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# Celebrating Dissent: Scholarship and Politics in the New American Century

## M. Alford interview with Prof W.S. Lucas

**ALFORD**: Good afternoon, Professor Scott Lucas. In the post Communist world is there any value using the terms Left and Right and do you think there's ever been value in using these terms?

**LUCAS**: People might use the terms either to stigmatise the other side or to mobilise their own forces but in terms of meaningful political divides, no, I don't think it works that way. For example, some of the salient opposition to the recent war in Iraq came from libertarians, notably antiwar.com, so-called American conservatives like Pat Buchanan, as well as members of the early '90s establishment. [Presidents Ford and Bush Snr's National Security Advisor] Brent Scowcroft was against it, [Reagan and Bush Snr's Chief of Staff] James Baker was doubtful about it before he joined forces with the current administration.

So, no, the issues that generally define Right and Left – those of Communism versus alternative systems domestically and internationally - these issues have significantly changed since the fall of the Soviet system in 1991. In fact, they changed before 1991 because I don't think the Cold war by the early '80s was a conflict between the US and Soviet Union.

**ALFORD**: So, was it a conflict between North and South?

**LUCAS**: It was a conflict of many different things. All of this comes down to the deployment of power - basically state power but also of other private groups. The challenge to American power in the 1980s was not from the declining Soviet system, except for the prospect of nuclear use. The political challenge was coming from the so-called developing world. So if you look at US policy in the 1980s the real cutting edge is in Nicaragua, Afghanistan, the Middle East, certain areas of Africa… and the big foe there is not Communism but rather different movements - sometimes national, sometimes indigenous, so-called left wing or radical movements.

Right and Left have broken down as meaningful descriptors long before the end of Cold war and they have broken apart since then. Some groups who opposed the Iraq war were in no way 'Left'. And then, on the other side, there were certain people who supported intervention in Iraq who too easily claimed to be of the Left, including Christopher Hitchens, Michael Ignatief and Michael Walzer. Sure, they may have been 'Left' in 1968 but their arguments of liberal interventionism have emerged because of changing world circumstances over the last twenty years. The cutting edge political issue is liberal intervention, which exposes Left and Right as relatively meaningless terms. The issues are far too complex to slap an easy label onto it like that.

**ALFORD**: The principal architects of US foreign policy currently at the top of the food chain are called 'neo-conservatives' but their aims are broadly supported by 'neo-liberals'. How do you square that circle?

**LUCAS**: If you go back to the whole question of intervention for human rights or a slogan for democracy or freedom go back to the start of the Cold war and find common ground that goes beyond Right and Left. In the 1950s it was very easy for people who called themselves supposedly Right - activist Cold warriors - to say we need to liberate Eastern Europe for the sake of human rights. On the Left it was equally easy to say 'we're for human rights in Eastern Europe as well so let's make connections with dissident groups'. So in the aftermath of [the failed anti-Soviet uprisings] in Czechoslovakia [1958] and to an extent Hungary [1956] there was a lot of anger amongst the so-called Left who felt they couldn't intervene because their hands were tied - they could hardly support American power over Soviet power. Meanwhile, many people on the so-called Right were saying that they could not intervene because it would raise the stakes in the Cold war. The Hungarians and the Czechs became pawns in that.

So the question of intervention has always been a more complex issue because it has a relationship to American power and it goes beyond the exercise of American power. To bring it back to today, George

Mombiot - far from being an antiwar lefty - wrote one of the most thoughtful pieces I've read recently on intervention. Far from being against intervention he comes out for it, but says it has to be on a humanitarian basis. So the divide between him and the neo-conservatives is not on the need for intervention in certain cases but on the question of the manner of that intervention. It can't be on behalf of imperialism or, put more bluntly, on behalf of a neo-conservative vision of American power.

**ALFORD**: So are you saying that you would support intervention if it was run by liberals rather than neo-conservatives? Have liberals been hoodwinked?

**LUCAS**: I wouldn't use the term liberal. It's almost useless as a term, certainly in America where, by the 1980s, it was used to attack people that were beyond the fringe of acceptable public opinion. The question on intervention was never 'liberal versus conservative'. It was about who was going to intervene. The breaking point over Iraq and to some extent Afghanistan was on the nature of an international mandate or a unilateral/ bilateral decision to intervene. The US rejected international intervention in favour of an Anglo-American operation.

**ALFORD**: Was it only the government that opposed internationalisation or do you see a broader movement against that?

**LUCAS**: There were certain government connections; the American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation, and the Foundation for Defence of Democracies were all on board. Also, certain independent commentators: Michael Ignatief, Michael Walzer, George Packard, and, of course, Christopher Hitchens, came out for intervention. And that's not to say they did not have reasons. They had their reasons and they should be debated and they have validity. But they came out for intervention as it was determined not by an international group or even a multilateral group but by the US government.

