

“Now Ain’t the Time For Your Tears”: Why Things Are Worse Than They Appear

by Michael Weinman

Appearances are that the United States (hereafter “U.S.”) is on the brink of fighting a war of aggression—the first war acknowledged to be such in its history, albeit in the dissembling phrase “pre-emptive”—in a distant land. Each morning the news outlets present more in-depth features on the preparedness of the U.S. military, of the current policy discussions, the current strong-arm tactics at the U.N., and diplomacy in the region to line up allies in the all-but-certain event of some putatively new military intervention. The U.S. Congress has provided the President with unprecedented (and unconstitutional) powers to wage war, and the organized voice of dissent is marginalized by the media to the tune of 1:10. (That is, if 100,000 people show up somewhere to protest a war, it will be reported—even by supposedly “liberal” outlets like the *New York Times* and National Public Radio. Though, to be fair, they will voice “retractions” a day or four later saying that they “believe” they under-reported the presence.)

But “take the rags away from your face, now ain’t the time for your tears,”

as Dylan once demanded of us. For the reality is much worse than the appearances. The fact of the matter is that, current unilateralist hyperbole notwithstanding, we are seeing little more play out now than the logical conclusion of a decade and more of U.S.-British policy in Iraq. For more than ten years, the predominance of which also consisted in the American Left’s consistent indecision as to whether or not it could sound its criticisms of the “New Democratic” party and its scion President William Jefferson Clinton, the U.S. and Britain pursued an Iraq policy of physical and diplomatic isolation, crippling sanctions, and consistent air-raids (which have killed at least 84 people in the past three years—that’s the number the U.S. acknowledges, many more are claimed¹) that both fur-

