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A dissenting voice: or how current assumptions of deterring and preventing genocide may be looking at the problem through the wrong end of the telescope,[1] Part I

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"Save our Species: Pay your ISG Dues": the words which greet the reader to the back page of the Institute for the Study of Genocide Newsletter always make me smile wryly when I see them. For I am never quite sure how they are meant to be taken. Is this a joke—the sort of British humour you see on our car stickers—or is there actually a more serious underlying message that struggling to halt genocide is the most cogent and appropriate route by which we can really save mankind?

This two-part article is intended as something more than a treatise on the back page of a newsletter. That said, it is motivated by more than a simply academic concern. Its proposition is that the issue of genocide not only needs to be placed within a much broader frame of contemporary reference but that this is actually a matter of considerable urgency. Its starting point indeed is that we are living in a time of global crisis and that looked at in its entirety the outcome of this crisis will determine our prospects for survival on this fragile planet. Its plaint with regard to the specificity of genocide is that currently the palliatives most commonly on offer fail to appreciate not only the nature of the phenomenon itself but the degree to which it is an intrinsic part of this broader malaise.

Paradoxically, since the time of first writing this article in the wake of 9/11 and the present moment of reconsideration in late March 2003, events have moved so fast on the world stage that there is hardly a need to alert readers to the existence of a global crisis. Nevertheless, the issue of palliatives is far from resolved. More particularly, at this momentous crossroads, two primary possibilities present themselves. Either the future of human security and survival will be dependent on the hegemonic forces within the "international system", for which read the United States; or alternatively, the forces of the "international society,"

for which the most obvious recent manifestation is the creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC), will reassert themselves. It was a contention throughout the article as originally conceived that the two elements: international system and international society—or arguably more crudely put, the US on the one hand, the UN on the other—were not compatible. And in the wake of the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq any assumption that they might continue to operate in tandem is, in the view of this author, entirely redundant.

That said, it is not the intention of this article to consider the specific events of the war in Iraq, not least at this particular moment when it is still ongoing. Moreover, as will become clear, especially in its second half, the issue perceived to be at stake is not so much a struggle between neo-liberal and neo-conservative ways of "managing" international peace and order, so much as the very fragile environmental preconditions upon which those assumptions of ongoing, sustained management are themselves so erroneously made. However, a word of caution at the outset is required. This author reserves the right to dispute conventional wisdoms. Whether his arguments are sound or not is of course for others to judge. But because the "voice" is consciously "dissenting" from norms which are taken for granted within dominant, mainstream opinion-forming and policy-making circles this, one hopes, will not lead in an academic milieu of free, independent inquiry to unwarranted charges of polemic, let alone of anti-Americanism. It will certainly be true that the United States *qua* the "state" figures prominently in these pages. But that is simply because it is *the* hegemonic power of our present era. Read more carefully, moreover, and one will note that it is the general hegemonic rise of the West, in which other states, notably Britain and France, were at the fore, prior to, or in tandem with specific US ascendancy which is taken to be at the dysfunctional root of a world which includes persistent recourse to genocide. Nor does the author start with an animus to any particular society or cultural formation. Just as he would repudiate a hierarchization of genocide victimhood as unhelpful to the study of genocide while at same time focusing on cases where particular groups have been victimized, the inference here is that repeated reference to either the United States or more broadly the West is simply a function of the overriding thesis, and not a case of West or American "bashing" for its own sake.

Fine intentions and myopic vision

To begin then with some basic observations. The idea of genocide has become an all-pervasive part of our life, language and culture. This, on one level, is quite extraordinary as Lemkin only publicly coined the term in 1944.[2] On another, it could be taken as a tribute to the way, post-Second World War, liberal norms on human rights attained a universal applicability. Indeed, the specific enactment of a United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (UNC) alongside that of the UN Charter on Human Rights would seem to have fulfilled Lemkin's own specific aspiration to have those who committed the act outlawed from international society. Never mind that through-

out the years of the Cold War governments went to enormous lengths to avoid having to invoke the Convention. Nor that elements of Western and other societies so overused and abused the term on behalf of their own agendas that it became thoroughly depreciated and cheapened. Even the fact that the experts could not really agree on what they meant by it[3] could not detract from the essential principle. Genocide today is universally regarded as a form of mass violence against peoples and one that ought to be prevented and punished by " international society."

