

# Excellent Fundraising Response Leads to New \$2,500 Challenge From Bob Parry's Family

This community of truth tellers and committed advocates for peace is truly amazing. Less than a week after we launched our \$5,000 Spring Fundraising Challenge Grant, we've exceeded that goal.

You're making online independent journalism work in this digital age – and we can't thank you enough. We still need a bit more in our effort to raise a total of \$30,000, but we are getting closer everyday, thanks to you.

In response to last week's success, Bob Parry's wife Diane Duston and his four children, Sam, Nat, Liz and Jeff Parry are offering a new \$2,500 challenge grant to encourage additional support for Consortiumnews.com's spring fundraising goal.

"We've set a deadline of June 24, Bob's birthday, to reach our ultimate goal. We can think of no better gift to honor his memory," said Diane. **Please donate today to our Spring Fundraising Campaign**. And if you respond today, your gift will be matched \$1-for-\$1. A \$135 donation will bring you a boxed set of three outstanding books by Robert Parry, the late founder and editor of Consortium News. (Due to increased rates for international shipping an additional postage fee for international orders is required; Please email [info@consortiumnews.com](mailto:info@consortiumnews.com) to inquire about international shipping rates.) Thank you if you have already donated.

Many websites claim to be committed to the same goal we share – namely fierce, unapologetic, independent reporting you can find nowhere else. There are many worthy causes. But we believe this community is unique. We are not here to spread opinions or perceptions of reality. We are committed to facts, wherever that leads.

No compromises. No half-truths. Together, we will ensure truly independent investigative journalism always has a home online.

**Please donate today** to support our shared commitment to truth, justice, and unencumbered investigative journalism. Donations will be matched \$1-for-\$1 up to \$2,500 by Bob's family, doubling the value of your support.

This is your democracy. As Ben Franklin once said, this is a "Republic, if you can keep it."

It's now up to each and every one of us to defend democracy and progress.

**Please donate today** to support our devotion to truth and to taking on the powerful special interests and institutions who are committed to spreading false narratives and group think.

Thank you for your support,

Diane Duston, Sam, Nat, Liz and Jeff Parry

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## Consortium News at Left Forum in New York to Honor Bob Parry

Consortium News will hold a panel discussion at the Left Forum in New York on Sunday to honor the memory of Robert Parry, the late founder and editor of this website.

To remember Bob, the panel will discuss “The Death of Principled, Non-Partisan Journalism.” Bob was completely non-partisan. Any political or business leader from any political party, group or nation was fair game for his incisive reporting. It was reporting based on the principle of seeking not just factual accuracy, but the meaning of those facts. He was driven to convey to the public not only information, but as close to the truth of a matter as was possible to obtain. Bob told a C-Span interviewer in the 1980s that to criticize the U.S. government was to open oneself falsely to the charge of anti-Americanism. In fact Bob’s principled and non-partisan journalism was for him the very essence of being American.

In an era in which just a handful of powerful corporations own virtually all of the mainstream media that dominates mass communications in America, a viewpoint such as Bob’s is crowded out of the mainstream. The internet has given a place for dissent to be heard. But in this hyper-partisan and unprincipled age of journalism, dissenters who are shut out of the corporate media are dismissed as unhinged or as propagandists. Consortium News seeks to remain in the forefront of the struggle against such repression.

On the panel to discuss the issue are Margaret Kimberley, a columnist and editor at Black Agenda Report, and a Consortium News contributor; Don DeBar, the producer and host of Community Public Radio; and Mark Crispin Miller, a professor of media at New York University. Joe Lauria, the editor-in-chief of Consortium News, will moderate the discussion. It will take place on Sunday,

June 3 from 2 pm to 3:50 pm in Room 1.99 at John Jay College, 445 W 59th St, New York, NY 10019. Register [here](#) for the forum.

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## Our Dad's Pledge to You, the Reader

"The core responsibility of a journalist is to have an open mind toward any information you might find, to have no agenda, and to have no preferred outcome. In other words, I don't care what the truth is. I just care what the truth is. That's the deal you make with your readers." – Robert Parry, accepting the I.F. Stone Medal for Journalistic Independence, October 22, 2015

That was Dad's defining philosophy as a journalist and his commitment to you, the Consortiumnews.com reader. And it remains our guiding principle as we move forward and continue to produce independent, fearless reporting that takes on the establishment's often dangerously flawed conventional wisdom.

It is with Dad's spirit and solemn commitment in mind that we are asking you today to [donate to our Spring Fundraising Drive](#). And to encourage you to make a donation today, the Toledo Community Foundation is honoring our work by offering a \$5,000 challenge grant through their Seed-to-the-Sower Fund, which supports several "fields of interest" including "excellence in journalism" that "raises the intellectual standard of news and information media."

[Please make a donation today](#) and help us reach our Spring Fundraising Drive goal and unlock the \$5,000 Seed-to-the-Sower Fund challenge grant.

In the months since Dad's sudden and untimely passing, we have been blown away by the outpouring of support and appreciation so many of you have shared on the site, through social media, and with blog posts and articles of your own. It has lifted our spirits and helped us all remember Dad as the trailblazing journalist he was.

Now with a new editor, Joe Lauria, and with us serving on Consortium's Board, we remain as committed as ever to Dad's vision. For him, it was never about one

person. It was always about creating a platform and a community that welcomed reporters of all backgrounds who are willing to challenge the dangerous group think that predominates so much of our mainstream media.

This is a community dedicated to truth and independence. This is a community guided by a rebellious, skeptical spirit and committed to reaching a deeper understanding of world events and to hold the powerful people and institutions to account. We don't see a world in the sharp black and white, good vs. evil simplistic narrative so prevalent in our mainstream press. Truth is always found in the grey areas that a more well-rounded, balanced, skeptical point of view makes possible. That's what this community is about.

You have made this work possible with your past support. And we ask you to step up again to help drive Consortiumnews.com forward into a new era, one that will always remain true to Dad's pledge to provide our readers with the truth.

[Please donate today to our Spring Fundraising Drive](#) and unlock the \$5,000 Seed-to-the-Sower Fund challenge grant.

Thank you,

**Sam and Nat Parry**

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## Consortium News Launches Spring Fund Drive



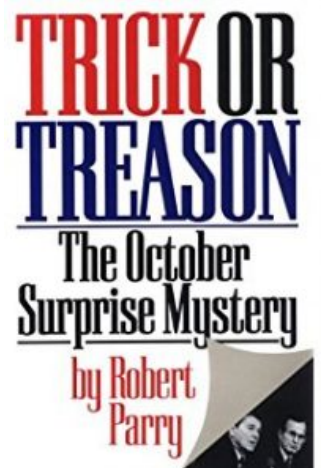
Consortium News is launching its Spring Fund Drive so that we can bring you expanded coverage and analysis of the most pressing international and domestic issues of the day.

