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# counterpunch

edited by alexander cockburn and jeffrey st.clair

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## "Look What You've Done!"

### AIPAC Congratulates Itself on the Slaughter in Lebanon

By JOHN WALSH

"My fellow American," Howard Friedman, President of AIPAC, begins his letter of July 30 to friends and supporters of AIPAC, "Look what you've done"! After warning that "Israel is fighting a pivotal war for its life," by which he means Israel's wanton slaughter and all-out destruction in Lebanon, Friedman condemns "the expected chorus of international condemnation of Israel's actions" and Europe's call for "a cease-fire immediately." Then he exults: "only ONE nation in the world came out and flatly declared: Let Israel finish the job. . . That nation is the United States of America--and the reason it had such a clear, unambiguous view of the situation is YOU and the rest of America Jewry." (All emphases in the original here and below.) Here I must take issue with President Friedman since I bet that most Jewish Americans, in contrast to the AIPAC crowd, were horrified by the slaughter in Lebanon. In fact if anyone other than President Friedman wrote this, he would be accused of fabricating a Jewish plot and labeled a nutty conspiracy theorist and scurrilous anti-semite.)

"How do we do it"? President Friedman asks a little further on. The answer is "decades of long hard work which never ends." Not only is it hard work--but it's eternal. However, President Friedman is not content with generalities and gives us some of AIPAC's trade

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secrets. Here are two notables:

"AIPAC meets with every candidate running for Congress. These candidates receive in-depth briefings to help them completely understand the complexities of Israel's predicament and that of the Middle East as a whole. We even ask each candidate to author a 'position paper' on their views of the U.S.-Israel relationship--so it's clear where they stand on the subject." (Would it not be great to see these "position papers"? I wonder how many candidates would release them? And what do the candidates get for all this effort? A pat on the back?)

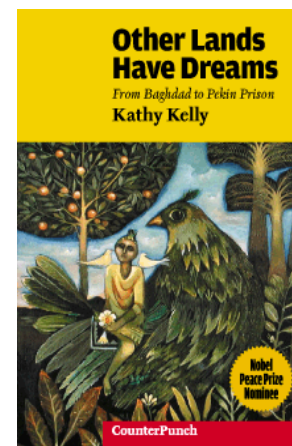
"Members of Congress, staffers and administration officials have come to rely on AIPAC's memos. They are VERY busy people and they know that they can count on AIPAC for clear-eyed analysis.. We present this information in concise form to elected officials. The information and analyses are impeccable--after all our reputation is at stake. This results in policy and legislation that make up Israel's lifeline." (Another way to read this is that the pea-brained hillbillies who make up most of the Congress can be led by the nose if the memos are simple enough. Testimony to this fact enters my mailbox, as I write, in the form of [a must-read interview](#) with Noam Chomsky, which details just how distorted the discussion of Israel and the war on Lebanon has become in the U.S.)

President Friedman's letter continues with more headlines: "Unfortunately, our work has just begun"! "Hizballah must be defeated." And finally, "The war is a diversion"!!!! This last section argues that the war in Lebanon is a "distraction," to "divert attention away from Iran's nuclear weapons program"! (In case you haven't noticed President Friedman loves exclamation points, which leads one to wonder whether a good dose of lithium might not be in order.) But this "analysis" is hopelessly confused since Israel started the war on Lebanon using a minor border skirmish as an excuse - as Chomsky points out in the interview alluded to above. It leaves one wondering about AIPAC's analyses. Are they "clear-eyed" as Friedman claims, or wild-eyed?

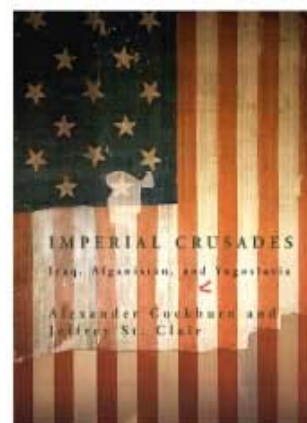
President Friedman closes with the exhortation: "Now is the time for us, American Jews, to stand up and tell our elected officials that they must demand Iran halt its pursuit of atomic arms." In other words, next stop Iran if AIPAC can swing it. And in that lies a great danger. The Bush administration is losing ever more of its base and only the neocon establishment and AIPAC remain securely in its camp. (Even some of the born-again are deserting.) With the November elections coming, Rove and Bush desperately need AIPAC support, and so they may be even more susceptible than usual to its demands for going after Iran. Indeed this is a dangerous time.