But there's the rub. Who or what is "international society"? The fact that the term is actually a shorthand for the values, aspirations and legal instruments of the post-Enlightenment West is certainly nothing in themselves of which to be ashamed. But at the same time it is surely necessary to acknowledge that this carries with it a particular set of assumptions about the state of the world and how it can be shaped for the better. The emerging field of genocide studies reflects this situation to a tee. Again the fact that the majority of its scholars are Western—and more particularly inhabitants of, or working in north American contexts—is nothing of which to be ashamed. That they are also working within a trenchantly liberal post-Enlightenment epistemology determines, moreover that their views on the subject are notably plural. Indeed, a scholarly organization like the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) might justifiably claim to be in the vanguard of such open and inclusivist tendencies and not least through its particularly wide range of interdisplinary and comparativist approaches. Even so, there is a case for arguing that much of the field's discourse—however consensual—operates within a set of quite restrictive, if self-imposed, constraints.

Genocide thus is taken to be an "object" of study at one remove from either the researcher or his or her environment. Almost by definition thereby genocide is something which is "out there." True, in the last decade it may have lapped at the shores of the Adriatic as well as a more distant Lake Victoria. Nevertheless, the clinicians' wisdom has essentially held. Whether the verdict is one of distorted ideological (read usually communist or "totalitarian") formation, ethnic conflict, the vestiges of some benighted or god-forsaken strata of pre-modernity, the toxicity is nearly always taken to be a product of mad, bad or sad polities, societies, structures or predispositions outside and entirely beyond the universe of the ordered, civilized legally constituted, democratically elected West.[4] Rarely considered are the interrelationships between the emergence and struggle of the West for hegemonic position in the world and the causative pattern of our phenomenon. Where reference is made to specific Western acts of genocide it is usually (and arguably rather conveniently) related to the quite distant past with racial prejudice or xenophobia, the usual—if aberrant—culprits rather than mainstream state building agendas themselves.[5] This does not mean that there is no wringing of hands over Western failures in the contemporary frame. In fact, there is rather a lot of this. But it is mostly treated as a failure of omission. Rwanda 1994 has been the classic, recent reference point for this approach, vast reams of print being expended on the Western inability or unwillingness to

pronounce genocide after April 6, 1994 or do anything to activate the UN to halt it.[6] By contrast, studies which have suggested that Western *commission* (by which I mean post-colonial actions rather than simply the egregious nature of a racially-informed German or Belgian colonialism) may have been central to the outcome, either in terms of specifically aggravating the localized post-1990 crisis or more generally determining economic and political conditions which may have destabilized Rwanda in the first place, are few and far between.[7] The possibility that the emergence of an international political-economic system dominated, controlled and regulated by the West might be intrinsic to the causation, persistence and prevalence of genocide in the modern world, in short, remains an entirely marginal notion.

The corollary to the conventional wisdom equally takes it as a given that "international society" has the intellectual, moral, legal and other practical tools—at least in principle—with which to eradicate the "odious scourge." Again, genocide is the object of research but the cure also lies with the researcher. Follow his or her safe lead to the safe shores of Western civilization, democratic norms and economic prosperity (sic.) and currently genocidally-prone societies could still be released from their affliction and turned instead into healthily upstanding, civic exemplars. Implicitly, the inference here too is that the dominance of the Western world carries with it a surety that genocide is something which if not reducible is at the very least containable. Significantly, before 9/11 advocacy for this apparently benign trajectory effectively became a subtext of the "New World Order."

With the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the victory of the American-led coalition in the Gulf war of 1991 Francis Fukuyama intellectually led those who prophesied a new dawn for mankind.[8] With ideology supposedly defeated (liberal capitalism apparently not being an "ideology") and the liberal route to man's material, terrestial salvation ostensibly triumphant, the opportunity to reshape the world in a Western image appeared quite plausible. This was, indeed, the decade in which US power on the world stage reached its unchallenged apotheosis and in which globalization made vast strides across both communist bloc and many third world countries which up to then had been aggressively inimical to Western, commercial penetration.[9] These again were primarily advances of the "international system," i.e. of the geopolitical and economic interests of the leading sovereign states of the West rather than that of the legally-buttressed and convention-bound value system of "international society" as most obviously represented through the UN. And it might be interesting to chart how the two formations have not always entirely complemented one another in this last decade. The "system" as a whole proved highly resistant, for instance, to intervention in ex-Yugoslavia in the early 1990s while "society" was busily (and quite rightly) screaming blue murder. On the other hand, the effulgent enthusiasm of Western states, led by the US, from around this juncture, to give their unreserved support for Holocaust remembrance and compensation may, with hindsight, prove a case of a political expediency aimed at trumpeting superior Western moral credentials with regard to a safely

foreclosed past in order to circumvent closer public scrutiny of a much more tarnished and dubious present record.[10] The effect, for a time, appeared to almost drown out debate on broader, including contemporary issues of genocides.

