituency for mobilization behind any nationalistic pharmacotic scapegoating movement – the 'angry white male' militia movement of the early 1990s – was severely politically discredited by the Oklahoma City bombing and subsequent publicity surrounding its own involvement in domestic terrorism. At the same time, the globalization of the US economy has created a situation where those most likely to benefit politically from

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an international pharmacotic military conflict and a more authoritarian domestic political order would find that the constraints associated with such developments would significantly undermine the competitiveness of US firms within that global economy, and will thus reduce the support of powerful constituencies for such policies. And, finally, over the past few decades a diverse, progressive, populist, grassroots political opposition has emerged within the United States – a tendency which on several measures enjoys the general support of a substantial fraction – perhaps as much as a quarter to a third – of the US population. Despite their general marginalization by the media and mainstream politicians, these progressive groups, and the grassroots democracy of resistance they practice, may well prove strong enough to withstand pressures towards pharmacotic nationalism and war, at least for the time being.

**Critical Support for Democratic Islamist Movements**

Avoiding the danger of a pharmacotic ‘clash of civilizations’ between the US and Islam will also likely entail a more realistically nuanced approach by both Western governments and progressive groups towards political developments within predominantly Muslim countries. While some Western analyses of Middle East politics have been sensitive to the highly problematic local political conditions left behind by centuries of short-sighted, largely self-interested European and American policies in the region, followed by decades of failed secular authoritarian states, often supported erratically by one or another of the Cold War superpowers during the most of the postcolonial period, most Western analyses have focused almost exclusively on the vexing dilemmas created by the desire to balance pressures towards liberalizing reforms versus fears that such reforms will create openings for Islamist extremists to come to power. But such approaches both overstate the popular support within most Islamic countries today for liberalization along Western lines, and underestimate the potential political viability of more moderate and democratic Islamist forces within the region – forces whose ideological values may legitimately disturb Western liberals, but which nevertheless are seeking, in the words of Ray Takeyh, ‘to harmonize imaginatively Islam’s injunctions with democracy’s imperatives’ (2001–2: 59; see also Davis, 1999; Esposito and Tamimi, 2000). A greater attention to the potential challenge that such movements could pose to a downward spiral into pharmacotic war might encourage Western progressives to lend critical support to the political efforts of some of these moderate Islamist groups and movements, while at the same time confronting and engaging them on questions having to do, for example, with the scope and nature of legitimate critical and scholarly inquiry, artistic freedom, the rights of women, gays and lesbians, and other issues around which profound disagreements between even moderate Islamists and Western liberals and progressives are likely to persist for some time.

The potentially moderate and democratically oriented Muslims who are attracted to such movements operate within a volatile political space

that hovers between cooptation and repression by authoritarian pro-Western Middle Eastern governments, on the one hand, and a resigned strategic convergence with violent extremist organizations, on the other. Positive overtures and other signals on the part of US and Western governments towards these democratic Islamist opposition groups, combined with enhanced ties to internationalist solidarity organizations and progressive Western NGOs can potentially strengthen the autonomy and increase the political capital of these groups. While this may incur political costs for the repressive client governments traditionally allied with the US in the region, and at the same time offend, or at least challenge, many Western liberals and progressives who will understandably object to many of the views and positions of these groups, the overwhelming danger of pharmacotic war may force dissenting Western intellectuals and political activists to revise their own understandings of the range of politically acceptable alternatives in the Middle East, and in other predominantly Muslim areas, as well.

#### **Political Mobilization and Legalistic Alternatives to the ‘War on Terrorism’**

Since September 11, most progressive opponents and critics of the Bush Administration’s ‘War on Terrorism’ have called for the implementation of some form of international legalistic approach to addressing the problems posed by international terrorism. Inspired by the successful example of the US prosecutions of the perpetrators of the unsuccessful 1993 bombing of the World Trade Towers, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the indictments by several national courts of war criminals and accused violators of international human rights laws – including many defendants formerly protected by government immunity – along with other examples of the rapidly accelerating authority and reach of various international legal institutions, most such commentators have been calling for criminal justice-oriented solutions to the crisis precipitated by the attacks of September 11, and to the danger of terrorism more generally.<sup>3</sup> Generally, such legal-judicial alternatives involve legally defining the terrorist attacks as crimes against humanity rather than as acts of war against the United States, and then utilizing international police powers and, if necessary, limited military forces operating under internationally recognized authority, to apprehend the perpetrators of those attacks and to try them in international tribunals.

