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A Note on Hillary Clinton, the Queen of Chaos

By Diana Johnstone

April 15, 2016

About a year ago, I concluded my book on Hillary Clinton, “Queen of Chaos”, with a fairly pessimistic chapter on the “War Party” which controls United States foreign policy. At the time, I wrote:

“A last-minute peace candidate would be a divine surprise. But a real alternative to the War Party must be built up over time...”

In fact, this primary campaign has produced a couple of surprises, more earthly than divine. Both surprises reveal widespread grassroots discontent with both Hillary Clinton and the whole American political establishment. However, this discontent so far fails to focus on the point of my book: the need to combat the ideology and practice of U.S. war policy personified by Hillary Clinton. Where is the effective alternative to the War Party?

Donald Trump has made it clear he wants to end the current hysterical anti-Putin pre-war propaganda and do business with Russia. This sounds like a major step toward preventing nuclear war. All to the good. The problem is, Trump is a lone wolf. Many of his supporters seem more excited by style than by content. Their multiple incoherent grudges against the system do not add up to an anti-war movement. Trump is unpredictable, and it is hard to see where he would find the foreign policy team and the support needed to overthrow the entrenched foreign policy elite.

With Bernie Sanders, things are a bit the other way around. The Sanders campaign is creating an enthusiastic popular movement, with specific aims in domestic policy. Bernie calls for a “political revolution” and insists that he cannot accomplish all this by himself. All to the good. But Bernie Sanders has said little about foreign policy. The radical shift in domestic priorities advocated by Bernie implies drastic cuts in military spending, but he has not been spelling this out. Despite his strong opposition to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, he has been susceptible to the “humanitarian” war cries of the liberal interventionists, who would certainly strive to take charge of his foreign policy should he miraculously be elected.

So, Trump has the defiance, and Bernie has the movement.

What is still lacking in this campaign is clear denunciation of the very worst of Hillary Clinton’s many negative traits: her eagerness to go to war. And it is not merely Hillary who needs to be defeated: it is the entire militaristic power structure she represents.

One hopeful sign is the resignation from the Democratic National Committee of Hawai’i Congresswoman Tulsi Gabbard in order bring her strong voice against “regime change” wars into the Sanders campaign. There is a chance that as it develops, anti-war sentiment may grow more explicit in the Sanders movement, influencing Bernie himself and providing the social force needed to confront the liberal interventionists within the Democratic Party.

The occasion of this campaign should be seized not only to expose the lies of Hillary Clinton, but also to seek freedom from America’s seven decades of subjugation to the military-industrial complex and its organic intellectuals who never cease conjuring up “threats” and “enemies” to justify the war economy. This entire policy needs to be exposed, denounced and rejected. That is what I tried to do in *Queen of Chaos*.

CounterPunch invited me to write this letter to advertise my book at this crucial time, but I prefer to quote someone I admire, David Swanson, who wrote:

“Diana Johnstone’s forthcoming book, *Queen of Chaos: The Misadventures of Hillary Clinton*, succeeds in providing an understanding of Hillary Clinton’s own worldview like nothing else I’ve read — and it does so despite being largely not about Hillary Clinton. Johnstone’s book is culture and political criticism at its finest. It’s a study of the American neo-liberal, with a particular focus here-and-there on Clinton. I strongly recommend reading it, whatever your level of interest in the ‘Queen of Chaos’ herself, for its illumination of the ideologies underlying U.S. adventurism, exceptionalism, and ‘responsibility to protect’, obsession with identifying believable threats of ‘genocide’ in nations disloyal to Washington or Wall Street.”