

[where have you gone, Eugene McCarthy?]

How They Get Away With It

Three reasons Washington's empire-builders don't have to worry about '60s-style dissent — not including the volunteer Army

By **Scott McConnell**

IT WAS SURPRISING how many people seemed to take genuine pleasure in British MP George Galloway's contentious appearance before the Senate Subcommittee on Investigations. He was, after all, only a former left-Labor Party backbencher, a bit pink in his associations. And notwithstanding the vigor of his denials, the nature of his financial relationship to Saddam's Oil for Food program was not entirely cleared up.

But it wasn't Galloway's protestations of innocence or his political character that made his turn noteworthy. What was striking was the sight of a man inside the Senate chamber using the full force of the English language to denounce the pack of lies behind President Bush's Iraq policy. Galloway didn't submit to the Democratic Party script and pretend that the war was due to a "massive intelligence failure," that President Bush was somehow misinformed about Saddam's weapons (or lack of them). He went instead for the jugular of the whole enterprise, reiterating what he had said well before the war—that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, no connection to 9/11, no ties to al-Qaeda—and on these crucial points he was right and Sen. Norm Coleman and the other Republicans hoping to milk his testimony for electoral gain were dead wrong. The fruit of their error, Galloway continued, was 100,000 dead, including

1,600 Americans, and another 15,000 U.S. soldiers wounded, many of them permanently maimed—not to mention that the United States now has the worst international image in its history or that the volunteer army can no longer meet its recruiting goals and may have its back broken by the burdens of an extended Iraq occupation.

One never hears words like this spoken in the Senate. A search for successors to William Fulbright or Wayne Morse or Eugene McCarthy or Bobby Kennedy yields only empty chairs. Big-name Democrats scramble for microphone time to denounce as "extremist" judges who are pro-life, but about the fomenters of a foreign policy that is manifestly extremist, they fall into timid silence. Howard Dean, the reputed mad dog of last year's primaries, has turned toy poodle as head of Democratic National Committee, full of fighting barbs about Tom DeLay's ethics but silent about a war that is hardly despised by his party's big donors. It took a Brit to remind Americans turning on the evening news what it might be like to have an opposition party.

The failure of Americans to generate a politically significant domestic opposition to the war is now one of the most important developments in world politics. It means that the Bush administration can contemplate, without any fear

of adverse domestic political consequences, expansion of its war to Syria or a large-scale bombing of Iran. The only constraints on its behavior are international.

In the year and a half after September 2001, observant outsiders could intuit much about the administration's plans. It was clear that the neoconservatives around Cheney and Rumsfeld wanted war not only against Iraq but against six or seven countries in the Middle East. Details were filled in by memoirs such as Richard Clarke's and the reporting of Bob Woodward. The recent publication of the so-called Downing Street memorandum, recording the minutes of a meeting of Tony Blair's top advisors in July 2002, confirms that Bush had already decided upon war and that "the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy." The British document indicates that Bush was lying outright when he told the Congress, in the fall of 2002, "I hope the use of force will not become necessary," that "if Iraq is to avoid military action ... it has the obligation to prove compliance with all the world's demands," and further, that the United States would go to war only "as a last resort." The Iraqis at that point had no way to avoid Bush's invasion, despite the fact that, in denying that they had any WMD, they were, in the words of U.S. weapons inspector David Kay, "telling the truth."

Not only was the administration silent about the Blair memorandum, a silence that confirmed its contents, but the rest of the political class ignored it as well—save for Congressman John Conyers and a rump group in the House. There were no major antiwar demonstrations this spring, no campuses shut down by protest, no marches on Washington big enough to notice. In the capital itself, a journalist can go to cocktail parties full of foreign-policy establishment types, all prudently opposed to the war, their talk spiked by witticisms about the failings and hypocrisy of the Bushites. But none are public about it, and the realists now say that an American assault on Iran is a virtual certainty.

For someone who grew up in the 1960s, when protests against the Vietnam War dominated the culture, the question that raises its head almost every day is, “How do they get away with it?” Of course, the wars are different: Vietnam, however much Kennedy and Johnson erred in terms of overestimating what U.S. Armed Forces could accomplish in Southeast Asia, at least corresponded to a general strategy of containment and of maintaining the

In terms of the domestic climate, one key difference is the absence of a draft: we fight in Iraq with a volunteer Army, working-class in origin—men and women who may have signed up originally for good pay and benefits or the possibility of a college education they couldn’t otherwise afford. The professional class is hardly represented, the political class not at all. Unlike the 1960s, the children of the establishment don’t have to calculate how they will avoid service or maneuver to find safe spots in the National Guard. This changes the political atmosphere on campus considerably, where there is now as much a likelihood of unrest about something to do with gays and lesbians or the wages of janitors as an aggressive war.