While such legalistic approaches represent a sincere effort to develop an ethically responsible standard for international political conduct on the part of both governments and individual political actors, they nevertheless suffer from a number of conceptual and practical problems. First, and most obviously, they mistakenly reduce the intentionality and political meaning of terrorist violence (as well as other forms of legally dubious political violence, including many military operations by nation-states) to the categories of conventional Western criminal law. In so doing, they conflate

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or ignore logically crucial and politically essential distinctions of meaning among different kinds of symbolic acts of political violence. Such acts may be motivated not only by calculations of political advantage or material self-interest, for example, but by religion, group ritual, identity (ontopolitics) or symbolic self-sacrifice, among other reasons, as well. To ignore the differences between such manifestations of *Glaubenskrieg* and more conventional political-economic conflicts not only effectively evades the legal obligation to consider intention, but will also likely prove ineffectual, and even counterproductive, as a result. To describe those responsible for the attacks on September 11 as essentially international criminals, rather than as agents of political organizations engaged in international theo-political pharmacotic violence, is an obvious and dangerous mischaracterization of both the agency and intentionality of those actors. It also incorrectly assumes that the individuals who comprise this network of self-understood soldiers in an international holy war conduct themselves according to Western logics of individualist cost-benefit instrumental rationality and secular materialist metaphysics, and subscribe to the general conceptions of both moral and procedural justice that ground Western legal theory. This sort of elementary hermeneutic error leads many who justifiably fear the implications of the Bush administration's 'War on Terrorism' to conclude implausibly that the present members and future recruits into groups like Al Qaeda are likely to be deterred by the prospect of arrest and judicial punishment, that their organizations – through some combination of police and military tactics – will eventually be destroyed and dismantled (along the lines of international criminal organizations like the Medellin Cartel), and that widespread support for such international judicial actions will materialize within the Islamic world. Yet none of these assumptions is realistic.

This is not to suggest that international legal efforts to restrain the pressures towards pharmacotic war should be dismissed outright, of course, but only to insist that their limitations be acknowledged. Significant problems, for example, confront well-intentioned, but ineffectual efforts to convince the Bush administration to conduct the 'War on Terrorism' in accordance with international laws of war, or to otherwise conform in its behavior to multilateral institutional restrictions on its unilateralist foreign policies. While maintaining the public fiction of a legalistic alternative to the 'War on Terrorism' and other current American foreign policies may be a necessary corrective to the momentum of rhetorical support for pharmacotic war, exaggerating the viability of a purely legalistic approach to the current crisis can also lead to dangerous political complacency, or worse. Neither violent theo-political extremists like Al Qaeda, nor the foreign policy decision-makers associated with the Wolfowitz-Rice-Perle wing of the Bush administration, nor the Christian fundamentalist theocrats running US Attorney General John Ashcroft's Department of Justice – that is, those who are currently both controlling and profiting politically from the present cycle of pharmacotic violence – nor, for that matter other peripheral political beneficiaries of this violence, like Ariel Sharon's Likud coalition and

Hamas, are currently exhibiting even minimal deference towards liberal international institutions or international legal norms.

In such a political environment, it is difficult to see how legalistic approaches alone can be expected to restrain the politically organized inertia of pharmacotic violence that, for the moment, at least, only serves to politically and organizationally strengthen those in a position to direct its course. Absent a large-scale transnational movement of principled non-violent international solidarity and resistance to pharmacotic war, the likelihood of further cycles of mutually reinforcing mimetic pharmacotic violence fueled by further terrorist atrocities on the one hand, and by escalating, increasingly unilateral US military violence on the other, remains high. Such a course of events will likely result in the further weakening of domestic and international legal institutions, accompanied by the evisceration of core civil liberties guarantees, the reduction to practical irrelevance of fragile transnational peace and human rights organizations and institutions, and the overall undermining of the rule of law both domestically and internationally (Campbell, 2002).

