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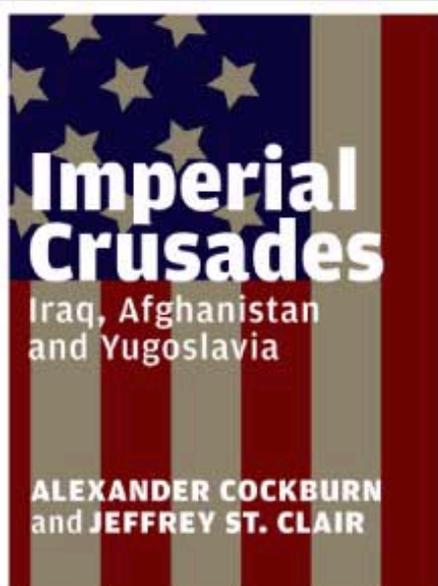
**edited by alexander cockburn and jeffrey st.clair**

## New Edition of CounterPunch

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**Imperial Crusades:**  
Iraq, Afghanistan and Yugoslavia  
by Alexander Cockburn  
and Jeffrey St. Clair

Today's Stories

April 23, 2004

April 23, 2004

## All Things Are Not Equal

### The Perils of Globalization

By CYNTHIA MCKINNEY

*This is the text of Cynthia McKinney's talk at the Georgia Tech Globalization Forum held on April 22, 2004*

I would like to thank Georgia Tech and the Georgia Peace Center for holding this forum tonight.

I spent one quarter as a "Rambling Wreck" and I hope that qualifies me at least for honorary membership on Tech's winning team.

However, I must admit that I did also spend one quarter as a Georgia State Panther. So I hope I'm not the victim of a squeeze play tonight.

Tonight we are here to talk about globalization. During my grad school days, I sat through a few econ courses. And I remember that my teachers could draw elaborate diagrams on the board, and write mathematical equations that went the length of the chalkboard; and they would always add at the end, "if all things are equal."

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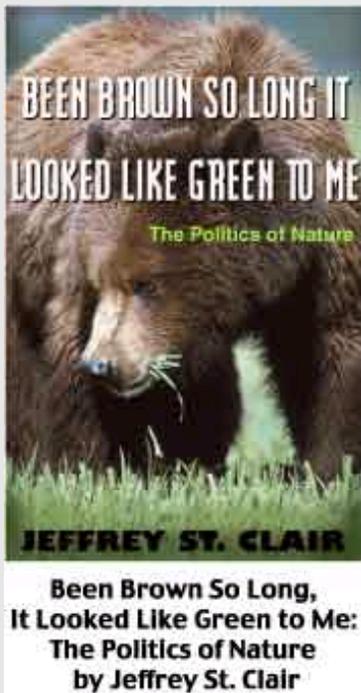
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And so I emerged from graduate school a true believer, that free trade was fair, if all things are equal.

But as I left the world of academia and entered the world of politics, my first lesson learned was that all things are not equal.

I think I would like to start my remarks by remembering a comment that Venezuela's President, Hugo Chavez, makes in the documentary, "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised." In that film, he says that the people who are labeled antiglobalizers are really not that at all. That they are the true globalizers because they care about the world and all its people.

The most glaring effect of globalization that I have confronted is the impact on the lives of real people for whom I am responsible.

My first encounter with people whose lives were impacted by what we call globalization came as I sought to represent Georgia's old 11th District that swept through Georgia's poor and rural black belt. Those most up in arms at the time were our farmers who were agitated about NAFTA. Those not up in arms, but who bore the brunt of NAFTA, were in one case, the women of Sparta, Georgia--Hancock County. There, single mothers held families together with their low-wage jobs in the textile plants. There, single mothers lost their jobs when the plants moved away. I watched desperate families endure desperate times. "All things being equal" didn't take the women of Sparta, Georgia into account. As a caring single mother, who also happened to be an elected official, I had to. That's when I drafted legislation to take away tax breaks for corporations that locate their plants overseas. It wasn't a sexy subject at that time, but it was definitely a problem that I saw firsthand, affecting real lives and real people.