Actual cases of genocide or sub-genocide in the mid-1990s, however, made Holocaust centricity difficult to sustain. The *Journal of Genocide Research* was itself a conscious standard bearer of a redoubled interest in the comparative aspects of the subject. On the wider scene, however, after the debacles in Bosnia and Rwanda, the "international system" began to evince signs of alignment with that of "international society" against at least with regard to some actual or potential cases of genocide. The 1990s had already seen neo-liberals and neo-conservatives—and not just in the USA—finding common ground around the prospect of a free untrammelled global trade. But by the same token, human rights activists and NGOs generally found in the reinforced Western dominance an opportunity for promoting their own global humanitarian agendas.[11] With the system-dependent UN, moreover, seemingly back in Western favour, the possibility of a genuine convergence seemed to gain ground. The nexus appeared to be sealed with NATO action over Kosovo. However imperfect and messy the military intervention, its ultimate success seemed to give an added cogency—and urgency—to the activists demand for a proper international legal framework for dealing with genocidal perpetrators. From the sidelines the already existent Hague Tribunals moved to centre stage. With the fall of Milosevic and his subsequent extradition and trial, including on charges of genocide, the whole thrust of the liberal critique, at last seemed to be being realized in terms of real political action.

True, in the months before 9/11 there was still no ICC. And with President Bush incumbent in the White House, no likelihood of this having the most powerful state in the world to support it. The new US leader, indeed, represented a blot on the humanitarians' imagined landscape of global cooperation. Even so, the efforts to apply international law against detractors from the Balkans and Rwanda, not to say ex-President Pinochet of Chile, were all grounds for optimism. If the advocates of "international society" were not quite proclaiming the triumphalism which White House and Whiltehall had failed to hide on the collapse of communism, they had least laid the groundwork for the routes by which they proposed to rollback and ultimately abolish genocide.[12]

These routes have been much debated in the era of the New World Order. They follow four main axes:

1. the development of strong juridical instruments to buttress existing international law
2. military intervention against violators
3. early warning aligned to programmes of conflict resolution
4. post-event peace and reconciliation

The object here is not to critique comprehensively these approaches. Indeed, I cannot since these are not my areas of expertise. Each clearly have principled strengths. Nor is it to be doubted that were it possible for them to be effectively

acted upon, individually or collectively, they might in some instances, posi-tively—if albeit ephemerally—affect the course of potential or actual genocidal events. The problem is that however legitimate each of these approaches are unto themselves what they do not and cannot do is address why genocides happen in the first place. As such they fail to provide at the first hurdle the necessary, firm foundations upon which genuine prevention can be conceived. The first approach is about post-event punishment. The second is about emergency treatment only. The third and fourth are only plausible within broader conditions of social, economic and political amelioration. To propose that any of them could provide serviceable substitutes for the real thing—i.e. policies which would have prevented genocide in the first place—is simply unsustainable.[13] To go one step further and imagine that any might constitute an authentic panacea for the problem itself would actually be a case of serious self-deception. But then could it be that reliance on these approaches is symptomatic of not simply an unwillingness but rather an epistemologically-based inability to confront the real underlying causes of so much of what is seriously dysfunctional in the modern world and to rely instead on technical fixes?[14]

Mort Winston in a recent unpublished paper has noted how Americans are especially prone to the "technological fix." Winston was thinking particularly of military wizardry: "zapping" the enemy with whatever space-based laser or other exotica might be at hand.[15] But the notion could be equally applied to any short-cut which seems to superficially "solve" the problem without dealing with its root cause. The limitations of military intervention, however, should be particularly self-evident. The NATO response over Kosovo may have killed as many innocent lives as it saved. And though it took place 10 years after the beginning of the present Kosovo crisis, it lacked any strategic plan whatsoever for the future of the province after it had been "liberated."[16] Moreover, the "fix" was only possible because the "enemy"—Serbia—was a relatively weak state. By contrast, Turkey, Indonesia, Russia and China, among the most genocidally-inclined of contemporary polities will always remain exempt from the military option so long as they remain powerful. Regardless of the fact that the first two are Western friends, the latter two historic enemies "the fix" cannot and will not apply where the military superiority of the West—or perhaps more specifically of the US—cannot be absolute. That leaves only two categories of states which can be covered under the specifically military prescript. The first are so-called "rogue" or pariah states who, ironically, also happen to be considered as alleged security threats, hence giving an added *realpolitik* dimension to any action taken against their humanitarian misdemeanours.[17] In the current circumstances it is Iraq most obviously which fits this profile[18] though Iran, Libya, Serbia and North Korea (though not "friendly" Israel) have also been regularly cited within this category. The recent US war against Taliban Afghanistan would suggest its inclusion too, though it might more appropriately be included in a second distinct grouping, namely, the very poorest—or in current Western parlance "failed"—states, a sizeable proportion of whom are sub-Saharan African.

