
Toffler's 'War and Anti-War'

Popularizer of Rumsfeld Information-Age Killing

by Carl Osgood

If Harvard Professor Samuel Huntington, with his *Clash of Civilizations* thesis, is the geopolitician for Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's military transformation, and if Director of Net Assessment Andrew Marshall is the technological guru, then all the language and buzz phrases were provided by futurist Alvin Toffler and his wife, Heidi, with their ideas of "Future Shock" and the "Third Wave." While posing as an attempt to address the questions of war and peace in the 21st Century, their 1993 book *War and Anti-War* is really a 250-page diatribe against the nation-state, in favor of their "Third Wave" society's global dictatorship, imposed from above by multinational corporate and financial interests, and from below by Internet-connected Jacobin mobs.

It is this hellish vision of the future which Rumsfeld and his co-thinkers are constantly invoking in their drive to "transform" the U.S. military. Rumsfeld, in a May 22 *Washington Post* op-ed, argued that the Defense Department needs the agility to be able to respond to "continuing changes in our security environment," because "In an age—the information age—when terrorists move information at the speed of an e-mail, money at the speed of a wire transfer, and people at the speed of a jetliner, the Defense Department is still bogged down in the bureaucratic processes of the industrial age." Adm. Arthur Cebrowski (ret.), the director of Rumsfeld's Transformation Office, told the Senate Armed Services Committee, on March 14, that "energy for current change seems to have emerged from three broadly defined events of the early 1990s"—the first of which, he said, was the demise of the Soviet Union and the "bipolar template that shaped U.S. security strategy"; the second was the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War; "and the third was the ascendance of information age warfare."

While the theoretical basis for these statements may largely derive from Huntington and Marshall, the formulations are all Tofflerite. One of the conduits for Toffler's ideas has been former Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and current member of the Defense Policy Board Newt Gingrich, who, over the past year or so, has been engaged in his own battles against the U.S. Army over the definition of transformation.

The basic thesis of the Toffler book is that as the mode of "wealth creation" changes from "First Wave" agricultural society, to "Second Wave" industrial society, to "Third

Wave" information society, so does the mode of warfare. "When waves of history collide," the Tofflers wrote, "whole civilizations collide." They went a step beyond Huntington, however, in arguing that the differences between individual cultures, which Huntington identifies as the source of future conflict, will be subsumed by what Toffler described as these three "super-civilizations." "The deepest economic and strategic change of all," Toffler wrote, "is the coming division of the world into three distinct, differing and potentially clashing civilizations."

From 'Airland Battle' to Military Transformation

By the Tofflers' own account, the project that would result in the book, began as the result of a 1982 meeting between them and Army Brig. Gen. Don Morelli, who was then the director of doctrine development at the Army's Training and Doctrine Command (Tradoc). Morelli, who had sought out the Tofflers, not the other way around, told them that a group of Army generals were busy reading their 1980 book, *The Third Wave*. Morelli told them this group, led by Morelli's boss, Gen. Donn A. Starry, "had set out to reconceptualize war in 'Third Wave' terms, to train soldiers to use their minds and fight in a new way, and to define the weapons they would need."

Many middle-ranking Army officers came out of their Vietnam War experience determined to reorganize the Army such that that experience could never be repeated. Some, like Gen. Creighton Abrams, took the approach of ensuring that the leadership of the United States could never commit the country to such a war, without a political price being paid. Abrams, who was Army Chief of Staff in the early 1970s until his premature death from cancer, moved a number of key capabilities into the National Guard and Army Reserve, so that no major deployment of military forces could take place, as *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche noted, in his Jan. 28 address "On the Subjects of Economy and Security," without "challenging the willingness of the population to fight that war."

Starry and his co-thinkers, however, took a different approach; one that, in a sense, tries to bypass an approach like Abrams'. Starry's thinking was deeply influenced by the Israeli experience on the Syrian Golan Heights in the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War, where they defeated a numerically superior Syrian force by rapidly going on the offensive with the forces that they had in hand, rather than waiting for reinforcements. It was in evaluating the Israeli experience, in the context of the defense of Europe against massed Soviet armor formations, that Starry read *The Third Wave*. When he met the Tofflers in 1982, Starry told them, "The Army is very hard to change. After all, it is a . . . Second Wave institution. It's a factory. The idea was that our industrial factories will produce and produce and produce weapons. The Army will run men through a training factory. Then it will bring the men and the weapons together and we'll win wars. The entire approach is

Second Wave. It needs to be brought into the Third Wave world.”