From a perspective inspired by a fully realistic assessment of the dangers of pharmacotic war, any narrowly legalistic solution to the present crisis can only serve, at best, as a necessary but far from sufficient element of a broader struggle against such danger. Such a struggle will require simultaneous action at several levels of political involvement, including focused participation in ordinary electoral politics, coordinated lobbying by organized anti-war groups, and large-scale national and international mass mobilizations. It will also have to include creative micropolitical strategies involving affinity group actions, NGO campaigns and probably even other, more confrontational forms of ‘extraordinary’ political action, including perhaps mass mobilizations and civil disobedience campaigns. The enormous challenges facing any such efforts can hardly be overstated, especially when confronted with an institutional foreign policy-making system as insulated from public accountability as the American system is, and under the severely politically disabling conditions created by intensifying concentrations of corporate control over the flow of information to mass audiences, and by the recent spate of legislation and executive orders targeted against domestic dissent and political opposition, issued by the US government since September 11.

### **Micropolitics, NGOs and Pharmacosis**

That said, a pharmacotic ‘clash of civilizations’ between the US and the Islamic world is far from inevitable. As Geov Parrish has suggested:

... buried in the rubble of the post-9/11 landscape, lurks enormous opportunity. There is a new willingness among Americans to listen to and perhaps try new policy ideas, to consider different ways of solving seemingly insoluble problems. We know that crisis itself need not last forever or become a normal state of affairs, a 1984 for the 21st century. (Parrish, 2002: 134)<sup>4</sup>

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Progressive NGOs, ad hoc affinity groups and other non-state political actors will necessarily play a major role in any such resistance to pharmacotic war. Many critical writers on international politics have called for governments substantially to expand large-scale state-to-state interventions, such as massive international economic aid initiatives, institution-building assistance, poverty-reduction programs and other 'nation-building' programs as a solution to the burgeoning problems facing the Middle East and the Islamic world generally. Such initiatives obviously have their own problems, and in any case are not likely to be funded at any level approaching what is necessary, particularly so long as the pharmacotic effects of September 11, the US war in Afghanistan, and perhaps other future acts of international violence persist. In such a context, the major sources of resistance to the vicious downward cycle of international violence and confrontation that could lead to a full-scale pharmacotic war are, for the time being, more likely to come from non-governmental sectors of global civil society, NGOs and transnational social movements, rather than from governments themselves. Although such resistance will ultimately have to influence government policy, it is nevertheless likely to emerge first and most effectively through the actions of non-state organizations, and will likely take the form both of intensified cross-border outreach efforts by civil society groups and NGOs, as well as 'extraordinary' political actions by both established and emerging international social and political movements. In this regard, both existing non-governmental organizations and a range of ad hoc groups have already begun to undertake important steps.

Immediately following September 11, for example, a relatively small and loosely coordinated coalition in the United States comprised of established peace groups, activists involved in the movement against corporate globalization, activists from the Arab- and Muslim American communities, other community groups and various sectarian leftist organizations staged demonstrations in several US cities protesting the Bush administration's unfolding military operations in Afghanistan. The political unproductiveness of these early responses was to a significant extent a consequence of the widespread failure of this nascent anti-war movement to grasp how far the pharmacotic process had already gone. These demonstrations, and the rallies that accompanied them, were in most cases hurried and reactive in tone, clumsily organized, and far too diverse in message and tactics to have had much impact on the emerging public debate about the administration's 'War on Terrorism'. With few exceptions, most of the speeches delivered during these rallies suffered from a strident, emotionally insensitive rhetoric and, in many cases, a confused understanding of elementary institutions and processes of international relations. As a result the mass demonstrations were largely dismissed by mainstream media, and generally ignored by the US public.

Out of these early tactical disappointments, a number of prominent US-based NGOs and anti-war groups began to rethink the appropriateness of conventional oppositional strategies to the far more difficult circumstances facing those interested in opposing the US military actions