Let's be blunt about it. No one was against intervening in Iraq - except some conservatives like Patrick Buchanan. The question was 'How do you intervene in Iraq?' especially given that sanctions were costing hundreds of thousands of lives. One of the biggest hypocrisies is that people criticise the antiwar people by saying 'You want to condemn more people to death by sanctions'. In fact, what was being sought was an alternative to military action and an alternative to a sweeping sanctions regime. Go back and look at 2001 when the French and Russians were going to propose a smart sanctions regime. The big threat to the American policy before 9/11 was that the UN Security Council was going to push for that position and the Americans would no longer have control of a sweeping sanctions regime, which they used as an economic weapon against Iraq.

The Americans have been using sanctions on a number of countries since the end of the Cold war - Iran, Libya - and whether or not that's a justified weapon we can talk about. But the fact is UN sanctions had become instruments of power used by different countries: France and Russia use it to change the rules of the game, not necessarily because they are benevolent but because they want to increase their trade with Iraq under smart sanctions. But that's an issue for discussion. Military intervention swept all that aside. The French didn't object to future military action in March 2003. Chirac did not say the French would veto the second resolution at that point. He was arguing for coercive inspections for months.

**ALFORD**: Yes, I had expected coercive inspections to happen but instead they went all out for it…

**LUCAS**: Exactly. There's a reason for that. The Americans, from a military point of view, had made the decision that action had to be taken by mid-March whatever else happened. Look at newspapers at the end of January, which said Bush and Blair were giving the Iraqi regime six more weeks. Using the UN to project American power was no longer worth the game. If they continued going on with that for another six months they risked being beholden to the UN, which isn't going to sit well with Wolfowitz, Pearle, Rumsfeld, Cheney.

**ALFORD**: Or Bush?

**LUCAS**: I don't think Bush had a clue about the deeper issues. This'll get me in trouble because I'm speaking as a polemicist, not an academic. Bush shows no knowledge about complexities within countries or international organisations. He speaks in slogans and as far as I can tell he thinks in slogans. And I've seen nothing to contradict that.

Let's be real here. The key people who are determining, shaping and setting policy are at the Pentagon - Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, to an extent Douglas Feith. They are in battle with factions of the State Department

- with Powell. Then there's Rice with National Security, Cheney as Vice President and to an extent George Tenet at CIA.

Bush makes no significant decisions based on a knowledge that says 'Lets put this all together and then I'll come up with the ideas'. The one example cited [of Bush making a significant decision] was the appeal to go to the UN in September 2002 and I'll tell you why they did that: it wasn't because Bush took a hard look at this. It was because of the British.

**ALFORD**: You think Blair had an influence?

**LUCAS**: Short term. Blair bought himself six months and the hope that the UN would provide cover for an Anglo-American operation, having already decided that it would be Anglo-American operation. Blair had decided that, probably from Summer 2002, if not from March. But that's another story…

**ALFORD**: I'd like to move on now to the concept of Anti-Americanism, which has been raised by various public figures, including Jack Straw. Do you have any particular insight into the value of this term as an American living in Britain?

**LUCAS**: It's a political weapon, a useless term. What does it mean? You hate America? Talk to people and they don't say 'I hate America'. They may say 'I hate American foreign policy' or 'I hate Bush', which doesn't mean they hate him so much as a person as they hate what the government is doing.

I don't see people hating America. I'll give you two examples. In Spring 2002 there emerged a photograph of Israelis lining up Palestinian detainees to be marched off and questioned and so on… no doubt a numbers of these Palestinians wouldn't be supportive of US foreign policy. First thing I noticed was that, of the people in the queue, one was wearing a hat with a Nike tick on it and another had a sweatshirt with the Chicago Bulls logo on it. These are people who, if not cognisant of American culture, are getting it unwittingly at the same time as they're supposedly being against America. The famous clip of Palestinians dancing after 9/11 - leave aside the debate about whether it's real - look at the background and there a Pepsi vending machine. So people in the West Bank are drinking Pepsi.

People negotiate their relationship with America. They may not do so at a very complex or deep level but they negotiate it. Look at the use of the term 'anti-American' and ask yourself if someone is freely saying they're 'anti-American' or if it's someone saying 'so-and-so is anti-American'. What you generally find is that people use the term to stigmatise a political position that they're not happy with and instead of challenging it on the details, they slap a label on it.

