



GEORGE GALLOWAY

At THE time that the Daily Telegraph's hard rain came down upon me, "the war in Iraq was critically poised and Mr Galloway was unceasing in his opposition," they said in court documents last month. Quite.

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financial misconduct involving hundreds of millions of dollars, his wife Barbara Amiel, General Ariel Sharon's chief cheerleader in the English-speaking world, and on the board of its parent company sat Richard Perle — called the Prince of Darkness by the Reagan White House — Margaret Thatcher and Henry Kissinger, the greatest living war criminal in the world today.

So we know which side each of the belligerents in November's epic libel

battle, in which I risked total ruin and won a spectacular victory, was on.

The Telegraph and the huge media power of the other neocon foreign billionaire Rupert Murdoch were lead trumpeters for the war on Iraq.

The shrill tinny sound of their bogus patriotism was what accompanied our young soldiers, like Gordon Gentle, into battle, to kill or be killed for George W Bush and his regimental corgi Tony Blair.

Those whose "opposition was unceasing" must be tarred and feathered as "enemies of the state," their supporters "the enemy within."

But the real enemy of our state is the Prime Minister who deceived his country, his party, his Parliament and his country's armed forces into a disastrous war, having reached a secret agreement to act in the interests of a foreign power — an agreement not yet fully revealed.

In plain language, this is treason. Of course, "treason never prospers ... for if it does, none dare call it treason."

The problem for Mr Blair and the real "enemy within," the regimental goats in Parliament and press, is that this treason hath not prospered. It has bloodily, blatantly, barbarously failed.

A blind man in a hurry could see that

the war and the raving neocon fantasies which underpinned it are now collapsing around the ears of its architects.

The departing CIA station chief, in documents leaked to the New York Times, has painted a picture of Iraq as Hades, as Dante's Inferno.

King Abdullah of Jordan is shutting between Washington and Riyadh trying to get the farcical "elections" planned for January 30 called off.

The grand ayatollahs of southern Iraq — and their patrons in the Islamic Republic of Iran — smirk in the knowledge that such an election, in which their supporters are the only likely voters, will sweep them to power in Iraq.

A peculiar foreign policy, you might think — to make the earth shake, disfigure the international legal and political system, kill more than 100,000 people, plunge us into a whirlpool of danger from extremism and terror ... to put the Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani in charge of Iraq.

Of course, Bush and Blair are not doing this because they like Shi'ites. It is unlikely that the theology of the split between Sunni and Shi'ite over the succession of the Prophet Mohammed is much studied in the Bush bedroom.

They are doing it for the same reason why they arm and bankroll Sharon for cynical short-term selfish reasons — anyone who thinks that the Bushes like Jews has never visited the president's golf club.

Put simply, the "enemy is my friend" — the very policy which produced Osama bin Laden in the Afghanistan "jihad" in the 1980s.

When Israel occupied southern Lebanon for most of the last quarter-century, the people who they were oppressing, killing and torturing were mainly Shi'ites.

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Then, the US called them terrorists, a canard on which they have now based their latest ultimatum to Syria — "Stop supporting Hizbullah ... or face the consequences."

The Shi'ite minority in the Bushes' home-from-home Saudi Arabia yearn for a separate state, in which most of the oil is to be found.

For the moment, they are "dangerous extremists" who must be crushed — with US help. If the wind shifts and the empire decides that Saudi Arabia is for the chop, they will become "oppressed," their struggle one for "freedom."

Such a catastrophic failure has been the Bush and Blair invasion of Iraq that they are reduced to seeing Sistani as the "Great White Hope," even though he is not "white" — ie not one of their clients — increasingly not great, as other more patriotic ayatollahs like Baghdadi and the rebel cleric Moqtada al Sadr begin to outflank him, and, old and frail, has little hope of being a long-term bet for the Pax Americana in Iraq.

Under the extraordinary circumstances of war, occupation and resistance, a deadly dialectic is under way which is producing the seeds of a catastrophic defeat for imperialism in Iraq.

Arab nationalism is becoming Islamised and Arab Islamists



REWIND: The policies that created Osama bin Laden are being repeated by the US.

are becoming, also, Arab nationalists. The two forces, once bitter enemies, thrown together in Iraq and soon elsewhere too, are fighting from the same trench against the same enemy — US imperialism. "Western" cultural hegemonism and savage capitalist globalisation.

Last week, in Beirut, a conference took place that is little known about in the West — the Arab National and Islamic Conference.

From all over the Arab world and, most importantly, from deep inside the constituency of the Iraqi resistance, fighters from both traditions came together.