**John Walsh** can be reached at [john.endwar@gmail.com](mailto:john.endwar@gmail.com).

He thanks President Friedman for much of the material in this article, which is taken directly from his latest fundraising letter to AIPAC supporters and members.



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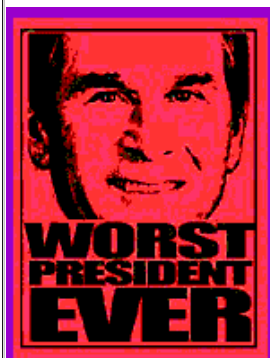
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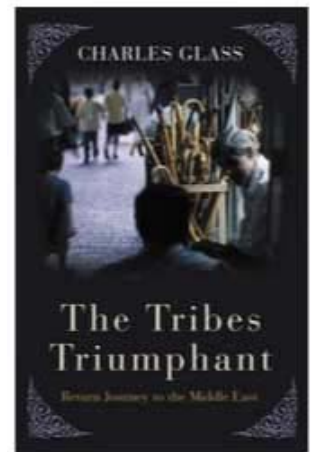
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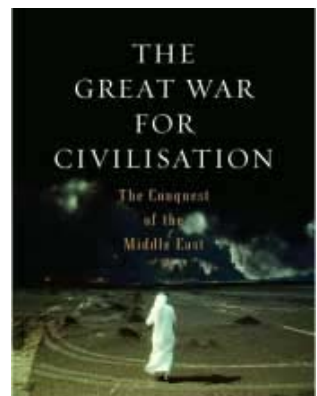
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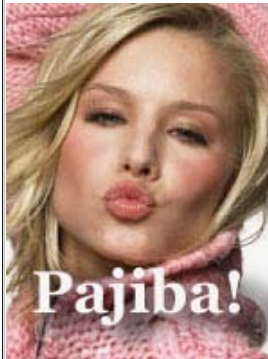
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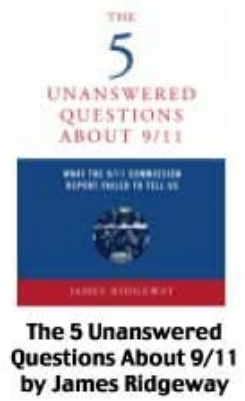
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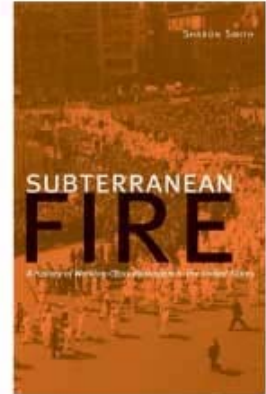


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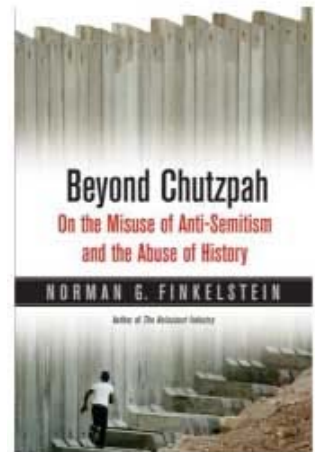
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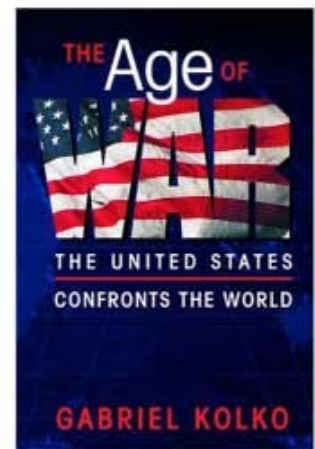


