

Tofflers' 21st-century strategic insanity

by Jeffrey Steinberg

In April 1982, at the moment when Lyndon LaRouche was engaged in intense back-channel negotiations with the Soviets, on behalf of the Reagan White House, around what would later be adopted by the President as his Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)—a true revolution in warfare—two of the most lunatic advocates of the post-industrial “New Age,” Alvin and Heidi Toffler, were being brought into the inner sanctums of the Pentagon, by some of the U.S. military’s leading utopians.

At least in part, as the result of the Tofflers’ collaboration with some senior officials of the U.S. Army’s Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), the United States has increasingly adopted a military strategy that can best be described as “Nietzschean warfare,” in which all principles of morality, strategy, and mission are abandoned, in favor of a senseless, high-tech “scorched-earth” policy of destroying every bit of infrastructure, and tallying rates of civilian casualties near 80%.

The Tofflers’ notion of warfare might best be described as the most advanced form of state-sponsored genocidal “blind terrorism” ever put forward as a military doctrine.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and President George Bush’s 1991 Persian Gulf War was hailed in the Tofflers’ 1993 diatribe, *War and Anti-War: Survival at the Dawn of the 21st Century*, as the greatest military victory in modern history. They referred to it, self-servingly, as the first war to occur between a “Third Wave” (i.e., post-industrial, “information”) versus a “Second Wave” (i.e., industrial) society. This idea of warfare between post-industrial nations (i.e., the United States, western Europe nations, and Japan) and industrial and Third World pre-industrial nations, was favorably compared, in the Tofflers’ book, to the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century “benign” imperial and colonial wars, conducted by the British and other European colonial powers against the populations of Africa and other corners of the underdeveloped world.

Already, advocates of “air war” and other utopian war-fighting doctrines are championing the 78-day aerial bombardment of Serbia and Kosovo as proof that the “era of air power” has finally arrived. It was only a matter of time, these “Third Wave air power” fanatics argue, until the proper amount of “information-intensive” gadgetry could be assem-

bled, to enable warfare to be a bloodless, casualty-less affair—for the winning side.

The new triad

By their own accounts in *War and Anti-War*, Alvin and Heidi Toffler were approached, in April 1982, by Gen. Don Morelli, who, along with Gen. Donn A. Starry, was working on an overhaul of U.S. military doctrine, drawing heavily from the Tofflers’ 1980 book, *The Third Wave*. That book set forth the idea that industrial civilization was obsolete, and that large-scale production could be replaced by “information.” The Tofflers received a series of detailed briefings from Morelli, Starry, and others, and, eventually, a decade later, wrote their book-length venture into the world of “operations research,” “future war,” and “AirLand Battle 2000.”

In that book, they put forward the idea of a new strategic “triad” for global warfare below the threshold of thermonuclear extinction. In what they looked forward to as a three-way “clash of civilizations” among agrarian, industrial, and post-industrial societies, the Tofflers argued that “Third Wave” warfare would be successfully fought through the combined deployment of “niche” special forces units, overwhelming use of “information-driven” air power, and “information warfare”—the use of advanced electronic systems, computer viruses, non-lethal weapons, and other *wunderwaffen* to disrupt the enemy’s command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (“C⁴I”).

Much of this grab-bag of lame-brain toys and tactics was codified in the Pentagon’s mid-1980s “AirLand Battle 2000.” If there is any doubt that the Tofflers’ kookery has penetrated deeper into government than merely through the thick skulls of Newt Gingrich and Al Gore, both of whom figured prominently in the Congressional Clearinghouse on the Future and the Congressional Military Reform Caucus, then just consider the recent remarks by Defense Secretary William Cohen.

Speaking to the Conference on Terrorism, Weapons of Mass Destruction, and U.S. Strategy, at the University of Georgia on April 28, Cohen said that he had just been reading the Tofflers’ *War and Anti-War*, and that this was “must” reading for strategists. He returned to the subject of the Tofflers’ ideas three times during the discussion period.

The Tofflers themselves, of course, are little more than pop-cult scribblers who take the insane “paradigm shift” ideas, generated by far more serious monsters from the Tavistock Institute, the Frankfurt School, and their many offshoots and fronts, and put them into barely readable prose, suitably byte-sized for an audience of “New Age” true-believers. The vastly bigger problem is that the U.S. military is now teeming with just such “New Age” policy wonks, with hundreds of billions of dollars in defense budget money at their disposal, and the increasingly frequent opportunity to play their “Nietzschean” war games against living and breathing human targets—most recently in the Balkans and Iraq, but, perhaps, coming soon to your neighborhood.