Starry and Morelli were the leaders of the effort to rewrite Army doctrine in the 1970s, into the 1980s. The previous rewrite had been led by Gen. William E. Depuy, commander of Tradoc from 1973-77. Depuy’s rewrite, called Active Defense, emphasized striking beyond the battlefield at Soviet second-echelon forces, and was strongly influenced by that 1973 Israeli experience. This was not enough for Starry who, when he succeeded Depuy in 1977, decided that a complete “rethink,” beyond Active Defense, was needed. As Toffler put it, “New ideas and new possibilities were in the air. Thus, as the American economy began moving toward demassified production, as a Third Wave system for creating wealth began to take form, the U.S. Army began a parallel development. Though the outside world remained unaware of it, the first steps were being taken to formulate a theory of Third Wave war.”

The result was the AirLand Battle doctrine, first published in the Army’s FM 100-5 field manual on Aug. 20, 1982. Toffler gleefully reported that the 1993 version of this manual declared, “Recent experiences gave us a glimpse of new methods of warfare. They were the end of industrial age warfare and the beginning of warfare in the information age.”

That recent experience was, of course, the 1991 Gulf War, which the information age warfare enthusiasts see as proof of their concept. Toffler wrote that what that war heralded, was “the arrival of a new form of warfare that closely mirrors a new form of wealth creation.” He called it a “dual war,” which saw the application, by the coalition forces, of both Second Wave methods of mass destruction, and Third Wave methods, using “information weapons” such as the AWACS and JSTARS airborne radar systems, and precision guided weapons, the which were featured every night on the television war coverage. Toffler hailed the small number of U.S. casualties in that war, and quoted a number of military analysts to the effect that the low U.S. death count signalled a new, less lethal form of warfare. He did this, while blithely ignoring the fact that there are other ways to kill large numbers of people without using what are normally thought of as the weapons of war—as anyone who has spent any time in Iraq, over the last 13 years, will attest.

That 1991 experience has led inexorably to Donald Rumsfeld’s military transformation policy. While most of the officers involved in the development of Airland Battle have long since retired—except for Morelli, who died within a year or so of meeting the Tofflers—they remain active, as consultants, in doctrine development and in the debates surrounding it. Starry, who is often cited as an expert in armor warfare, also became a collaborator of the Israeli spy-linked Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA), participating on one of their junkets to Israel in 1996. A third officer, retired Brig. Gen. Huba Wass de Czege, who is generally



Alvin Toffler’s famous “Information Age” was a brief era indeed, producing the telecom-dot.com bubble which blew up in the 1990s into the current economic collapse. The lunatic theses of Toffler’s 1993 War and Anti-War live on, as the “military transformation” pushed by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld as the key to an American global empire.

credited with writing large parts of the 1982 doctrine under the tutelage of Starry and Morelli, works, today, as a consultant on Tradoc’s Advanced War Fighting Experiments.

Trashing the Nation-State

Toffler’s Third Wave thesis buried, perhaps intentionally, the fact that the shift to his beloved information age is no more a natural progression than was the arrival of the industrial age in the latter half of the 18th Century. As *EIR* has shown, the Industrial Revolution was in fact the product of a deliberate effort by key thinkers and leaders, such as Benjamin Franklin, building on the scientific work of Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, to bring into existence the political economy needed to support a nation-state republic dedicated to the common good of all of its citizens. By the same token, the shift to the post-industrial society was brought about by deliberate policy changes, beginning with Richard Nixon’s decoupling of the dollar from gold on Aug. 15, 1971; continuing through Jimmy Carter’s deregulation policies and Federal Reserve Chairman

Paul Volcker's interest-rate shock policy of 1979-80. Those policies combined with the 1973 and 1979 oil hoax shocks to wreak havoc with American heavy industry, especially steel and machine tools, and push the process of de-industrialization to the point that the United States is no longer capable of reproducing itself.

Toffler, of course, makes no mention at all of this policy shift.