Now, more people are paying attention to globalization because at first it was just "them," now, it's a whole lot of us. Globalization used to be perceived as something that happened to poor workers or the environment in faraway places like China. Now globalization has come home.

So the first effect that I would like to mention is the effect that these economic policies have on careers, creating uncertainty for real people as they watch more and more jobs being sent off shore.

Estimates run into the millions of jobs that have been lost since George Bush was sworn into office. How does one measure the anxiety level of American workers who need these jobs; watch them leave the US; realize that some companies even continue to get tax breaks when they leave; and then find that their careers have been outsourced?

In all of my econ courses, I don't recall any of my professors ever adding that to the equation.

Secondly, I am concerned about the worsening gap between rich and poor; not just globally, but in our own country, too.

Globally, as many as 1 billion people fail to meet life's basic requirements as defined by the UN. About three-fifths of the world's population in developing countries live without sanitation. About one-third live without safe drinking water. One-fourth lack adequate housing; one-fifth live without modern health services;

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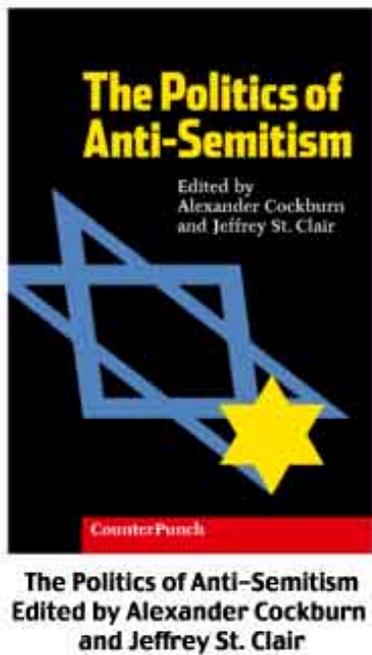
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one-fifth of their children don't make it through fifth grade; an equal number are malnourished.

Water shortage and contamination kill nearly 25,000 people a day. Diarrhea kills nearly 4 million children every year. In Bolivia, when the US multinational Bechtel tried to privatize the water supply, a revolution was sparked. Now, we can add Bolivia to the list of countries that don't like our policies.

In addition to global inequality, the United States is also experiencing domestic inequality. According to the US Census, more than 34 million Americans now live below the poverty line. That's almost 2 million more impoverished than in 2001. Over 16% of our children live in poverty, almost double the figures for 2001. The Veterans Administration estimates that on any given night 300,000 veterans sleep on America's streets. The VA estimates that during the year as many as half a million veterans experience homelessness. Conservatively, one out of every four homeless males who is sleeping in a doorway, alley, or a cardboard box in our cities and rural communities has put on a uniform and served our country. Surely America must remember them. But while our country spends one billion dollars a week for war, we can't find money to provide our vets shelter and a warm meal?

In addition to the highest unemployment in a decade and persistent health care challenges for those Americans who do have jobs, a permanent underclass is being created and that is not sustainable.

I'll just recite for you the findings from several studies published this year:

United for a Fair Economy: State of the Dream, 2004 report states that on some indices, the racial gap has actually widened since the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sadly, it will take 8 years to close the high school graduation gap; 73 years to close the college graduation gap; 581 years to close the per capita income gap; and 1,664 years to close the home ownership gap.

The New York Times informs us that nearly half of all black men aged 16 to 64 in New York City are unemployed.

The Chicago Sun-Times tells us about a Hull House Report entitled, "Minding the Gap: An Assessment of Racial Disparity in Metropolitan Chicago. According to the Sun-Times, "the report describes two completely different cities, documenting disparities in income, education, housing, transportation, health, and safety."

According to the Hull House report researched by Loyola University, it will take 200 years for the gulf that separates black quality of life from white quality of life to close entirely.