We are setting our spring fundraising goal at \$30,000, so we can continue

publishing this independent-minded news site, which produces journalism that demands real facts from all sides in important public debates while rejecting Washington's conventional wisdom.

We are planning expanded coverage, to pay new writers from around the world to add even more diverse voices to Consortium News. We intend to bring you more international and domestic U.S. news analysis as well as reporting on labor, the environment, historical perspectives on the news, and news of women fighting for their rights, especially in developing nations.

A \$135 donation will bring you a boxed set of three outstanding books by Robert Parry, the late founder and editor of Consortium News. (Due to increased rates for international shipping an additional postage fee for international orders is required; Please email [info@consortiumnews.com](mailto:info@consortiumnews.com) to inquire about international shipping rates.)



You can support us by [credit card online](#) (we accept Visa, Mastercard, American Express and Discover), by PayPal (our PayPal account is named after our original email address, "consortnew@aol.com"), or by [mailing a check](#) to Consortium for Independent Journalism (CIJ); 2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 102-231; Arlington VA 22201.

We also are registered with PayPal's Giving Fund under the name Consortium for Independent Journalism. And, since we are a 501-c-3 non-profit, donations by American taxpayers may be tax-deductible.



What makes Consortium News special is its commitment to old-fashioned journalistic principles. We try to be evenhanded and fair toward everyone regardless of popularity (or lack thereof) – and we insist on evidence before serious accusations are made.

We don't simply run with the media pack. That can annoy some people at times when they want us to join in supporting a favored political agenda. But that is not our job. Our job is to objectively evaluate evidence and put it into a reasonable context, which is why we are often out of step with the mainstream media.

But that is also why our stories, overwhelmingly, stand the test of time. And our commitment to honest journalism is our promise to you, our readers. Thank

**consortiumnews.com**

you for your support.

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## Tribute to Robert Parry, Founder of Consortium News, May 19, Berkeley, CA.

REMINDER: This Saturday afternoon, May 19, at 2pm, a Tribute to Robert Parry, Founder and Editor of Consortium News will be held at Berkeley Fellowship Hall, 1924 Cedar St. in Berkeley, CA. Open to the public. Tickets at Brownpapertickets.com or at the door (\$10, \$15, \$20 – sliding scale).

It is no exaggeration to say that Bob Parry who died last January at the age of 68 was an exemplar of journalistic independence and integrity. *Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting*(FAIR) had this to say of him:

“Journalism lost one of its most valuable investigators when Robert Parry died from pancreatic cancer on January 27, at the age of 68. He was the first reporter to reveal Oliver North’s operation in the White House basement (AP,

6/10/1985), and the co-author of the first report on Contra drug-smuggling (AP, [12/21/1985](#)). He did some of the most important work investigating the 1980 Reagan campaign's efforts to delay the return of US hostages held in Iran, a scandal known as the [October Surprise](#).

"After breaking his first big stories with the Associated Press, Bob moved on to Newsweek and then later PBS's Frontline. Frustrated with the limits and compromises of corporate media—he was once told that a story on Contra financial skullduggery had to be watered down because Newsweek owner Katharine Graham was having Henry Kissinger as a weekend guest (Media Beat, [4/23/98](#))—Bob launched his own online outlet, [Consortium News](#).

"He was a pioneer in bringing maverick journalism to the Internet," FAIR founder Jeff Cohen [wrote](#) after Bob's death. "Bob was a refugee from mainstream media who, like Izzy Stone, went on to build an uncensored and uncensorable outlet."

Robert Parry himself wrote [this](#) about present day media which led him to found Consortium News:

"We looked at the underlying problems of modern democracy, particularly the insidious manipulation of citizens by government propaganda and the accomplice role played by mainstream media. Rather than encouraging diversity in analyses especially on topics of war and peace, today's mainstream media takes a perverse pride in excluding responsible, alternative views.

'It's as if the New York Times, The Washington Post, CNN and others have learned nothing from the disaster of the Iraq War when they pushed the groupthink about WMD and betrayed their responsibilities to the American people and the people of the world. Despite all the death, destruction and destabilization caused by the Iraq invasion, there was almost no accountability in the U.S. press corps, with many of the worst offenders still holding down prominent jobs and still engaging in the same terrible journalism.

**A TRIBUTE TO ROBERT PARRY**  
**The Journalist Who Revealed Vital Facts from Contras & Cocaine to Russiagate**

Speakers: Sam Parry, Joe Lauria (New Editor of Consortium News)  
plus: Natylie Baldwin, Dennis Bernstein, Norman Solomon  
Saturday, May 19, 2 PM :: Berkeley Fellowship Hall  
1924 Cedar Street, Berkeley  
sliding scale: \$10, \$15, \$20 [brownpapertickets.com](http://brownpapertickets.com)  
Sponsors: Task Force on the Americas, KPFA, Veterans for Peace / East Bay, Resumen

"When I was a young reporter, I was taught that there were almost always two sides to a story and often more. I was expected to seek out those alternative views, not dismiss them or pretend they didn't exist. I also realized that finding the truth often required digging beneath the surface and not just picking up the convenient explanation sitting out in the open.

"But the major Western news outlets began to see journalism differently. It became their strange duty to shut down questioning of the Official Story, even when the Official Story had major holes and made little sense, even when the evidence went in a different direction and serious analysts were disputing the groupthink.

"Looking back over the past two decades, I wish I could say that the media trend that we detected in the mid-1990s had been reversed. But, if anything, it's grown worse. The major Western news outlets now conflate the discrete difficulties from made-up 'fake news' and baseless 'conspiracy theories' with responsible dissenting analyses. All get thrown into the same pot and



subjected to disdain and ridicule.”

A detailed account of Parry’s contributions over the decades is given by his son Nat Parry [here](#). It is well worth reading not only as a summary of Bob Parry’s work but as a chronicle of the debasement of journalism over the decades. In it Nat Parry includes the following anecdote which gives one an idea of the sort of man Bob was:

“With my dad, professional work has always been deeply personal, and his career as a journalist was thoroughly intertwined with his family life. I can recall kitchen table conversations in my early childhood that focused on the U.S.-backed wars in Central America and complaints about how his editors at The Associated Press were too timid to run articles of his that – no matter how well-documented – cast the Reagan administration in a bad light.

“One of my earliest memories in fact was of my dad about to leave on assignment in the early 1980s to the war zones of El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala, and the heartfelt good-bye that he wished to me and my siblings. He warned us that he was going to a very dangerous place and that there was a possibility that he might not come back.

“I remember asking him why he had to go, why he couldn’t just stay at home with us. He replied that it was important to go to these places and tell the truth about what was happening there. He mentioned that children my age were being killed in these wars and that somebody had to tell their stories. I remember asking, ‘Kids like me?’ He replied, ‘Yes, kids just like you.’”