in Afghanistan and elsewhere. The NGO Global Exchange, for example, which had been active in several of these early demonstrations, began sponsoring direct people-to-people links along with both local and transnational victim support actions. As violent attacks, threats, and assaults against Arab-Americans, Muslim Americans and those suspected of being members of these groups escalated after September 11, Global Exchange, along with other Bay Area groups like the Midnight Special Law Collective began coordinating volunteer ‘accompanists’ who simply showed up alone or in small but visible groups at mosques, Islamic cultural events, private Muslim homes and other locations where violence or intimidation directed against these groups and individuals had either occurred or was likely. A number of non-Muslim women in these solidarity and support groups began wearing the *hijab* in public, and in various other ways members of these groups placed themselves in harm’s way between the real and potential targets of pharmacotic violence and their victimizers. Prominent local and national figures, along with individual interfaith community leaders called for public meetings at mosques and Islamic centers across the country to show solidarity with innocent Muslims and Americans of Middle Eastern extraction. In Los Angeles, for example, several prominent figures in the entertainment industry, including Edward James Olmos and Ed Asner, held public gatherings and press conferences in such locations, calling on Americans to oppose pharmacotic violence of all forms. The Japanese-American Cultural Heritage Museum in Los Angeles (which is located symbolically on the site of the deportation of thousands of Japanese-Americans to internment camps during the Second World War), sponsored a forum on the implications of the experience of the Second World War incarceration of Japanese-Americans for the current plight of Muslim and Arab-Americans. Academics, journalists and other intellectuals published opinion pieces in local newspapers and magazines, and appeared on radio and television programs calling for forbearance and for a critical rethinking of the Bush administration’s almost exclusively military response to the crisis. Many members of Arab-American and American Islamic communities subsequently credited these and other similar actions by individuals, community groups and NGOs with having dramatically curtailed the violence directed against them.

Some transnational affinity groups have begun to take more direct action against the spiral of pharmacotic violence, as in the case of hundreds of pro-Palestinian solidarity ‘internationalists’ who infiltrated refugee camps on the occupied West Bank during the Israeli military assaults of April 2002. Other organizations have sought to make available alternative news and information to that provided by the corporate-owned American media and the Bush administration. Foreign Policy In Focus, for example, has established an impressive online ‘think tank without walls’ (<http://www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org/index.html>), where dissident voices challenging the current direction of American foreign policy can be heard, and a clearing house where actions and other planned events can be publicized. Other US-based Internet sites where critical information on the

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unfolding 'War on Terrorism' can be found include Middle East Report ([www.merip.org](http://www.merip.org)), Focus on the Global South ([www.focusweb.org](http://www.focusweb.org)), the Z Magazine online website ([www.zmag.org](http://www.zmag.org)), the International Forum on Globalization ([www.ifg.org](http://www.ifg.org)), CommonDreams ([www.commondreams.org](http://www.commondreams.org)), AlterNet ([www.alternet.org](http://www.alternet.org)), and ([www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org)). The Arab-American Anti-discrimination Committee ([www.adc.org](http://www.adc.org)) and the Muslim-American organization CAIR monitor and report on acts of pharmacotic violence against American Muslims and Arab-Americans. American Atheists ([www.atheists.org](http://www.atheists.org)) and the Interfaith Alliance ([www.tialliance.org](http://www.tialliance.org)) publish commentaries, reports and other materials exposing the connections between religious extremism and pharmacotic political violence generally. Outside the United States, websites like [www.bitterlemons.org](http://www.bitterlemons.org), [www.mideastweb.org](http://www.mideastweb.org) and [www.peacewatch.org](http://www.peacewatch.org) publish thoughtful, incisive commentary from contrasting viewpoints, including Israeli as well as Arab voices. The Middle East Media Research Institute ([www.memri.org](http://www.memri.org)) publishes real-time translations of Arabic-, Farsi- and Hebrew-language media reports and analyses. (In response to this independent media counter-strategy, right-wing anti-Palestinian Israeli Internet activists have begun 'cyber-squatting': capturing Palestinian-sounding domain names like 'jenin.org', 'sabrashatila.org', or 'fatah.org' and using these to publish pro-Sharon and anti-Palestinian propaganda.)