One example cited in the report: "Whites are 125% more likely to use marijuana than blacks; 181% more likely to use cocaine; 431% more likely to use inhalants; 516% more likely to use LSD. And yet blacks account for 79% of all drug arrests."

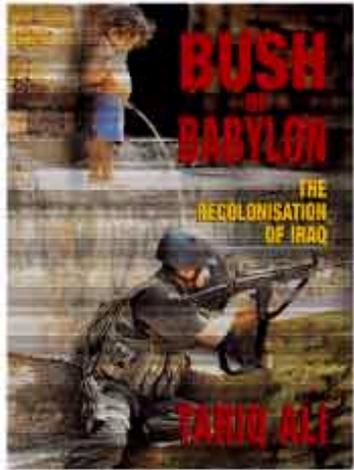
A University of Cincinnati report shows that African Americans are stopped more often, frequently receive unequal treatment after being stopped, are stopped for longer periods of time, and are searched and arrested more often.

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A Harvard University study finds that the quality of health care varies by race and at a recent seminar on the subject, one of the star panelists recommends that blacks see black doctors to escape racism in health care.

Harvard Professor Henry Louis Gates, in his series "America Beyond the Color Line," informs us that a full 40% of all black children are living at or beneath the poverty line.

The Washington Post tells us that hundreds of children tested at least 47% higher than the national average for lead poisoning.

The most recent report comes from the National Urban League, which reports on the State of Black America, 2004. It reminds us that over "216 years ago, the authors of the US Constitution counted enslaved African Americans as 60% of a white person. According to the total of the 2004 Equality Index, the status of African Americans today is 73%" that of their white counterparts.

Over 200 years of American progress equals 13%. No wonder the National Urban League reports that 40% of blacks feel little or no improvement in economics or social mobility.

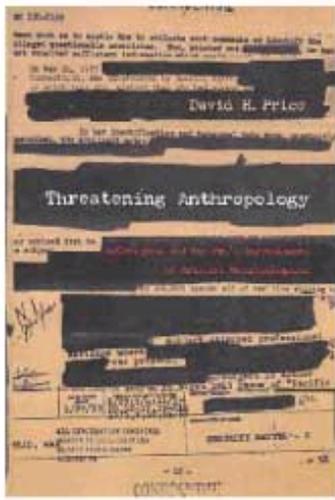
Clearly this is a situation that is not sustainable.

Thirdly, I'd like to talk about a situation that is a growing problem: sexual slavery and human trafficking. One major side effect of extreme poverty throughout the world is the growing crisis of sexual slavery and human trafficking. A recent U.S. Government estimate indicates that approximately 800,000 - 900,000 people annually are trafficked across international borders worldwide and between 18,000 and 20,000 of those victims are trafficked into the United States. This estimate includes men, women, and children who are trafficked into forced labor and sexual exploitation as defined in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000. Girls as young as 13 are trafficked as mail order brides. Children are trafficked for domestic work. In Lithuania, children as young as 11 are known to work as prostitutes. The Government of Azerbaijan wants to crack down on child traffickers who are believed to take children abroad and sell their organs for profit.

This is a human tragedy borne out of world-wide poverty. In fact, human trafficking is the ultimate form of globalization: people doing anything to generate commerce. And while this Administration speaks about the scourge of human trafficking, it has done nothing to end the lucrative Pentagon contracts that go to DynCorp, in particular, a company whose employees are known to have engaged in sexual slavery, and are reported to still be doing so, even today.

Globalization without a moral compass is what we're experiencing today. Here's what John Kennedy had to say at his inauguration in 1961:

"The world is very different now. For man holds in his



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mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. . . . To those new states whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny. We shall not always expect to find them supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them strongly supporting their own freedom--and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside.

To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required--not because the communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right. If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich."