The tribute to Bob Parry on Saturday, May 19, will include talks by Norman Solomon, Joe Lauria (the new editor of Consortium News), Ann Wright, Natylie Baldwin, Sam Parry and Dennis Bernstein plus comments by Eric Garris, Bruce Dixon and Alicia Jrapko. It promises to be not only a tribute to Parry the man but a stunning commentary on the state of journalism today.

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## Consortium News’ Comments Policy

As some readers have objected to their comments being blocked or removed we republish here our updated Comments Policy.

At Consortium News, we welcome substantive comments about our articles, but comments should avoid *ad hominem* attacks, abusive language toward other commenters or our writers, sexist, homophobic, racial or religious slurs (including anti-Semitism and Islamophobia), and allegations that are unsupported by facts, as well as gross or misleading factual errors.

If we notice violations of this Comments Policy, we will either edit or take down such comments. If readers spot such violations, they can bring them to our attention at [info@consortiumnews.com](mailto:info@consortiumnews.com). Repeat offenders will be placed on a watch list requiring case-by-case approval of their comments.

Obviously, our preference is for commenters to show self-restraint and to make their observations in a respectful, thoughtful and factual way that is on-topic. We have plenty of work to do without having to police the comment section.

Also, because of annoying SPAM, we have installed a SPAM filter that uses algorithms to detect SPAM. The filter does a good job at this, but sometimes catches legitimate comments by accident. During the day, we try to recover these comments, but please do not be upset if one of your comments suffers this fate.

In addition, we use an automated system that pulls out questionable comments for manual review. Those comments that do not violate our Comments Policy will be restored. Do not be dismayed if there is a delay before your comment is approved or permanently removed.

We also strongly encourage commenters to use their real names and avoid pseudonyms unless there is a legitimate reason to do so.

If you have any questions about this policy please contact us at [info@consortiumnews.com](mailto:info@consortiumnews.com)

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## On This Date in Consortium News: May 4, 2004, Apocalypse Again

We begin a new feature, looking back at articles published years ago on Consortium News on the current date. This article by Nat Parry, published on May 4, 2004, is about the madness of the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

*The original version of this article can be found [here](#).*

**By Nat Parry**



Marlon Brando's Col. Kurtz character in "Apocalypse Now" applied crystal logic to the madness of the Vietnam War, concluding that what made sense was to descend into barbarism. The U.S. military hierarchy, judging Kurtz's tactics to be "unsound," ordered the colonel eliminated to keep at least a façade of civilization.

A reprise of that tragedy – a kind of "Apocalypse Again" – is now playing out in Iraq, with U.S. soldiers sent halfway around the globe to invade and occupy a country supposedly with the goal of protecting the world from violence and introducing democratic freedoms. As in Vietnam, there is a widening gap between the uplifting rhetoric and the ugly facts on the ground.

On April 30, for instance, with previous claims about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and Saddam Hussein's supposed links to al-Qaeda no longer tenable, George W. Bush touted a humanitarian justification for the invasion. "There are no longer torture chambers or rape rooms or mass graves in Iraq," Bush told reporters as he retreated to this latest line of defense. But now even those minimal standards don't appear to be true.

The year-long occupation of Iraq – like the war in Vietnam – has led some U.S. troops to engage in behavior that much of the world views as madness or war crimes.

The U.S. assault on Fallujah in April transformed a soccer field into a fresh mass grave for hundreds of Iraqis – many of them civilians – killed when U.S. forces bombarded the rebellious city with 500-pound bombs and raked its streets with cannon and machine-gun fire. There were so many dead that the soccer field became the only place to bury the bodies. Supposedly avenging Saddam Hussein's old mass graves of the 1980s and 1990s, Bush's policies have opened up new ones.

### **Rape Rooms**

Even Bush's oft-repeated assertion about closing Hussein's torture chambers and rape rooms no longer can draw a sharp line of moral clarity.

As Bush spoke, worldwide press attention was focusing on evidence that U.S. guards had tortured and sexually abused Iraqi prisoners held at the Abu Ghraib prison, the same prison that Saddam Hussein's henchmen used. U.S. guards photographed repulsive scenes of naked Iraqis forced into sexual acts and humiliating postures while a U.S. servicewoman gleefully gestured at their

ge



Investigative journalist Seymour Hersh disclosed in The New Yorker's May 10 issue that a 53-page classified Army report concluded that the prison's military police were urged on by intelligence officers seeking to break down the Iraqis before interrogation. The abuses, occurring from October to December 2003, included use of a chemical light or broomstick to sexually assault one Iraqi, the report said. Witnesses also told Army investigators that prisoners were beaten and threatened with rape, electrocution and dog attacks. At least one Iraqi died during interrogation.

"Numerous incidents of sadistic, blatant and wanton criminal abuses were inflicted on several detainees," said the report written by Maj. Gen. Antonio M. Taguba. In other words, Iraq's torture and rape rooms were open for business, only under new U.S. management. One victim who faced torture at Abu Ghraib under both Saddam Hussein's regime and the U.S. occupation said the physical abuse from Hussein's guards was preferable to the sexual humiliation employed by the Americans. Dhia al-Shweiri told the Associated Press that the Americans were trying "to break our pride." [USA Today, May 3, 2004]

After the publication of the Abu Ghraib photos, Bush said he "shared a deep disgust that those prisoners were treated the way they were treated." He added that "their treatment does not reflect the nature of the American people." One would hope not.

But Bush's protest was reminiscent of the senior officers in "Apocalypse Now" condemning Kurtz's atrocities and extrajudicial killings, when Kurtz's barbarism was only the logical extension of that war's excessive violence. The generals created Kurtz and then had to disavow him.



In a similar line of argument about Iraq, many people around the world are asking whether Bush should be held accountable for the policies that led to war crimes. Bush ordered the invasion in defiance of the

United Nations, deemed his Iraqi enemies to be “evil,” and brought to bear massive firepower against both military and civilian targets.

### **Restaurant Bombing**

Possible war crimes attributable to Bush date back to the conflict’s earliest days. For one, Bush ordered the bombing of a Baghdad restaurant – a civilian target – because he thought Hussein might have been having dinner there. As it turned out, Hussein wasn’t among the clientele, but the attack killed 14 civilians, including seven children. One mother collapsed when rescue workers pulled the severed head of her daughter out of the rubble.

As the official who ordered the invasion, Bush also must bear ultimate responsibility for excesses blamed on U.S. troops who were put in an extraordinarily difficult and dangerous position of both conquering and then occupying a country with a different language and an alien culture. Bush’s invasion plan left U.S. forces stretched thin as they tried to establish order after toppling Hussein’s government in April 2003.