But three other developments, of impact perhaps even greater than the absence of a draft, make a culture of protest harder to sustain than it was in the 1960s.

The first is a different, less industrial, more service-oriented and more globalized American economy, which produces as great a change in the way citizens think about economic life as it does

required admission ticket for any kind of upward mobility. So there was no burden on parents to worry about how they were going to afford college for their children—at least in comparison to today. Similarly, no one seemed to worry about health insurance; medicine could obviously accomplish less, but the United States was in that interlude between the time when a family could get wiped out by the costs of a child’s long-term illness and the present, when the cost of health insurance and the fear of losing it weighs on the calculations of nearly everyone in the middle and lower classes.

In the 1960s, therefore, a huge proportion of Americans felt little fear of losing their jobs. In affluent America, one could “drop out” of the regular career train—many did for reasons more cultural than political—and then rejoin the rat race at the time and place of one’s choosing. Those who dropped out didn’t fear slipping into poverty. For those with reasonable modern-economy skills, lower-middle-class jobs were there for the asking—and there was no reserve army of desperate Latin Americans ready to work for almost any price. This was a political economy that not only allowed dissent, but indeed one that seemed to make it, in economic terms, nearly cost-free. The contrast with the present day—where one hears continually from those with a stake in the middle-class that dissent is something only the wealthy (or very poor) can afford—could not be more striking.

A second reason for the low ebb of dissent is an attitudinal shift in the American Jewish community, particularly among those active politically, a shift exemplified by the rise of neoconservatism. It is clear to anyone remotely interested in the question that the Old Left (the American Communist Party and its related organizations) was in great part Jewish, the New Left in great

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existing East-West boundaries. On the borders of the Cold War, divided states like Germany and Korea had become a kind of norm, and the United States was protecting in South Vietnam a weak and unstable status quo. Iraq was clearly something completely different: a war initiated under the falsehood that Saddam Hussein had something to do with 9/11 and clearly in violation of international law.

in the goods they consume. The United States of the 1960s was “The Affluent Society” in the John Kenneth Galbraith phrase, and it was a secure affluence. Tens of millions of relatively well-compensated manufacturing jobs were available, it seemed, for anyone willing to take them. You were supposed to finish high school, and a diploma was necessary to get a secure job, but a college diploma was not yet what it is now—the

part the direct offspring of the Old. Without the radical Jewish children of radical parents, there would have been no early SDS, no Free Speech Movement at Berkeley, no New York kids going South for Freedom Rides to turn the civil-rights movement into a matter of

A third way in which the America is a very different country today can be traced to the political transformation of American Protestantism. In his outstanding book *The New American Militarism*, Andrew Bacevich describes how evangelicals—who once were

from clear that even the revival of the draft could ignite the kind of campus protest that would make an impression on Congress and the administration. Where would the leaders of campus protest come from? For if they are less likely, given the rise of neoconservatism, to come from ranks of activist Jews, it is even more implausible to imagine them emerging from the remains of the WASP establishment, whose children are not the academic and social leaders on the nation's elite campuses. It is perhaps only slightly more likely to come from the new Asian immigrant groups, who are generally still focused on professional advancement or purely ethnic concerns. And only the wooliest of neo-Marxist romantics can see it emerging from the poor or working classes.

In the absence of an antiwar movement or serious domestic political opposition, only the outside world can put the brakes on American policy—only when Bush's war plans come up against foreign obstacles that produce a dramatic defeat or humiliation or generate a financial crisis that the administration can't overcome. Barring that, the American future may be war for as long as anyone can foresee. ■

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national conscience. By the late 1960s, the Left was more ethnically diverse, but young Jewish radicals had been its leavening agent.

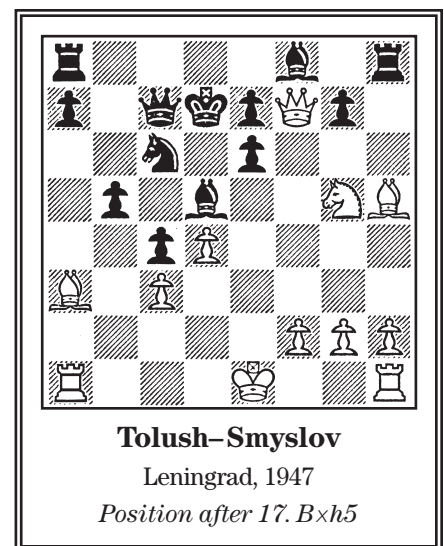
The Jewish turn from the New Left, marked by such signposts as the collapse of the black-Jewish alliance in the late 1960s and the recognition that the Pentagon and an airlift ordered by Richard Nixon might have been necessary to Israel's survival in October 1973, may have been a turnabout in the mentality of no more than a few hundred activists and polemicists, but the effect on the political tone of the country shouldn't be underestimated. The political biographies of Marty Peretz and David Horowitz, two emblematic figures of this sea change, with a corresponding shift in the mentality of thousands of politically astute and engaged people in their cohort, had a huge impact on the country's political culture.