None of this to be sure, necessarily negates the efficacy of the military fix in

its entirety. Notwithstanding some recent commentary disputing how many lives really could have been saved, most observers agree that the deployment of a rapid reaction force in Rwanda—aligned to a firm political will—would have made a difference.[19] Whether in the present climate any Western state or groups of states, either under UN auspices or not, could find any particularly cogent reason for a *solely* humanitarian intervention in the sub-Saharan region, however, is another matter. And all the more so if there were several such emergencies of this sort at any one time.[20] However, this avoids the main issue of contention here. The military option, at least insofar as it motivated by genuine humanitarian imperatives is a weapon of last resort. By its very nature it is something intruded into a situation where either genocide is already unfolding or at the very least significant atrocities have taken place. Put more prosaically, it is like the firefighter trying to put out a house fire, rather than the architect trying to build into the house safety features to keep its flammability to an absolute minimum.

So, if we are agreed that prevention is the issue, does not a strong juridical arm, in other words, Lemkin's big idea, more fully address the issue? If so, could we thus not argue that far from being a technical fix, this is an integral part of a preventative architecture? There are few interested parties who would doubt that the idea of bringing perpetrators of genocide to book alongside other "crimes against humanity" is a just and necessary one. The constraining factors to this end certainly do not lie with the genuine advocates of "international society" but rather with those in the "international system." It is the latter which has diluted and emasculated the concept of the ICC to the point that, whether set up or not, its powers will be extremely weak. And it is the "system" too which will ensure that. Even should the ICC actually be allowed an existence, it will never be Western friends such as a Sharon (let alone a Kissinger), nor for that matter Chinese or Russian leaders potentially indictable for genocidal actions in Chechnya, Tibet, Sinkiang and elsewhere who will be brought before it.

Yet again, however, the point of discussion here is not about the nature of geopolitical handicaps *per se* but whether the juridical principle empowered through the ICC or equivalent bodies has in itself prophylactic qualities. Can it, in other words, deter potential offenders? Historical observation would suggest not for the simple reason that it is based on a false premise. State leaderships which embark on genocide nearly always do so, not only in crisis conditions where they have effectively burnt their bridges to the rules and norms of international behaviour but more precisely as a blatant rejection of them. The act of genocide indeed is a quite conscious shot across the bows of international "system" and "society" alike. All one has to consider are the three most cited genocides of the last century, Armenia, the Holocaust and Rwanda to recognize that one of the genocidaires' key aims was to tear up and trample upon "international society" rules. Paradoxically, the only cases where this does not apply are those where the perpetrator is covertly supported by the hegemonic forces in the "international system"—as, for instance, in the Indonesian massacres of 1965 and the subsequent annihilatory invasion of East Timor 10 years

later—or those, usually involving the extermination of fourth world groups, where the "system" again is entirely disinterested in the outcome.[21]

Protagonists for justice as prevention thus suffer from a double handicap: the first that no precipant genocide regime is going to stop to reflect upon the threat emanating from an ICC-like body, however big its stick; the second that in *many* cases, their actions will be shielded by the "system" anyway, even if this is in direct contravention of "international society's" intent.[22] This is not to deny the value of having an international justice. Any more than to deny the value of developing notions of conflict resolution or some therapeutically-based process of reconciliation in the aftermath of genocide to try and heal psychic as well as actual wounds. All are motivated by the very best of intentions. They also involve quite specific areas of expertise. The problem is that the purposes which they can serve are increasingly being confused with those they cannot.

An obvious response to this jeremiad would be: yes, but we live in an imperfect world. As such any response to a Bosnia, Rwanda or a Kosovo—if not a Chechnya—is going to be better than nothing. Moreover, what alternatives are there? To which this writer's counter-response would be: we do not consider the possible alternatives—that is planning for genuine prevention—because both epistemologically and practically speaking they come too close to the nub of the issue: the issue of the primary wellsprings of contemporary genocide itself.

What is the answer then? An Israeli adage about killing mosquitoes proposes that you can eradicate a thousand mosquitoes one day but by tomorrow there will be a thousand more to take their place. The answer, according to the adage, is to do something about the swamp. Again, we are in the land of technical fix; after all, swamps are usually rather complex eco-systems and obliterating them may actually in the longer term do just as much damage to ourselves as dealing with the mosquitoes. But surely the point is that we need to know about the ecology of swamps and how human interactions with them breed disease. Only then might we be in a position to pronounce a solution. The proposition thus, is both simple and complex: an understanding of our global political-economic swamp demands of us—by which I particularly mean the advanced dominant nation-state-cum-societies of the West—a much more thoroughgoing and rigorous reassessment of its entire human ecology.