Jittery U.S. soldiers opened fire on demonstrations, inflicting civilian casualties and embittering the population. In Fallujah, some 17 Iraqis were gunned down in demonstrations after U.S. soldiers claimed they had been fired upon. The city has been a center of resistance ever since.

Over the past year, the insurgency has spread across Iraq, even uniting age-old religious enemies, Shiites and Sunnis, in the common cause of ending the U.S.-led occupation. More than 720 U.S. soldiers and thousands of Iraqis have died. By casting the war in Iraq as a clash between good and evil, Bush also arguably

created conditions for justifying the humiliation of Iraqi prisoners who supposedly represented the “bad guys.”

Politically, the bloody occupation also has been a disaster for U.S. international standing, fuelling anti-American anger across the Middle East and around the globe. Spontaneous demonstrations have descended on U.S. embassies in many cities.

Even traditional U.S. backers are becoming unnerved at the image of a Christian zealot who thinks he’s guided by the Almighty inflicting death and destruction on an Islamic nation. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, considered one of the staunchest U.S. allies, cancelled a meeting with Bush and declared that current U.S. policies have created “hatred of Americans like never before in the region.”

“There was no hatred of Americans,” Mubarak said, but “after what has happened in Iraq, there is unprecedented hatred.” He said, “the despair and feeling of injustice are not going to be limited to our region alone. American and Israeli interests will not be safe, not only in our region but anywhere in the world.”



### **Angry Demonstration**

I recently witnessed some of this hatred and anger on the streets of Copenhagen, Denmark, a marked contrast to the unprecedented outpouring of solidarity for Americans after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks on New York and Washington. As in other cities around the world, residents of Copenhagen filled the sidewalks outside the U.S. Embassy with flowers and other displays of sympathy for the terror attacks.

On April 16, however, I came across a demonstration of thousands of people,

overwhelmingly Arab and Muslim. I walked along, trying to get a feel for the tone. The banners and signs were typical enough, with demands for Denmark and the U.S. to leave Iraq and calls to "Stop Bush's Massacre." But there was a militancy and a strident anti-Americanism, unusual for traditionally mild-mannered Denmark.

A sound truck led the march, and when the leader called out a chant, the crowd answered in a deafening response. Chants included, "Jihad!" "Down, down, USA!" and "USA! You will pay!" Some demonstrators displayed an open animosity toward non-Arabs. One Arab man gestured to me with his head, as if to say, "Get out of here."

The occupation of Iraq may be the most visible reason for the increased anger around the world, but Bush's approach to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is stirring possibly even deeper animosity. By endorsing Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to dismantle a few Jewish settlements in Gaza while keeping other parts of the occupied territories, Bush gave America's stamp of approval to what many around the world see as clear violations of international law.

Until Bush's endorsement of Sharon's plan, the U.S. had maintained, along with the European Union and other leaders around the world, that Israeli settlements beyond the 1967 borders were illegal and presented "obstacles to peace." But in a drastic change of course, Bush essentially legitimized those settlements, buying into Sharon's view of a "Greater Israel."

Beyond reversing 37 years of U.S. government policy towards Israel, Bush gutted his own "road map" to peace by eliminating the core principle that the final status of the territories will not be determined by unilateral action. Bush also has refused to join in denunciations of Israeli "targeted" killings of Palestinians, including Sheik Ahmed Yassin, the quadriplegic spiritual leader and founder of Hamas. EU foreign ministers said the killing of Yassin was "extrajudicial" and had "inflamed the situation" in the Middle East.

Bush said he found the Israeli attack "troubling" and called the Middle East a "troubled region," while stressing that Sharon had the right to "defend" Israel against terrorism. The Bush administration also vetoed a Security Council resolution that would have condemned the Yassin assassination as a setback to the peace process. The U.S. explained that the resolution didn't condemn Hamas by name, although it did condemn terrorism.

Soon after the Yassin assassination, Hamas said the U.S. and American leaders should be considered legitimate targets for revenge, reflecting the widely held perception that Israel only carried out the attack after receiving a green light from the Bush administration. Yassin's successor as leader of Hamas, Abdel Aziz

al-Rantissi, called Bush “an enemy of Muslims” and said Bush, together with Ariel Sharon, “declared war against Allah.” But, he added, “Allah declares war against America, Bush and Sharon.” [BBC, March 28, 2004]

Israel then assassinated al-Rantissi, an act also widely condemned by world leaders, including Bush’s closest ally, British Prime Minister Tony Blair. The EU’s External Affairs commissioner Chris Patten reiterated the EU’s position that “We believe that targeted assassinations are wrong, illegal and counterproductive.”

Again, the Bush administration declined to criticize the killing, saying Israel had a right to defend itself.

### **Policy Shift**

The U.S. has always maintained a close strategic relationship with Israel and has frequently acted as an extension of the Israeli government in the U.N. Security Council. But under Bill Clinton and previous presidents, the U.S. worked as a broker seeking settlement to the long-running Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Bush changed that.

Ten days after his inauguration, at the first meeting of the National Security Council, Bush shifted to a more “hands-off” policy, according to Bush’s first Treasury Secretary Paul O’Neill whose insider account is presented in Ron Suskind’s *The Price of Loyalty*.

Bush is quoted as saying, “We’re going to correct the imbalances of the previous administration on the Mideast conflict. We’re going to tilt it back toward Israel. And we’re going to be consistent.” Bush’s analysis of the situation was that Clinton had “overreached,” causing negotiations to fall apart. “That’s why we’re in trouble,” Bush said.

Recalling a helicopter trip he had taken with Sharon over Palestinian refugee camps, Bush remarked, “Looked real bad down there. I don’t see much we can do over there at this point. I think it’s time to pull out of that situation.”

Secretary of State Colin Powell expressed strong misgivings, predicting that U.S. disengagement would unleash Sharon and lead to “dire consequences,” especially for the Palestinians. But Bush shrugged off the concerns, saying “Maybe that’s the best way to get things back in balance.”

Elaborating on this theory, Bush said, “Sometimes a show of strength by one side can really clarify things.”

So years of diplomatic efforts to resolve the Middle East conflict came to an



end. Sharon launched some of the deadliest attacks ever seen in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and Palestinians countered with suicide bombings that killed Israeli civilians. The cycle of violence spiralled out of control.

Another early part of Bush's Middle East strategy was the ouster of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. O'Neill, who served on Bush's National Security Council, said invading Iraq was on the new administration's agenda from the start. Then, the Sept. 11 attacks gave Bush the political opening to lead the United States into Iraq in March 2003.

After a three-week war that drove Hussein's government from power, however, U.S. forces struggled to bring order to Iraq and soon were facing a stubborn insurgency. As in Vietnam, the frustration of fighting a shadowy enemy that moves among the population has led to violent excesses, both in battlefield tactics and in interrogation of prisoners.

