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edited by alexander cockburn and jeffrey st.clair

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Neve Gordon

Playing Fetch in Congress

Israel's Ball Boys

By CHRISTOPHER KETCHAM

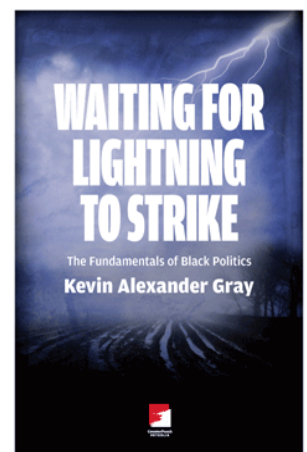
Last May I spent a day at the French Open with my daughter. What fascinated most were the rituals of the ball boys, creatures trained to run, race, scream through the air if a ball even hints at dropping. The toadying boys rocket about the court, chasing like dogs. Then, the object retrieved as if god itself were somehow contained in its bounciness, they slam to a halt before the player and with ridiculous militant importance, standing ramrod straight with an arm high in the air while lowering the other, they wait for the player to nod his head, at which time they will pass the ball to be put into play. Elsewhere they are employed, with the same inane amphetaminated unction, to sop sweat from the muscles of the stars on the court.

"You in America are Israel's ball boy," a French intelligence source laughs at me one day when we start talking tennis. It's an embarrassing thought and I want to punch my source in the face for saying it, simply because he's French and I'm American and I still have to pretend at pride in the whored republic.

But he's right, of course, and it's in the US Congress where you'll find the hardest working of Israel's ball boys. Case in point: Congress' recent vote to take loud ownership of the horror of the war crimes in Israel's invasion of the Gaza Strip. How easily Congress forgets that among the motivating factors behind Al Qaeda's murder of 3,000 Americans is the continual blind US support of Israel, the heaving of billions of US taxpayer dollars into the maw of one of the most advanced and richest countries on earth. Even establishment drone Philip Zelikow admitted, in one of those riveting elephant-in-the-room moments (in testimony before Congress, as it happens), that Israeli violence and oppression in the Occupied Territories inspired Bin Laden

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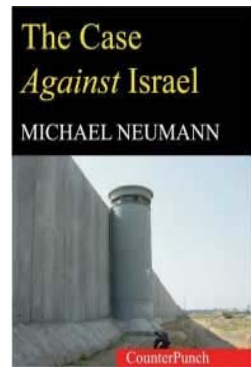
and his chief 9/11 planner, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. In this regard, then, the US Congress with its Gaza cheerleading now invites new terrorist attacks on US citizens.

That the Congress has become a danger to the welfare of Americans, and, in effect, an enemy of the American people – running the ball for forces and players inimical to life and liberty – is understood by any citizen who reviews the public record. It is Congress, bending over for the Bush administration, that gave us the desecrations of the Constitution in the Patriot Act and the Military Commissions Act; that immunized the big telecoms to spy on our phone calls and e-mails; that failed to investigate acts of torture and the nation's violations of the Geneva Convention; failed to demand a non-fiction version of events behind 9/11; failed to produce intelligence reform (while continuing to pour funding into the black hole of the intel budget); failed to impeach or even seriously investigate George Bush and his many criminal underlings – the list goes on. It is Congress that controls the money – every penny of it, covert and overt – that makes this waste and wantonness and insult possible.

Now, the latest injury, and per usual it involves blowing huge amounts of cash with no oversight, no accountability: The Washington Post reports that executive pay caveats in the Wall Street bail-out originally proposed by Barack Obama will be removed from the package, by consent of both parties, so that Congress yet again, obsequious and obese and utterly contemptible, will run the ball for its masters on the court while slapping the taxpayer with the bill.

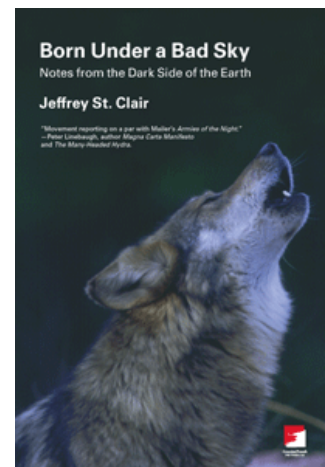
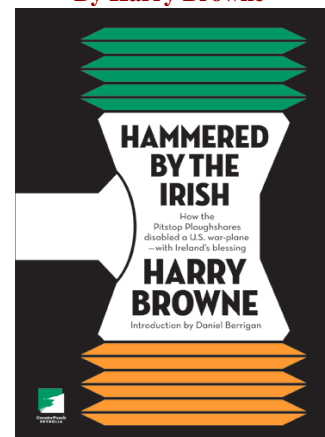
I have long made it my mantra that the most pro-American stance one can take in these foul times is to be anti-United States. The acts of Congress over the last decade prove the point. If the elected puppet playthings really don't like the nation, its traditions, its laws and its people – and it's clear they don't – then show a modicum of honesty and decency, drop the pretense and go join Al Qaeda; go work for the corporations; move to Israel and get elected in the mire in Tel Aviv. Do *something* with yourselves, just don't do it here. I like the idea of emptying out the Capitol marble of its quasi-human contents, sending the cretins on good will trips to Mars, then blowing up the building and using the scraps for grave markers of soldiers killed in Iraq.

Christopher Ketcham is working on a book about the dissolution of the United States and its replacement by bioregional republics. He can be reached at cketcham99@mindspring.com



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