That also demands of us a concerted effort at overcoming our own blind spots. Human collectivities are good at pronouncing what is bad, hypocritical and loathsome in others but usually extraordinarily defensive when it comes to criticism of themselves, usually because they literally cannot see what to others is blindingly obvious. Western commitment to liberal pluralism and free thought, unfortunately, does not make us more immune from this failing. Indeed, put to the test in the form of an 11/9 type crisis one wonders the degree to which the best intentions of the human rights advocates can be sustained at all. Not only has the accelerated US surge towards war and retribution fatally unstuck the rather inadequate New World Order glue which seemed to bond "system" and "society" together for much of the 1990s but it has also led to a massive retreat in the ability of its leaders to reflect on their own critical role in the making and

continuance of a globalizing ethos predicated on structural inequality and violence. What thus might have represented a remarkable opportunity to cognitate on the state of the world, and how it might be healed, has given way instead to a naked assertion of state interest with no regard whatsoever for the defence of genocidally-exposed or vulnerable communities. This is not to propose that Western states, both the US and others, have entered into some new era where they are now the *direct perpetrators* of genocide, anymore than they were for most of the last century.[23] It is to propose that they have regularly been first cause of why others have become so.

The immensity of this statement cannot be fully developed here, except in the very briefest of outlines. Genocide is essentially understood by this author in a Feinean sense,[24] that is, as a discrete phenomenon involving mass physical killing, albeit with an ability to metamorphose into a range of other state policies which may or may not involve violence against one or more communal groups. It follows that the immediate focus of any genocide case-study will be on the role behaviour and agenda of the perpetrator regime—usually backed up by significant elements of the dominant society—and its interactive relationship with the victim group. However, if the economic, political or cultural characteristics or configurations peculiar to a given polity society are the necessary building blocks for understanding modern genocides, they are rarely sufficient. There is a further critical dimension involving the dynamic relationship between the state society and the dominant political and economic forces at work in the world. Understanding any specific state or nation-building agenda can hardly eschew this broader context at the best of times. In cases where genocide occurs however this dynamic may literally become a matter of life and death as real or imagined grievances against the dictates of the international system are displaced by a regime onto usually domestic communal "out" groups.[25]

This is, of course, to state the matter baldly. If we were to consider specific cases of actual, near or potential genocide we would find the temporal and spatial, not to say cultural and social parameters of their state-system interrelationships to vary widely. For instance, if we were to look closely at the unravelling of Yugoslav events during the last decade it ought to be quite transparent that a pronounced narcissism within Serbian society has been a particularly toxic ingredient.[26] Yet while this socio-psychological aspect is deserving of much attention, it also has to be set against 150 years of Balkan efforts to create a series of homogeneous nation-states in the Western image in an otherwise variegated multi-ethnic mosaic, not to say against the backdrop of Ottoman disintegration entirely caused, accompanied, or succeeded by repeated if not continuous Great Power interference in the region. The drive for a genuine Serbian independence thus has both followed and resisted the Western lead, motivated by a desire on the one hand to create a strong modernized polity which could compete with the dominant political forces on the world stage and on the other, by increasing frustrations that those same forces were at least perceived to be placing obstacles and limitations in Belgrade's path. These frustrations, in turn, could only serve to highlight not Serbian strength but rather

the transparent reality of its "latecomer" backwardness and socio-economic weakness.[27] The interaction between NATO's Rambouillet diktat and Milosevic's attempted mass eructation of Kosovar Albanians might be seen as the most recent culmination of this trend.[28]

Afghanistan represents a case of even more current interest. While its now deceased Taliban regime has not been accused of genocide *per se*, it undoubtedly was responsible for at least one major instance of genocidal massacres.[29] It also clearly exhibited many of the symptoms we might associate with a classically genocidal mentality: a highly charged xenophobic hatred of all outside influences which did not equate with its own self-referential ideology, including an utterly uncompromising version of the idea of a pure, uncontaminated Islamic community. Add to this an equally tunnel-visioned prescript that all of its actually very diverse ethnic communities must conform to its will. If this amounted to an effort—even on the basis of its markedly limited resources—to create a totalitarian, state-controlled and regulated dystopia, then Taliban Afghanization is clearly the nearest latter-day equivalent we have had to (an otherwise not immediately or obviously resemblant) Khmer Rouge Cambodia.[30] Yet to imagine that the Taliban's particularly extreme variant of Islamic fundamentalism came out of the thin air of the Hindu Kush would require us to blithely suspend awareness of the country's recent catastrophic history. The Taliban, like the Khmer Rouge before them, could only have come to power in the context of US decisions to use their countries as free-fire zones in their struggle to defeat either domestic or neighbouring Soviet-backed regimes and to cynically utilize their populations—that is, men, women and children—as ultimately expendable proxies to this end.[31] Chronologically speaking, the process of outside destabilization, in some key respects, may have been considerably shorter and more telescoped than in the Balkans. Yet it is inconceivable that either the Taliban or Khmer Rouge could have seized their respective controls of state against the backdrop of anything but such utterly massive and accelerated political breakdowns, or been able to mobilize at least sections of society around their utterly grievance-ridden agendas.