When Iraqi insurgents killed four American security contractors in Fallujah and a mob mutilated the bodies, Bush ordered Marines to "pacify" the city of 300,000 people. According to some accounts, more than 800 citizens of Fallujah have died in the assault and 60,000 fled as refugees. Now, Arabs are calling Fallujah the "new Jenin," a reference to Israel's deadly assault on the Jenin refugee camp in April 2002.

### **War Crimes?**

In attacking Fallujah and in other counter-insurgency operations, the Bush administration again has resorted to measures that some critics argue amount to war crimes. These tactics include administering collective punishment against the civilian population in Fallujah, rounding up thousands of young Iraqi men on the flimsiest of suspicions and holding prisoners incommunicado without charges and subjecting some detainees to physical mistreatment.

During the siege of Fallujah, British human rights worker Jo Wilding said it was impossible to deliver food and medical aid to besieged civilians because of the threat of American snipers. She said everyone in Fallujah has lost at least one close friend or relative to the American onslaught.

Though U.S. forces insisted they were targeting only armed insurgents, international shock at the heavy firepower against a densely populated city contributed to the Marine decision to forego a full-scale assault on Fallujah. Instead, Marine commanders agreed to send in a former general from Hussein's army to co-operate with city officials in restoring order.

There have been allegations of war crimes elsewhere in Iraq. In the city of Kut, American soldiers allegedly beat an Iraqi man to death because he refused to

remove a picture of wanted Shiite Muslim leader Moqtada Sadr from his car. "After the man refused to remove Sadr's picture from his car, the soldiers forced him out of the vehicle and started beating him with truncheons," according to Agence France Press. He was taken to a hospital where he died from wounds sustained in the beating.

Meanwhile, Bush has continued to insist that the U.S. has eliminated a source of "tyranny and despair and anger" in the Middle East by overthrowing Saddam Hussein. In a press conference on April 13, Bush stressed that the war in Iraq is not only part of the struggle against "terrorism," but is part of an epic battle between the "civilized world" and "Islamic militants," "radicals," and "fanatics." It is a struggle in which "we are changing the world," Bush said.

The world may indeed be changing, though not exactly in the way Bush suggests. Rather than becoming safer, it appears to be growing less safe. Instead of seeing the United States as a beacon of liberty, more and more people around the world are viewing Americans as arrogant bullies.

### **Presidential Race**

In Europe and elsewhere, many people – from government leaders to common citizens – have become convinced that Bush is so inextricably tied to the failed policies in the Middle East that new leadership in Washington is a prerequisite for a solution. Sen. John Kerry, the presumptive Democratic nominee, is likely not exaggerating when he says that many world leaders are rooting for his victory.

What is less certain is whether even a Kerry victory would create the conditions to reverse Bush's policies. On the campaign trail, Kerry has insisted that he would not abandon Iraq though he says he would reach out to the world community to share the responsibilities for bringing order. Kerry has even advocated committing 40,000 more troops, about a one-third increase in the 135,000 U.S. soldiers currently there.

As for the Iraq invasion, Kerry told *Time* that he "might have gone to war, but not the way the president did." Kerry also said he is prepared to act unilaterally in defense of U.S. interests if a situation demands it. "But there is a way to do it that strengthens the hand of the United States," Kerry said. "George Bush has weakened the hand of the United States."

Some opponents of the Iraq War have criticized Kerry for not going further. They contend that his position constitutes "Bush-Lite," although it is possible that Kerry is simply playing it safe, trying not to alienate swing voters who see a danger in a rapid U.S. withdrawal but also see a risk in Bush's tendency for

rash actions and “us-against-them” rhetoric.

At the very least, Kerry might know better than to paint the U.S. into corners with language about a clash between the “civilized world” and “fanatics.” He also might avoid quasi-religious language that casts the struggle as a “crusade” between “good” and “evil.”

The logic of Bush black-and-white world view eliminates the gray areas where political compromise is possible. The “bad guys” must be crushed. “Our side” must be victorious. Anyone not “with us” is “with the terrorists.” Drawing such lines in the sand can have the unintended consequence of pushing some people repulsed by U.S. actions to side with the terrorists when otherwise they would have stayed neutral.

Also, when U.S. soldiers see themselves as confronting “evil” and defending “good,” virtually any tactic becomes justified, whether blasting apart a rebellious city, torturing a suspected enemy or subjecting prisoners to sexual and physical humiliation to “soften them up” for interrogation.

Bush’s Iraq War is forcing Americans to relearn the hard lessons of Vietnam. Like Col. Kurtz in “Apocalypse Now,” U.S. forces are trapped between the unrealistic expectations of politicians back at headquarters and the harsh reality of a counter-insurgency war on the ground. Caught in that paradox, with no reasonable way to achieve the lofty goals, it cannot be surprising that one reaction from at least some soldiers in the field would be a descent into barbarity.

While punishing individual offenders is necessary in such cases, the larger question is: Who among the higher-ups also should be held accountable?

**Nat Parry is co-author of *Neck Deep: The Disastrous Presidency of George W. Bush.***

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## May Day ‘71: When Bob Parry Went to Jail in the Biggest Mass Arrest in U.S. History

In 1971, Bob Parry, the late founder and editor of Consortium News, traveled to Washington to take part in an anti-Vietnam War protest. Here published for the first time in 47 years is Bob’s account of that day.

**A note from Nat Parry:** In the spring of 1971, with war raging in Vietnam, the U.S. peace movement hoped to shut down the federal government in an audacious mass civil disobedience action. Under the slogan “If the government won’t stop the war, then the people will stop the government,” tens of thousands of protesters set out to block major intersections and bridges to bring Washington, DC, to a halt.

A young Robert Parry, then a student at Colby College, drove down from Maine to participate in the demonstrations and ended up arrested along with thousands of other protesters who were swept up in the largest mass arrest in U.S. history. He later wrote about the protests and their significance in the *Colby Echo*, where he was Editor-in-Chief.

Marking the anniversary of these events, we republish Parry’s article for the first time in 47 years, with an introduction from his classmate Stephen Orlov, who attended the demonstration with him.

**By Stephen Orlov**

It was with a heavy heart that I read Nat Parry’s moving tribute to his father, Robert, on his sudden passing.

Bob was my closest friend at Maine’s Colby College during the turbulent Vietnam War years, when Bob was Editor-in-Chief of our student newspaper, the *Colby Echo*. He rarely talked with family and friends about his time at Colby, given the enormity of the important issues of the day he addressed tirelessly during his distinguished career. So Nat asked me to share a few anecdotes about Bob during his student days, when he began honing his muckraking journalistic skills and demonstrating to our campus community his inspiring strength of character in speaking truth to power.