Now, I'll end this as I began it. One vision of globalization has put our entire planetary ecosystem at risk. I do not share that vision. However, a different leadership can inspire us to have a very different vision. I have a global view and I care about the world and all its people. John Kennedy said it right; this Administration and those who think like it get it wrong.

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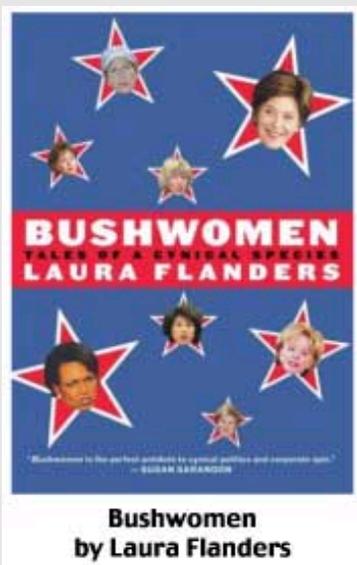
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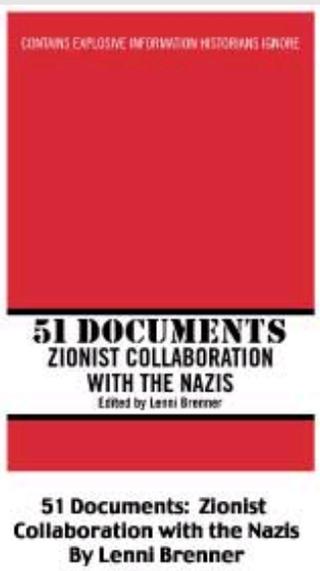
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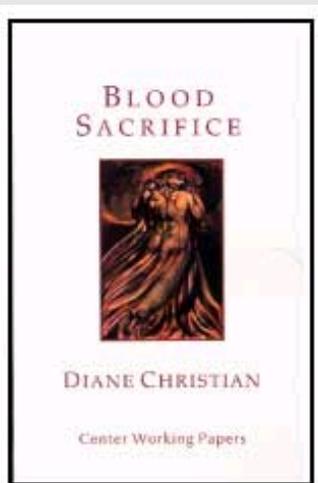
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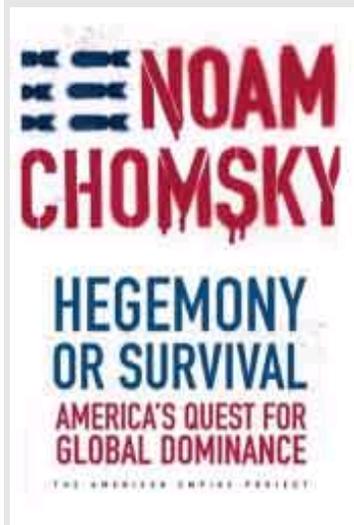
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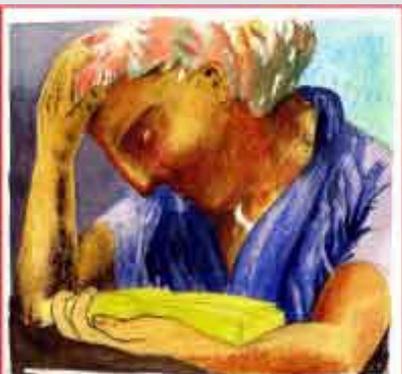
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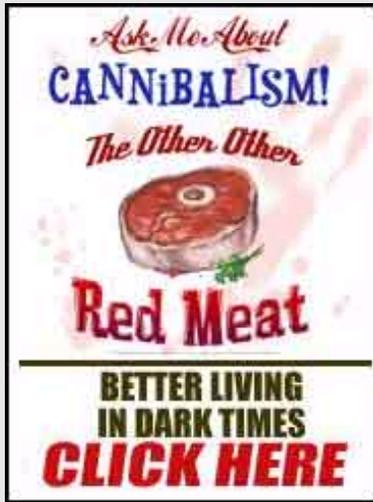
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