To return to our basic proposition: genocide, instead of being treated as a series of unrelated aberrations, afflicting only god-forsaken peoples whose cultural idiosyncrasies or ideological borrowings predispose them in this direction but who otherwise have no relationship to a normative modernity rather needs to be viewed as one critical by-product—though, I should emphasize very far from the an exclusive one—of what is actually a very seriously dysfunctional modern international system. Or to put it another way, the micro-level of radicalized state violence cannot in the twentieth century be isolated from the macro-context in which it occurs anymore than a perpetrator society's possibly historic hatred against a particular group or groups can be disentangled from hegemonic, globalizing pressures which may finally and fatally push it over the genocidal precipice. It may be an extraordinary paradox that the ideas of "international society," its jurisprudence and values including those of a universal notion of human rights have flowed from this same Western source. But so

long as its hegemonic sister "system" remains configured in the way it has been developing for the last several hundred years to the point of its post-1990 culmination, the sincere efforts of Lemkin enthusiasts in favour of a legally-enshrined global community without genocide are not realizable.

However, if this hypothesis is correct and genocide is an ineluctable outcome of our contemporary political economy, the question then arises: what, if anything, can "liberal" scholars do about it? The "cynical" answer might be that we have to stop offering Western governments' lessons or prescriptives on how to operate peacekeeping forces, conduct crisis management, or even how to apply international criminal law and, instead, return to our drawing boards to concentrate on a much more focused epidemiology of our phenomenon than we have to date achieved. To paraphrase Comte: if one cannot understand causation, one cannot anticipate; if one cannot anticipate, one cannot prevent. There may, of course, be a bitter irony in this polite request, given that US and British governments post-9/11 and, more particularly, since the onset of the war in Iraq have evinced very little interest anyway in what either scholars, NGOs or human rights activists may have had to tell them.

That said, far from advocating that academics should retreat to their ivory towers and abnegate responsibility to those who have power, our proposition here is entirely to the contrary. The tunnel-visioned nature of hegemonic leadership, already strikingly manifest in the wake of the "coalition" (sic.) war in Afghanistan, has only been reinforced by its behaviour over Iraq. The specific challenge for genocide scholars is to recognize that this is both symptomatic of the chronic stress and structural violence that pervades the international "system" but also threatens to create further massive destabilizations of non-Western societies with even more disastrous results. It is time that we comprehensively repudiated the notion that genocide, like the terrorism, "out there" is nothing to do with ourselves. Or, alternatively, as if by some magic of wish-fulfilment that we might quarantine it in an isolation ward without reference to what goes on outside. This is indeed the error of the technical fix. As are all ways of thinking which fail to see the wood for the trees. In this sense it is time to match Feinian rigour with a more Charnyian range.[32] In short, if we are to tackle genocide's root causes—as scholars and human beings—we are going to have to struggle and campaign for prevention in terms of a much more holistic antidote than we have so far dared to contemplate.[33]

Notes and References

1. An outline version of this paper was given at the fourth conference of the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis in June 2001. It has been revised with reference to post-11 September 2001 events. Many thanks are due to Jenny Ivory, my co-worker in the Genocide Media Archive, Leamington Spa, UK for many of the newspaper references.
2. Raphael Lemkin, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment, 1944).
3. "At the most fundamental level, we presently lack even a coherent and viable description of the processes and circumstances implied by the term genocide." Ward Churchill, "Genocide: toward a functional definition," *Alternatives*, Vol 11, 1986, p 403.
4. No key analyst offers an entirely monocausal explanation but all, to greater or lesser degrees, embrace all

or some of these causes. See especially Irving Louis Horowitz, *Taking Lives, Genocide and State Power* (Brunswick, NJ and London: Transaction, 1980); Leo Kuper, *Genocide: Its Political Use in the 20th Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981); Helen Fein, "Genocide, a sociological perspective," *Current Sociology*, Vol 38, 1990; R. J. Rummel, "Democide in totalitarian states: mortacracies and megamurders," in Israel W. Charny, ed., *The Widening Circle of Genocide: A Critical Bibliographical Review*, Vol 3 (New Brunswick, NJ and London, 1994), pp 3–39; Barbara Harff and Ted Robert Gurr, "Toward empirical theory of genocides and politicides: identification and measurement of cases since 1945," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol 32, 1988, pp 359–371.