I worked with Bob at the *Echo*, writing anti-war articles as an Associate Editor and Student Government President. We helped lead with a handful of activists the Colby strike against the Vietnam War in May of 1970, following Nixon’s invasion of Cambodia and the National Guard’s killing of protesting students at Kent State. Bob played a key role in our successful lobbying campaign that convinced the Colby Faculty to pass a resolution supporting our student strike.

We replaced classes with a counter-cultural-curriculum of daily workshops led by students and professors on the mass movements that were engulfing America in a tidal wave of social protest—anti-war and nuclear disarmament, civil rights and black power, feminism and gay rights, the American Indian Movement and United Farm Workers Boycott, anti-poverty and pro-environment.

Bob and I drafted a telegram on behalf of student government heads of 16 college

and university campuses in Maine to Senators Edmund Muskie and Margaret Chase Smith, which forced them to fly to Colby within days for an all-state anti-war rally that would "give the students of Maine the opportunity to confront you."

We devoured the non-violent civil disobedience writings of King, Thoreau and Gandhi, discussing for hours how to best apply their theory and practice to our plans for being arrested together at anti-war demonstrations in Washington DC that spring. And a year later at the May Day demonstrations in 1971, the friendly elderly stranger arrested next to us turned out to be Dr. Benjamin Spock, who had penned the classic baby-care "bible," we both would later rely on as parents.

At a speech to Alumni donors during the strike, Colby President Robert

Strider attacked Bob's editorial stewardship of the *Echo*, decrying "the uncontrollable barbarism, with its obscenities, libel and innuendo, of the college press." The following semester, Strider moved to end the College's near century-old sponsorship of the *Echo* because of Bob's editorial choices.

Strider wrote to Bob officially demanding the removal of the Colby name from the *Echo* and he convinced the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees to propose at a Board meeting we attended a resolution to disassociate the College from its student newspaper. Strider had highlighted swear words and an *Echo* photo of students frolicking "au natural" as just cause, but we countered that the heart of the matter was Bob's anti-war editorial position. Bob refused to remove the Colby name from the *Echo* and he delivered an unflinching defense of freedom of the press, convincing the Trustees to reject the censorship resolution of their Board Chair and College President.

On a personal note, Bob lamented a painful rift with his father, William, who was the publisher of the *Framingham News*, nearby Boston. He told me how his dad had always preached to him the need to consider multiple points of view for every story, a principle Bob embraced throughout his career, and yet William dogmatically dismissed off-hand Bob's anti-war position as being anti-American, and he ardently supported the war effort in his paper. Perhaps that personal experience later helped Bob emotionally confront the surreptitious maneuvers by government and media power brokers to blacklist him within the Washington press corps for his courageous reporting.

Bob and I remained in close touch during our first few years after graduation. We traveled together to Miami in 1972 for anti-war demonstrations at the Republican National Convention, sleeping in a pop-up tent in the protester's camp at Flamingo Park, where we bathed in the Park swimming pool. We drove there from Mass. to Florida in a car Bob had recently bought. He was rather proud of

the fact that he had tuned it up himself after studying an auto-maintenance manual.

After I moved to Montreal and he to Virginia, regrettably we rarely saw each other, occasionally catching up on work and family life from a distance. I can still remember decades ago, Bob describing passionately his visionary plans to begin publishing an online investigative journal in the tradition of his hero, I.F. Stone. I was thrilled to learn that Bob was honored in 2015 with Harvard's Nieman Foundation I.F. Stone Prize for Journalism, and later with the Martha Gellhorn Award. Ironically, when the Colby Trustees refused forty-five years earlier to back the Board resolution disassociating the College from the *Echo*, they appointed Trustee Dwight Sargent, the curator of Harvard's Nieman Foundation of Journalism at the time, to head a study committee, which never censored Bob or the *Echo*.

Throughout his life's journey, Robert Parry cast the shadow of a giant, and on his path he left a signature footprint marked by strength and integrity. Bob's passing is a personal loss of a friend I've admired my entire adult life, a loss of far greater magnitude for his loving family. His legacy shall endure, inspiring investigative journalists the world over.

**Stephen Orlov is an award-winning playwright, who recently co-edited with Melbourne-based Palestinian playwright and poet, Samah Sabawi, *Double Exposure: Plays of the Jewish and Palestinian Diasporas*, the first English-language anthology worldwide in any genre of drama, prose, or poetry by Jewish and Palestinian writers.**

"May Day"

**By Bob Parry**

(Originally published in the *Colby Echo* student newspaper in May 1971)

There was the air of a mighty athletic contest about it. A super bowl played out in the streets of the nation's capital. And the news media always alert for any incident that will appeal to America's sports-minded viewing public played the athletics of the situation to the hilt. To the media, it was the kids coming off several big seasons of demonstrations against the seasoned veterans of the Washington police force. The demonstrators with their potent offense trying to throw the city into chaos; the cops, led by their elite Civil Disturbance Unit and backed up by thousands of Marines, Army, and National Guard, putting up a great defense to maintain social order.

It was to be the biggest story of the week, perhaps of 1971, and the participants' temerarious victory predictions and scoffs at the strength of the opposition reminded some viewers of Joe Namath psyching the Baltimore Colts out of the '69 Super Bowl. The demonstrators had stated, "If the government won't stop the war, then the people will stop the government." And President Nixon had countered with assurances that he would not be intimidated. Chief of the D.C. police, Jerry Wilson, who would guide his team on the field, went on saying that the demonstration would be only a minor "nuisance."

So the lines were drawn and the kids readied themselves for game time Monday morning. But the police started things early with a foray into the demonstrators' home base at dawn Sunday. At that time, 41,000 people were camping at West Potomac Park. The police dispersed them hoping that many would go home, but most remained in Washington and others, like the nine members of the Colby contingent, had been staying elsewhere.

But with the thrust into the park, the police had taken the play away from the offense-minded demonstrators. The kids charged foul, but their cries went unheeded. Rules for the week's struggle were fuzzy at best, and with their early move, the police gave warning that many of the fair-play guidelines were out the window for as long as threats of disruption continued. The lack of rules reflected an even greater confusion which would plague observers and commenters throughout the week – how could anyone tell who won.

Nine of us from Colby – Steve Orlov, Dick Kaynor, Bob Knight, Lyndon Summers, Ken Eisen, Joel Simon, Andy Koss, Peter Vose and me – had come to Washington to commit civil disobedience. Most of us expected to be arrested; some were prepared to be clubbed. We had come because we opposed the war and wanted to demonstrate through the power of non-violent civil disobedience that our commitment to the war's end went beyond placards and petitions to congressmen.

We had come expecting to engage in Gandhian civil disobedience (passive non-violence); we learned, however, on meeting up with our regional group Sunday afternoon that the tactic now being favored was "mobile non-violence." Apparently because of fears that the numbers of demonstrators had been significantly reduced by the park clearing and because of a greater concern for the ends (who would win the "Stop the City" Bowl Game) rather than the means, regional leaders favoring "mobile" tactics had prevailed over others wanting more passive disobedience. Gandhi was to be mixed with Abbie Hoffman and the result would be a kind of touch football in the streets.