In the US, several NGOs have sponsored and organized actions that underscore the connections between the victims of September 11 and the victims of the civil war in Afghanistan and the US bombing there. In the closing months of 2001, communities across the country participated in hanging over 25,000 'Hate Free Zone' posters in public forums. In January 2002, Medea Benjamin, Green Party candidate for US Senate from California, led a 'Victim to Victim Delegation' trip to Afghanistan, in which survivors and relatives of victims of the September 11 attacks visited shelters and homes of Afghans who had also lost family members as a result of the US bombing during the war against the Taliban. One result of this trip was a series of meetings with Members of Congress where relatives of the WTC victims proposed that the US government establish a \$20 million fund for the innocent victims of the US bombing in Afghanistan. This would entail an assessment of 'collateral damages' by CARE and other NGOs, and Congressional appropriation of funds to pay for these reparations. In February 2002, another group of 17 family members of victims of the September 11 attacks formed an organization called 'September 11 Families for Peaceful Tomorrows' in order to provide a forum for discussing alternatives to war and to call for public support and assistance to families harmed by the US bombing campaign in Afghanistan' (Moss, 2002). In Los Angeles, the Levantine Cultural Center, a popular venue for political and cultural events that regularly bring together representatives of all of the cultures of the Middle East, has been hosting a series of poetry readings, plays and musical performances that address political and social themes related to the events of September 11 and the 'War on Terrorism'.

The most promising response to the danger of pharmacotic war remains, then, the revitalization of a multi-track, media-savvy politics of principled non-violent resistance, informed by the cultivation of what William Connolly has called an ‘ethos of pluralization’, along with the rekindling of activist democratic political *virtu* (Connolly, 1995; Honig, 1993). As Hannah Arendt and others have shown, war and other forms of organized violence tend to render politics mute. Resistance to the escalation of this conflict into a catastrophic pharmacotic war will thus have to involve clearing a viable public space for political action, ranging from interrogating the rhetoric of the war on terrorism, to challenging scapegoating practices at every opportunity, to cultivating new democratic forms of what Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt have called ‘constituent power’ (Hardt and Negri, 2000; Negri, 1999), both within the country and across international borders. In assessing the impact of the various efforts by the diverse range of groups that are slowly mounting a resistance to pharmacotic war, it must be stressed that the primary positive effect of such actions is to signal to like-minded opponents of pharmacotic war within the Islamic world that substantial numbers of Americans, along with others in the West, reject and oppose current trends towards such a pharmacotic ‘clash of civilizations’. The immediate goal of an anti-pharmacotic politics, in other words, is to undermine the cultural and social foundations that encourage xenophobia and militarism in both regions, while giving aid and comfort to those on both sides of the increasingly precarious lines of articulation between the two ‘civilizations’ who recognize that pharmacotic war is not inevitable, but that to prevent it will require a sophisticated understanding of its character and dynamics, and a new kind of politics capable of challenging it. Pharmacosis poisons political life; thus the cure for pharmacotic war will continue to be more politics.

#### Notes

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1.

They strutted around in black turbans, they drove big pickups, they looked tough. But on the inside, the Taliban were actually a bunch of pretty depressed guys. At least that’s what their shrink says. ‘I don’t think the Taliban needed more guns,’ the doctor added with a grin. ‘But more Prozac.’ When the hard-line Islamic Taliban invaded this northern Afghan city 3½ years ago, [Dr] Alemi was stuck in the unenviable position of dispensing mental health care to a group of people who, with their appetite for war and medieval punishments, would seem certifiably insane almost anywhere else. (Gettleman, 2002)

2. None of this should be construed as an endorsement of Samuel Huntington’s empirically flawed and tendentious ‘clash of civilizations’ thesis (Huntington, 1996).

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Pharmacosis is an onto-political process, one which is readily manipulated and exploited by political leaders for their own purposes – rather than an ontological condition of global intercultural relations (Campbell, 1998; Connolly 1991, 1995). On the flaws in Huntington's approach, see *Foreign Affairs* (1996) and Walt (1997).

3. In the United States, the most consistently principled advocate of such solutions has been Richard Falk (2001a, 2001b, 2001c).

4. The reference to Orwell's dystopian vision is suggestive, but science fiction allegories usually require nuanced interpretation. For decades following the end of the Second World War, the popular American image of the Cold War enemy was a combination of the hellish world of Winston Smith and the grim communist tyranny portrayed in Solzhenitsyn's novels. Then, following the collapse of the USSR, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* of depoliticized hedonists strung out on antidepressants seemed more prophetic. Now it may turn out to have been another science fiction classic that charts the future: the Arabic translation of the title of Isaac Asimov's classic *Foundation* series, which was apparently very popular in the Middle East at the time Osama bin Laden's youth, is Al Qaeda.

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**Larry George** is (text to come)