5. Even authors such as David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) and Ward Churchill, *A Little Matter of Genocide, Holocaust and Denial in the Americas: 1492 to the Present* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1997) who are arguably considered and possibly self-consciously wish to be considered as maverick or marginal to the world of genocide scholarship develop analyses with regard to the specificity of historical genocides committed in the Americas primarily as outcomes of Western racism, xenophobia and religio-cultural dispositions, yet without notably relating these causes to the broader pattern of contemporary and near-contemporary genocide worldwide. Some effort to view genocide in the historical round is to be found in Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1990). However, see Dirk Moses, "Conceptual blockages and definitional dilemmas in the 'racial century': genocides of indigenous people and the Holocaust," *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol 36, No 4, 2002, pp 7–36, for a more recent and cogent understanding of the interconnect-edness of genocides.

6. See Alison Des Forges, *Leave None to Tell the Story, Genocide in Rwanda* (New York, London, Washington and Brussels: International Federation of Human Rights, 1999); Philip Gourevitch, *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* (London: Picador, 1999); L. Melvern, *A People Betrayed: The Role of the West in Rwanda's Genocide* (London: Zed Books, 2000), for notable examples. Also more generally, Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell," America and the Age of Genocide* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

7. Peter Uvin, *Aiding Violence: The Development Enterprise in Rwanda* (West Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press) for a notable exception to this rule, plus Mary Anne Tetreault's excellent review of Uvin in *The ISG Newsletter*, No 26, Spring 2001, pp 16–17. Also Dave Waller, *Rwanda, Which Way Now?* (Oxford: Oxfam, 1993).

8. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin, 1992).

9. John Gray, *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism* (London: Granta Books, 1998), Chapter 6; Francis Adams, Satya Dev Gupta and Kidane Mengisteab, *Globalisation and the Dilemma of the State in the South* (Baskingstoke: Macmillan, 1999).

10. Again it is interesting that the best-known critics of the "Holocaust Industry" have concentrated on its Jewish rather than Western state political underpinnings. See Peter Novick, *The Holocaust in American Life* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), Norman Finkelstein, *The Holocaust Industry, Reflections on the Exploitation of Jewish Suffering* (London and New York: Verso, 2000). For a broader approach, see Mark Levene, "Remembering for the future: engaging with the present," in *Remembering for the Future: The Holocaust in the Age of Genocide*, Vol 1 (London: Palgrave, 2001), pp 55–70.

11. See, for example, Richard Falk, "The challenge of genocide and genocidal politics in an era of globalization," in Tim Dunne and Nicholas J. Wheeler, eds, *Human Rights in Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp 177–194; Idris Kamil and Michael Bartolo, *A Better United Nations for the New Millenium: The United Nations System—How It Is Now and How It Should Be in the Future* (The Hague, 2000).

12. This optimistic stance is still being upheld post-9/11 in some prominent quarters. See Jennifer Leeming, "Genocide: to be expected, not inevitable, perhaps preventable," Geschichte und Prävention, International Symposium, Radio Österreich, Vienna, November 2001, unpublished, for a notably upbeat and cogent rendition.

13. See Martin Woolacott, "The Balkans legacy may be a war crimes court that works," *Guardian*, November 17, 2000, where he argued that the *ad hoc* tribunals were simply a substitute for policies that would have prevented mass human rights violations in the first place.

14. Ivan Illich, *Tools for Conviviality* (London: Collins, 1973), for a sustained critique of such fixes.

15. Mort Winston, "The impending moral slide," available online at: <AGS-ISG@alist.tcnj.edu>, September 2001.

16. See Noam Chomsky, *The New Military Humanism: Lessons from Kosovo* (London: Pluto Press, 1999); Ted Galen Carpenter, ed., *Nato's Empty Victory: A Postmortem on the Balkan War* (Washington, DC: Cato Institute, 2000).

17. Simon Tisdall, "Rogue states and terrorist threats identified in attempt to boost spending," *Guardian*, January 13, 2001, for instance, for the linkage with the continuing US national missile defence programme.

18. Patrick Wintour, "We are working to make the world more peaceful," *Guardian*, March 28, 2003, for the most recent Bush–Blair Camp David summit outing of the argument, at the time of writing.

19. See Alan J. Kuperman, "Rwanda in retrospect," *Foreign Affairs*, January–February 2000, pp 94-118 for a less sanguine view and the subsequent exchange between Kuperman and Alison des Forges, "Shame: rationalising Western apathy on Rwanda," Foreign *Affairs*, May–June 2000, pp 141–144. See also "When good men do nothing," *Panorama*, Broadcast BBC-1, December 7, 1998.

20. Henry Huttenbach, "Separating preventable from unpreventable genocide: towards a methodology of classification," IAGS conference unpublished paper, Minneapolis, June 2001.