The beginnings of a unified political and military front in Iraq could be seen in outline. During the next 12 months, this will be thrown into sharper relief.

Coming at the end of a week in which I had triumphed over my enemies at home, it surely accounted for the spring in my step.

● *George Galloway MP is the prospective parliamentary candidate for Respect in Bethnal Green and Bow. He is a columnist for the Scottish Mail on Sunday and the new edition of his book I'm Not the Only One, published by Penguin, will be out in February.*

PRICE OF EMPIRE: Mohamed Najim lies dead in an Iraqi morgue, a victim of violence since the invasion.



Exit Powell • Banana Republicans • He's Dead Now

Three stories from the mourning after

SEVERAL years ago, I was attending a youth conference organised by two former leaders of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California. Elaine Brown, one of the organisers, said from the podium that "Colin Powell is Clarence Thomas, armed and dangerous."

She's wrong. Clarence Thomas is one of our nine Supreme Court Justices. His ascension to the high court was notable not merely because he was the second African-American to serve in his position but because his confirmation hearings were marred by revelations of sexual harassment.

Justice Thomas enjoyed discussing hair from the nether regions and pornography with a female colleague. Thomas is one of the most right-wing members of the court.

Ever since the first slave revolt was betrayed, there have been Uncle Toms sell-outs. Powell, however — US citizens unremittently pronounce his name "colon" — is not one of them.

Powell has a dignity, a self-respect that Uncle Toms lack — his own son, Michael, included.

Powell's mistake is that he took this claptrap about the "American dream" a little too seriously and he served a little too willingly as Bush's hit man — I mean, "point man" — in the UN.

His departure from Bush's inner circle does not mean that The Crazies — as we affectionately call Wolfowitz & Co — have triumphed.

They had already won their victory, because Powell never felt that it was his duty to question his God's orders.

If Bush had commanded Powell to commit hara-kiri, this good little samurai would have. Powell is not a cowardly, cringing slave, but he is a willing one.

IN 2000, Democratic Party candidate Al Gore conceded the presidential election before all the votes had been recounted.

In 2004, John Kerry conceded before all the votes had been counted. If this trend continues, in 2008, the Democrats will probably concede before the vote.

The demonstrators in the former Soviet republic of the Ukraine seem to care more about democracy than US citizens. Next to them, John "Concede Before They're Counted" Kerry looks like Chicken Kiev.

And have you noticed that all the glitches that we see in the US voting system, especially as we move into the era of electronic voting, always seem to benefit Bush and not the Democrats?

I STAYED at home on Thanksgiving Day listening to the radio. As I aimlessly explored the airwaves, one station suddenly came in crystal clear.

This is Radio Free America. If you were shocked by that US marine executing an unarmed, wounded Iraqi, then, boy, you don't know American history. Let me take you back to

THE FIFTH COLUMN

with PROFESSOR JONATHAN FARLEY

Chicago, 1969.

"At 4.45am on December 4, the police, working closely with the FBI, raided the headquarters of the Chicago chapter of the Black Panther Party, ostensibly to conduct a search. Instead, 98 shots were fired into the building in nine minutes.

"BPP chairman Fred Hampton never woke. There was evidence he may have been drugged before the raid by an FBI and police informant who confessed that he had been ordered to infiltrate the Black Panther Party and to make a map of the floor plans of Fred Hampton's house.

"One of the survivors heard the cops enter Fred Hampton's bedroom, remark that he was still alive and then fire shots. Hampton was only 21 years old.

"The whole point of the raid was — to quote a secret FBI memo — to 'neutralise' Fred Hampton. 'He's dead now?' We've heard it before."

The DJ continued. "The police and FBI immediately issued a series of half-truths and falsehoods to cover themselves. Anyone who dared to question their story was slapped with a libel suit.

"The police and FBI claimed, for instance, that the Black Panthers had, in fact, been the ones shooting at the police.

"To back up this theory, they brought in paid forensics experts, who claimed that holes in the walls of the Panther headquarters were 'evidence' that bullets had exited the building. A civilian investigative committee later proved that these holes had in fact been made by nails, not bullets.

"Compelling evidence finally forced the authorities to admit their culpability and pay the victims' families \$1.85 million in damages.

"Just imagine who the black 'leaders' would be today if men like Hampton had not been murdered."

Colin Powell was no Clarence Thomas, I thought, but he was no Fred Hampton, either. Then, as suddenly as lightning, the station went dead.

Coda: I SAW Michael Moore yesterday, his first television appearance since the election. He looked well, defeated. God help us all.

● *Professor Jonathan David Farley's work on counterterrorism was recently profiled in The New York Times. He can be contacted at farley@maths.ox.ac.uk*