Of course, it is true that most American Jews are still politically liberal and a majority now tell pollsters they oppose the Iraq War. But this is beside the point. Nowadays, political passion, engagement, and activism are as likely to be found on the Jewish Right—at least a Right favoring a pro-war, pro-imperialist (and very pro-Israel) foreign policy—as they are on the Left. Nothing could be more different from 1968.

both politically quiescent and skeptical of the culture that surrounded military life—came, in the wake of Vietnam, to embrace the military as a sort of bulwark against national moral decay. With the corresponding decline in political numbers and influence of the mainline Protestant churches, this increased energy on the evangelical Right changed dramatically the way most American Christians regard war. In the hands of evangelicals, Just War principles became, in Bacevich's words, "not a series of stringent tests but a signal: not a red light, not even a flashing yellow, but a bright green that relieved the Bush administration of any obligation to weigh seriously the moral implications of when and where it employed coercion."

And thus, in the developed world's most devout country, Christian witness against war "became less effective than in countries thoroughly and probably irreversibly secularized." Evangelicals have in great part transformed the Christian view of Just War into a crusade theory in which the United States is believed to embody God's will and its enemies are "God's enemies."

For those yearning for a revival of a peace movement that might slow down this administration, there is nothing reassuring about this analysis. It is far



[sources say]

Deep Throat's Ghost

The Mark Felt I knew acted more out of personal pique than moral principle.

By Ralph de Toledano

WHO WAS DEEP THROAT? For some three decades that question echoed when Watergate, the scandal that drove a president out of the White House in disgrace, was chewed over. Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, the *Washington Post* reporters who wrote the shattering and marathon exposé of the scandal, gave Deep Throat as the major source of the sensational stories that forced Richard Nixon's resignation and brought down his administration. But they categorically refused to disclose his identity, except to say that he was an official in the executive branch who had access to the evidence. But so wide-ranging were Deep Throat's disclosures that it was often assumed he was a composite—amazing in a city where a state secret is something you heard in the Metropolitan Club bar.

Unexpectedly, the secret is out. Deep Throat is Mark Felt, assistant director and second-in-command of the FBI at the time, and who in the late 1970s had been indicted, tried, and convicted for authorizing wiretaps and illegal entries against the Weather Underground and other domestic terrorist groups. Prior to his trial, he had published an exculpatory memoir, *The FBI Pyramid*, largely written by me since his original manuscript read like *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*.

Contrary to legend, J. Edgar and Richard M. thoroughly disliked each

other, though they kept their feelings under wraps. Following his usual custom of trying to keep new presidents off-balance, Hoover sent Mark Felt to investigate trumped-up charges by political gossip columnist Jack Anderson that John Ehrlichman, a Nixon adviser, was a homosexual. Ehrlichman was cleared, but from that moment Felt had him in his pocket, and the president had it in for Felt.

When Hoover died, Felt served for one day as acting director. But when it was suggested that Felt take over Hoover's job, Nixon was emphatically against it. Felt was "a bad guy," Nixon said. "I don't want him. I want a fellow in there that is not part of the old guard." Instead, he

Ehrlichman was reporting White House cover-up activities to Felt, and he had been told that Felt was leaking to the *Washington Post* and to *Time*.

But there was a curious twist to Felt's behavior. Secretly violating his oath of office, he was playing a double game, hoping that in seeming to play up to the White House he would be appointed FBI director. There was a plan to have Deputy CIA Director Vernon Walters lean on Pat Gray and tell him, "Stay the hell out of this"—to call off the FBI's investigation. There were indications that Mark Felt would lend his support to this plan. Gray would then call Felt in and say, "We've got the signal from across the river [the CIA] to put the hold on this."

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appointed L. Patrick Gray III, a Justice Department official. When the scandal began to build, Bob Haldeman, Nixon's chief of staff, complained, "the FBI is not under control because Pat Gray doesn't exactly know how to control it." Felt was running the investigation, and it was "leading into some productive areas" and getting much too close to home. Everything that FBI agents were turning up was in Felt's hands. Moreover, Haldeman suspected, and he was correct, that

Felt resigned. The White House believed he would never go public. "No one likes an informer," Nixon said. But the case had by then developed its own momentum, the Oval Office tapes had been discovered, and Congress was moving decisively.

Mark Felt wrote his book. I re-wrote it and Felt swore to me that he was not Deep Throat, that he had never leaked information to the Woodward-Bernstein team or anyone else. The book was pub-