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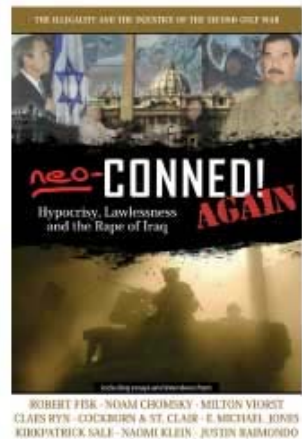
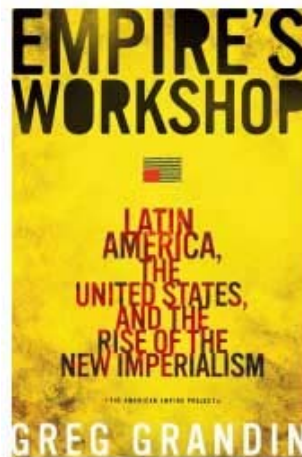
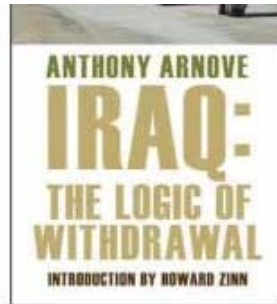
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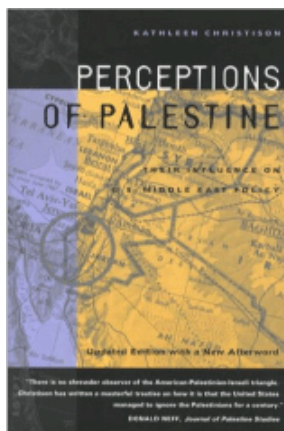
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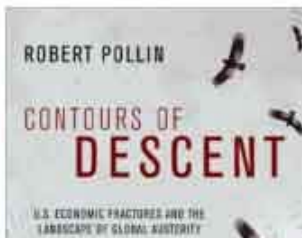
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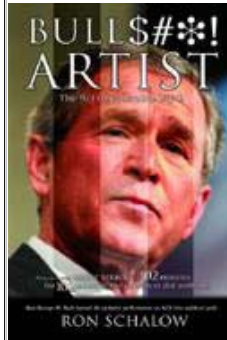
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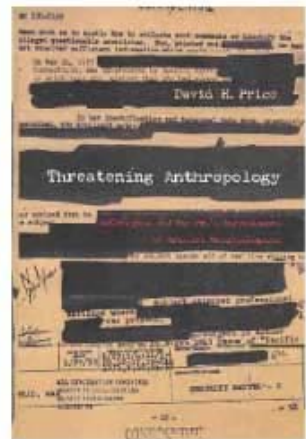
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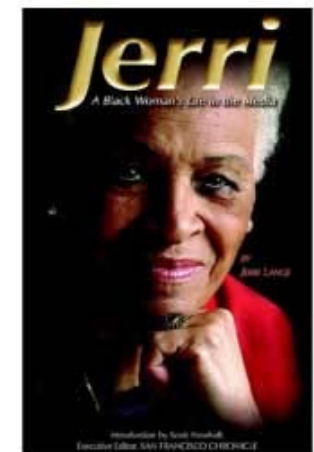
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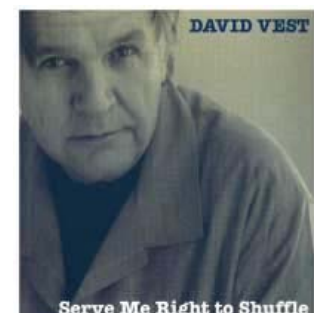
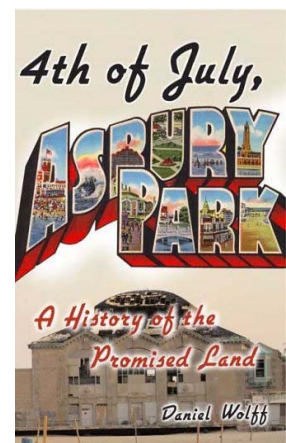
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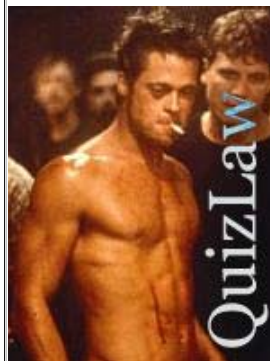
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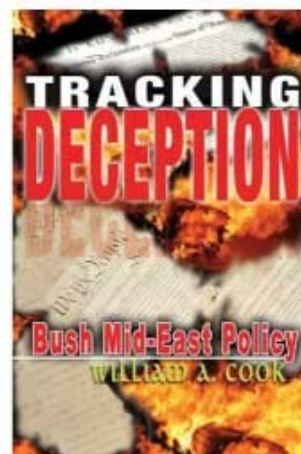
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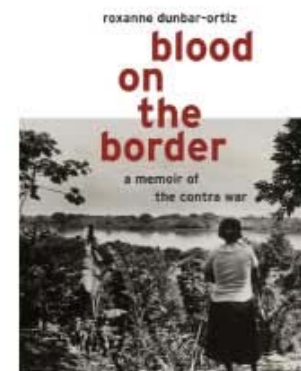
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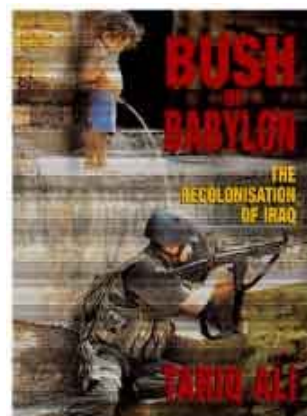
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