21. This of course corroborates Noam Chomsky's view that the Western-led system treats massacre and atrocity as either "constructive" (perpetrated by friends) "nefarious" (perpetrated by enemies) or "benign" (which should speak for itself). See Milan Rai, *Chomsky's Politics* (London and New York: Verso, 1995), pp 27–28.

22. Significantly, even William A. Schabas, *Genocide in International Law: The Crime of Crimes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p 545, after an exhaustive survey of the subject agrees that the UNC's usage of the term "prevent" remains "enigmatic." Even the UNC's intent to genuinely punish is a matter of dispute. The leading Dutch jurist B. V. A. Roling, for instance, on the Convention's inception claimed that the elevation of genocide to the status of an international crime was primarily "a contribution to a moral standard … The question of whether in reality prosecutions take place is not the decisive one." Quoted in Antonio Cassese, *The Tokyo Trial and Beyond: Reflections of a Peacemonger* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p 96.

23. This, of course, would take us into a long debate about whether US military campaigns in Korea, Indochina and elsewhere have been genocidal. Suffice to say, this author holds to a quite rigorous definition, but one which is divorced from any argument which would propose that this particular form of mass killing is somehow more egregious than others. Having said that, putting aside ongoing waves of localized genocides in the Americas and Antipodes throughout the early modern and modern periods, one might note a whole series of colonial genocides or at least sub-genocides perpetrated by the US and British at the turn of the twentieth century—in the Philippines, in joint "international" actions against the Boxer rebellion, certainly in the British destruction of the Chimurenga, if not exactly in the Boer war policies of Kitchener. This, of course, is additional to "better known" German exterminations in East Africa and South West Africa in this same period. See Mark Levene, *The Coming of Genocide* (forthcoming, I. B. Tauris, 2004), Chapter 8, "Ascendant imperialisms."

24. See Helen Fein, "Scenarios of genocide: models of genocide and critical responses," in Israel W. Charny, ed., *Toward the Understanding and Prevention of Genocide: Proceedings of the International Conference on the Holocaust and Genocide* (Boulder and London: Westview Press, 1984), pp 4–5.

25. See Mark Levene, "Connecting threads: Rwanda, the Holocaust and the pattern of contemporary genocide," in Roger W. Smith, ed., *Genocide: Essays Toward Understanding, Early Warning and Prevention* (Williamsburg, VA: Association of Genocide Scholars, 1999), pp 27–64.

26. This was intriguingly scrutinized in the wake of the handover of Milosevic to the Hague tribunal in the BBC *Today* programme, April 27, 2001, when the commentator Alexander Djilas objected to the scapegoating of one man. The whole "collectivitiy of the nation was involved," said Djilas. He also characterized the Serb national version of history as one in which "we are always the heroes, the others, the bad guys." See Branimir Anzulovic, *Heavenly Serbia: From Myth to Genocide* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), for more on this theme.

27. Misha Glenny, *The Balkans, Nationalism, War and the Great Powers 1804–1999* (London: Granta Books 1999); Charles and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States 1804–1920* (Seattle: University of Washington Press 1977); for aspects of the Serb: "system" interplay.

28. Chomsky, *New Military Humanism*, pp 107–108, for close analysis of this dynamic.

29. Robert Fisk, "Thousands massacred by Taliban," *The Independent*, September 4, 1998, reported in the wake of the Taliban capture of the Shia Muslim city of Mazar-e Sharif.

30. See Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2001) for the most informed book to date on the movement; Angelo Rasanayagam, *Afghanistan: A Modern History* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003) for a broader sweep; Ben Kiernan, *The Pol Pot Regime, Race, Power and Genocide* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), for the best equivalent on the Khmer Rouge. Bill Topich of Pulaski Academy AR is currently working on a comparison of the two regimes.

31. The degree to which successive US governments were prepared to cynically use Islamic fundamentalism a tool for their anti-Soviet agendas is already well charted. See, to date, John Cooley, *Unholy Wars, Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism*, 2nd edn (London: Pluto Press, 2001); Michael Grifffin, *Reaping the Whirlwind: The Taliban Movement in Afghanistan* (London: Pluto Press, 2001). For Cambodian equivalences, William Shawcross, *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambo-*

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dia (London: Deutsch, 1979); John Pilger and Anthony Barnett, *Aftermath: The Struggle of Cambodia and Vietnam* (Manchester: New Statesman, 1982), Part III, Cambodia.

32. While I do not accept Israel Charny's definitional ultra-inclusivism in matters of genocide, I recognize that there is an underlying humanitarian principle in his work which is in need of scholarly recognition and development.

33. See Herb Hirsch, *Anti-Genocide: Building an American Movement to Prevent Genocide* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003) for some cogent pointers in the right direction.