The kids were up early Monday but, as the slogan goes, the police department never sleeps. The cops and the troops were out in force and they had already had the four bridges from Virginia to D.C. neatly in their pockets. Ken and I drove

our cars into the city before six. Our job was to use the cars for blocking and slowing down traffic. Steve and Peter stayed with us in case of trouble and the others disembarked on the D.C. side of the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge. From the beginning it was clear that things were not going our way.

Steve and I drove around participating in and occasionally starting traffic jams. Scenes from Godard films met us at nearly every corner. Police charging and swinging into clumps of demonstrators, police cars chasing kids across parks, the grey smoke of tear gas rising everywhere, troops in their full, khaki battle gear lining the city's bridges. The government had responded to the threats of a shut-down with force and throughout the morning they had the kids running from their attacks and reeling from the tear gas. Traffic was snarled (some places for hours) but as the government pointed out, the workers got through.

When the Colby contingent returned to Ken's house in Arlington, we evaluated what had happened and discovered that Jody and Lyndon had been arrested. Everyone at the Eisen's was disappointed with how the demonstration had developed. We had come to be arrested and instead spent the whole day avoiding arrest. All of us agreed, no more of the same.

That evening, however, Bob, Steve and I talked with Hosea Williams, a leader of the SCLC, and he told us that his organization would lead a march to the Justice Department Tuesday afternoon which would end in a mass sit-down and, almost certainly, arrests. Six of us decided to go; four of us (Ken, Steve, Dick and I) got arrested. (Bob and Peter had taken a lunch break during the speeches and when they returned from their "Justice Department" sandwiches, they found four rows of police blocking off access to the several thousand demonstrators.)

The demonstrations at Justice were what we had been hoping for. When the police arrived, the two or three thousand protesters sat down and pulled out handkerchiefs to use in case of tear gas. The police moved toward us in rows, a tear gas canister was set off accidentally. The people didn't panic, they didn't run, they stayed together. The police began the arrests. At first, there were some incidents of violence, police clubbing and macing demonstrators, but when the cops realized that there would be no resistance, the arrests came orderly and peaceful.

The arrested demonstrators were taken in buses to areas of detention. The four of us from Colby and about 800 other people were placed in the U.S. District Court cell block. We were held in a cell (50'x20') with 100 other protesters and later in a cell (15'x15') containing 66 people.



# May Day

by Jack Henry

There was the air of a night athletic contest about it. A super bowl played out in the streets of the nation's capital. And the news media always alert for any incident which will appeal to America's sports-minded viewing public played the athletic of the situation to the hilt. To the media, it was the kids running off several big seasons of demonstrations against the continued existence of the Washington police force. The demonstrators with their potent offense trying to throw the city into chaos: the cops, led by their elite Civil Disturbance Unit and backed by thousands of Marriana, Arnie, and National Guards, getting up a great defense to maintain social order.

It was to be the biggest story of the week, perhaps of 1971, and the participants' spontaneous victory parade and exactly at the strength of the opposition revealed more winners of Joe Namath psyching the Billie Jean King out of the '68 Super Bowl. The demonstrators had stated, "If the government won't stop the war, then the people will stop the government." And President Nixon had countered with assurances that he would not be intimidated. Chief of the D. C. police, Jerry Wilson, who would guide his team on the field, went on record saying that the demonstrators would be only a minor nuisance.

So the kids were angry and the kids needed them. So the kids were angry and the kids needed them. So the kids were angry and the kids needed them. So the kids were angry and the kids needed them.



certainly, arrests. One of us decided to go; four of us (Ken, Steve, Dick, and I) got arrested. (Dick and Pete

The over-crowding, the oppressive heat, and the bologna sandwiches served with rancid mayonnaise made life in the cells difficult. But it also served as a crucible test for the principles of communal living. When food was provided for us, we asked to be allowed to pass the food back to the back of the cell in an orderly way. The people sitting against

the back wall ate first. We overcame the difficulties of too many people by communicating with each other and arranging shifts for sleeping (while some slept, others stood or sat uncomfortably). In short, we survived by learning to live with and care for each other.

At 10:30 Wednesday morning, I was taken in a bus to court. Ken, Steve, and Dick had to remain in an even smaller cell (8'x12') with 33 people until five that evening. Dick, Ken, and I were fortunate to be arraigned before Judge Halleck, the judge most sympathetic to our cause in the city. Halleck was accepting pleas of nolo contendere (no contest) and giving sentences of two days or \$20 (the two days considered already served). Steve and Jody were released on bond and the charges against Lyndon were dropped.

People have asked us since we've returned to Colby what was accomplished in Washington. The media, knowing that nobody likes a tie game, had ruled that the police had won. And indeed there are strong arguments to support that conclusion: the city was kept open, the government did function, and the war still continues. The police statistics were also impressive: virtually all government employees made it to work and almost 14,000 demonstrators had been arrested. And the people who watched on their sets at home saw the police always on the offensive and the demonstrators on the run.

But one thing that the media seemed to forget was that the shutting down of Washington was only one of May Day's aims. The demonstrators were designed to project an image of Washington, D.C., to the world as the scene of social chaos brought on by the country's involvement in Indochina and the problems of racism and poverty at home. By forcing the government to line its streets with

thousands of soldiers the demonstrations created an image not easily washed away.

But more importantly, May Day was the first large-scale application of non-violent civil disobedience by white Americans. The arrest tallies which are pointed to with such pride by Chief Wilson stand perhaps as a greater monument to the determination and will to sacrifice of the protesters. As we were being taken away from the Justice Department in a bus, the cry of the people with us was not of defeat but of victory. As we passed people on the streets kids leaned out the windows shouting "We won, we won."

But the greater measure of victory or defeat had to lie in the effect the actions had on those not participating. The initial reaction from television commentators and politicians indicated that the demonstrations were not well received, but other adults who were more immediately involved with the May Day occurrences felt differently. For instance, a reporter for the *Washington Star* who was arrested at Justice and served time in our cell block wrote on Thursday, "I ... was radicalized, but not just in the political sense. When I was separated from the group in the cell block, I told them I didn't know whether to flash a V sign for peace or a fist for power. 'Give them both,' said a friend. I did."

The spirit, he wrote, comparable to that of the "Britons in their bomb shelter during World War II or civil rights workers in the south" – was the feeling of men and women with a vision of a new society that is coming. Everyone I've talked to who experienced that feeling left Washington knowing that they had found 14,000 brothers and sisters by being in jail. The whole question of victory or defeat became submerged under all of us win or all of us lose.

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## Month in Review: Syria, Gaza, Russia and Tributes to Bob Parry

A look back at the stories in April that made the headlines on Consortium News.