It is, however, Benjamin Franklin's nation-state republic, the only form of organization of society yet devised that is capable of addressing the common good of all of its citizens, that is the real target of Toffler's Third Wave, Information Age hype. Early on in *War and Anti-War*, Toffler declared, "Nationalism is the ideology of the nation-state, which is a product of the Industrial Revolution." The Third Wave world, he insisted, is characterized by the disappearance of borders, and the attempt to retain those borders is one of the future sources of conflicts. "Thus, while poets and intellectuals of economically backward regions write national anthems, the poets and intellectuals of Third Wave states sing the virtues of a 'borderless' world. The resulting collisions, reflecting the sharply differing needs of two radically different civilizations, could provoke some of the worst bloodshed in the years to come."

Toffler identified two forces challenging the existence of the nation-state. On the one side, "The emergent Third Wave economy, based on knowledge-intensive manufacture and services, ignores existing national boundaries." Technology-driven decentralization "could, in time, change the entire balance between national and regional economies. They make the latter more viable, thus strengthening the hand of border-breaching separatist movements." Therefore, these two forces, "one from above, and the other from below, are cutting the ground out from under the rationale for national markets, and the borders they justify." Toffler said that some forecasters "see a future world not with today's 150-200 states, but with hundreds, even thousands of mini-states, city-states, regions and non-contiguous entities." The model seems to be Singapore, and Toffler favorably quoted one co-thinker suggesting that China's destiny is to be broken up into hundreds of Singapore-like city-states.

Completely excluded from Toffler's analysis is that truthful history of the nation-state from the standpoint of physical economy, a standpoint represented, today, by Lyndon LaRouche. In his April 28 statement "A World of Sovereign Nation-States" (see *EIR*, May 16), LaRouche identified the American Revolution of 1776-83 and the 1789 creation of the U.S. Federal constitutional republic as what George Washington's ally, the Marquis de Lafayette, described "as a temple of liberty and a beacon of hope for all mankind." LaRouche wrote that "The underlying purpose of the American revolution and its leading European supporters, was, from the beginning, to establish the U.S.A. as a republic which would contribute, in the manner of a seed crystal, to inspiring the

emergence of a community of sovereign republics of the world."

This goal was expressed by our greatest statesmen, John Quincy Adams, Abraham Lincoln in his Gettysburg Address, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, in his commitment to a decolonized post-war world. "On this account," LaRouche wrote, "one must understand the unique importance for the world, then, as now, of the Preamble of the 1787-1789 drafting of that adopted Constitution," and its efficient commitment to the common good.

Not only does Toffler not understand that document, but, in principle, he is opposed to it. Never once, throughout his book, did Toffler ever mention a commitment to that principle of the common good as one on which the relations between nations must be based. The "hope" that Toffler offers is a world where the issues of war and peace are farmed out to private interests, which provide private armies to the United Nations, on a contract basis, "to do what it takes, ranging from legalized bribery to propaganda to limited military intervention, to the supply of peace-making forces in the region," in a sort of "Peace, Inc." "Private investors," Toffler suggested, "might be found to capitalize such firms if, say, the international community or regional groups agreed to pay them a fee for services plus bonanza profits in years when casualties decline." This would be one component of a new Third Wave peace-form, a world which is "a complex new global system made up of regions, corporations, religions, non-governmental organizations, and political movements, all contending, all with different interests, all reflecting different degrees of interactivity."

LaRouche, in opposition to this sort of insanity, has counterposed the principle of strategic defense, as implemented, in particular, by the great French military genius, Lazare Carnot. Carnot organized the defense of France, against nearly every other power of Europe, in the 1792-94 period, by mobilizing nearly the entire nation on the basis of military engineering principles. The principle includes conscription, for which there is no room in Toffler's, or in Donald Rumsfeld's, world. In his Jan. 28 address, LaRouche stated that "the object of war is not war. The object of war is peace, when you can't obtain it by other means. And therefore, that's the idea of strategic defense, is to have a *peace* policy, a policy for establishing peaceful relations which are acceptable among nations, and fighting to ensure that that is not jeopardized."

Lawfully, the attempt to bring into existence Toffler's nightmare vision is resulting in the collapse of the global financial system, worldwide. The effect has been to turn the United States into a Roman-style empire that is no longer capable of physically sustaining itself, and so has to loot the rest of the world in order to continue to exist. Thus, the perpetual war policy of Vice President Dick Cheney, Rumsfeld, and the rest of the chicken-hawks, for which Toffler's ideas are ready made.