**By Joe Lauria**

The worsening crises in Syria and Gaza dominated Consortium News' coverage in April.

Last month also saw publication of numerous tributes to the late founder and editor of Consortium News, Bob Parry. A memorial for Bob was held in Arlington, Virginia on April 14. Several tributes (from [John Pilger](#), [Brian Barger](#), [Joe](#)

Lauria and Don North) were posted on the site and a video of the entire event was made available on April 27.

## **Syria**

Donald Trump's April 14 air strike on Damascus was the focal point of the Syria coverage. In the lead-up to the strike Consortium News zeroed in on two aspects downplayed or totally ignored by corporate media: the legality of the strike and the question of evidence. In the aftermath of the strike, we focused on the continuing lack of proof of a chemical attack in a Damascus suburb—Trump's supposed *casus belli*, or as Ray McGovern quipped, a *casus belly* laugh.

After a supposed chemical attack on April 7 allegedly killed dozens of people in the Damascus suburb, and talk of a U.S. military retaliation stirred in Washington, Consortium News published an appeal by a group of international lawyers on April 11, arguing that the U.S. could only act in self-defense under Article 51 of the U.N. charter or with U.N. Security Council authorization. The Trump administration sought neither.

Instead Trump toyed with the idea of conflict with nuclear-armed Russia in a series of tweets, the most alarming of which was on that very day, April 11: "Russia vows to shoot down any and all missiles fired at Syria. Get ready Russia, because they will be coming, nice and new and 'smart!' You shouldn't be partners with a Gas Killing Animal who kills his people and enjoys it!"

On the same day, as Trump contemplated his "nice" strike, we also ran an article from University of Illinois Professor Francis Boyle about America's "Unlimited Imperialism," based on the teachings of Prof. Boyle's mentor Hans Morgenthau. The day before, on April 10, Consortium published a piece on the dangers of nuclear confrontation with Russia, as well as an excerpt from Daniel Ellsberg's new book, "The Doomsday Machine."

We took a look at America's Long History of Trying to Determine Who Rules Syria in a column on April 12 by Caitlin Johnstone. The following day a memo to President Trump from the Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity was published, urging Trump to obtain evidence of Syrian culpability and follow U.S. and international law before deciding to commit an act of war.

On the next night Trump attacked. We published a quick reaction to the strike, pointing out that chemical weapons inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons were due a few hours later to arrive in Syria to begin their work to determine whether chemicals were even used in Duma. By contrast, corporate media wheeled out ex-generals, many with undisclosed military industry contracts, to tout the hardware the U.S. had employed in an

advertisement masquerading as news analysis. The issue of evidence and legality was hardly raised in mainstream reports.

In the days following the attack, Consortium News ran pieces from Norman Solomon calling the strike a salute to the "Russia-gate faithful;" first-time writer Barry Kissin wrote on Defense Secretary James Mattis' 24-hour about-face from opposition to support for the strike; two pieces were published on reports that victims in Duma had suffered from smoke inhalation rather than chemical weapons; and another on the possible role of the White Helmets in the chemical weapons story.

Lawrence Davidson penned a commentary on April 19 exploring the psychological state of leaders who resort to force in the wake of the Syria strike.

A report, special to Consortium News, from Damascus on April 27 described life in the Syrian capital after the defeat of jihadists in nearby Ghouta. The rebels had been firing rockets into Damascus for the past seven years. The same day we ran an interview by Dennis J. Bernstein of weapons inspector Scott Ritter, who refuted U.S. government claims of a chemical attack.

On April 29 we published the first part of an in-depth analysis by As'ad AbuKhalil, his first piece for Consortium, on the U.S. role in Syria from before the crisis, and how mainstream media suppresses American responsibility for the bloodshed there.

## **Gaza**

While the crisis sharpened in Syria, a series of Friday protests inside the border fence separating Gaza from Israel resulted in the Israeli Defense Forces murdering dozens of Palestinian protestors and injuring more than a thousand. Consortium News ran seven pieces on Gaza, including interviews by Dennis J. Bernstein of Diana Buttu, Palestinian Knesset member Haneen Zoabi, Gaza-based journalist Wafa al-Udaini and Max Blumenthal.

Marjorie Cohn wrote a commentary on April 8 in which she argued that Israel should be brought before the International Criminal Court for its actions in Gaza. And David William Pear, examining the plight of Gazans, wrote on April 20 about the difference between "'Worthy' and 'Unworthy' Victims."

## **Russia**

The site published several pieces on the ongoing deterioration of U.S.-Russian relations and the dangers that entails. Paul Fitzgerald and Elizabeth Gould wrote an in-depth, two-part series on how neoconservatives grabbed power behind the scenes and targeted Russia.

Ray McGovern covered a story that was completely ignored by corporate media: a criminal referral of Hillary Clinton, James Comey and others in the Russia-gate affair.

Will Porter also wrote on April 18 about increased tension between the U.S. and Russia that would result if a new move by Ukraine to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was realized. And Gareth Porter delved into the mystery of the poisoning of a former Russian double agent that the British government has used to ramp up already tense relations with Russia, without offering any solid evidence.

### **Martin Luther King Jr.**

On the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, Margaret Kimberley, of *Black Agenda Report*, in her first piece for Consortium News, explored how King's legacy has been betrayed. Don North, a former correspondent for NBC News, recalled how he left the violence of Saigon to arrive in Washington a day later as the riots in reaction to King's death started to spread. And William F. Pepper, lawyer for the King family, and Andrew Kreig, marveled at a story in *The Washington Post* that actually reopened the question of who killed King.

**Joe Lauria is the Editor-in-Chief of Consortium News.**

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## A Celebration of the Life of Robert Parry

**VIDEO:** A memorial service for Robert Parry, the founder and editor of Consortium News, was held in Arlington, Virginia on April 14.

Bob's wife, Diane Duston, introduced friends and colleagues to recount their memories of Bob, whose work impacted the nation.

The speakers were Lynn Neary, the NPR broadcaster; Spencer Oliver, a former Congressional staffer and one of Bob's then unnamed sources; Jill Abramson, the former *New York Times* executive editor and a long-time neighbor of Bob and Diane's; Brian Barger, Bob's partner at the AP on many Iran-Contra exclusives; Joe Lauria, the Consortium News editor-in-chief who also read a tribute to Bob from legendary journalist John Pilger, who was unable to attend; a video tribute from Oliver Stone, the filmmaker, and Bob's two sons, Sam and Nat.

We present here a video of the entire memorial for the many admirers of Bob who were likewise unable to attend. It runs one hour and seven minutes. Broadcasters can request an abridged version or individual speakers by writing to [info@consortiumnews.com](mailto:info@consortiumnews.com) .

## A Celebration of the Life of Bob Parry

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