**ALFORD**: Could we say that anti-Americanism implies anti-capitalism or anti-progress?

**LUCAS**: Most people don't think in terms of 'with us or against us'. If there is a "with us or against us" framework, you know where it's coming from. Go to Iran where satellite TV is illegal, technically, but where most people in the middle classes have satellite TV. I walked in one night to a party and a group of academics and professional people - spanning from conservative to reformers (to use those general labels), were watching Fox news. Let's get real. There is an issue over American economic power and its relationship to broader economic power through global institutions, multinational corporations and even through non-governmental organisations. There's an issue about cultural power and the deployment of cultural power through public policy or unofficially through American films. There's definitely an issue about American political and military power and the way that power is being deployed around the world. To say that someone is 'anti-American' because they question American foreign policy is as facile as saying that someone is anti-Iraqi because they questioned the military policy of Saddam Hussein. I never heard any commentator worried about anti-Americanism saying we're questioning the foreign policy of Jacques Chirac so that means we're anti-French.

**ALFORD**: Moving on, tell us about the latest idea you're working on about the hyper-power elite.

**LUCAS**: The idea pays tribute to sociologist C. Wright Mills who wrote about the power elite in the late 1950s and tried in a very meaningful way to elaborate economic sources of power and to map out the way power was created, negotiated and deployed. I wanted to take on that idea for a number of reasons. The cutting edge question is the question of power: who has it, who's trying to deploy it and why? That's not just the Americans. It's the Chinese leadership, Iran in the Middle East, and so on. I want to go beyond Mills, to talk not just about economic, political or military elites, but also about cultural power. Power is not just in terms of soldiers and military equipment and economic influence. It's about how you project your ideas.

**ALFORD**: Soft power.

**LUCAS**: Yes, that's a good way to put it. It's easy for America to overwhelm a country with military force. The question is about hearts and minds - support, endorsement, co-operation with your objectives. That's where Americans are having problems in Iraq and Afghanistan.

**ALFORD**: The counterargument is that hearts and minds are not so important when you have small cells of psychopaths intent on destroying anything American.

**LUCAS**: Get real. These are the convenient myths. Go back to Vietnam. In the '60s they said this over and over again - a small group of psychopaths called the Vietcong working with the North Vietnamese. We know now that the South's population was either passively or actively supporting the Vietcong. Look at Iraq - most people aren't supportive of violence against American troops - although that may be increasing. However, under any opinion poll you see there's a majority who do not have sympathy with American occupation. They may tacitly or passively accept that violence is going to occur against American troops. What is clear is that Americans are not going to win over those people who are questioning the occupation with their current official and unofficial attempts at diplomacy and use of cultural power. They won't be able to liberate Iraq with an idea that American values equal Iraqi values.

**ALFORD**: You've criticised the polemical attitude of the US administration but what kind of ethical limits should there be on public figures engaged in these debates on 'your side', so to speak? Specifically, what is your position on the polemicism practised by the likes of Oliver Stone, Michael Moore, Noam Chomsky and, indeed, yourself? Are you a polemicist, antiwar protestor, or do you have scholarly values as well? Can you blur the boundaries?

**LUCAS**: Scholarship versus polemic is an artificial distinction. That's the first thing to recognise. The scholar sets himself up as an objective authority by, in many cases, denying that they're polemists or that they are political. The polemicist - sometimes to gain authority - will try to claim scholarship but then also say, 'I'm not like those dry and dusty academics', so that they have an impact.

Look at A.J.P. Taylor. You can't deny he was an extremely good historian. He was also a polemicist, sometimes about current affairs but he was also provocative with history. He took people beyond what the information supported and said, 'look at this in a different light'. He was opening up a space.

The reason I wrote *Betrayal of Dissent* was not to convince people that my point of view was the right one but that there is a need for space for various viewpoints on important issues regarding politics, international relations, and the future of a number of countries and regions. That space was being closed off by academics and polemicists, in many cases. The importance of Chomsky, Moore and Stone is that they open up a space to discuss alternative viewpoints. Sometimes these views are more mainstream than we recognise, for example the JFK assassination conspiracy, but in other cases they open up areas that haven't been part of mainstream debate. For example; Chomsky on East Timor and, indeed, on American policy in Central America; Moore on the culture of fear and – more effectively - on the nature of corporate power in the US.

**ALFORD**: You see Moore's earlier work like 'Roger and Me' as stronger than, say, 'Dude Where's My Country?'

**LUCAS**: Yes, his later work is fun to listen to, it is provocative, and there's some mileage in the terms of research done but… well…

**ALFORD**: … Moore's post 9/11 work has seemed quite weak to me, in scholarly terms. For example, his argument that American policymakers deliberately scare us with terrorism so that they can strengthen the economy because people buy things when they're scared…

**LUCAS**: I agree. The difference between being an academic and a columnist… [aside] my first book took six years and my second book took a long time… if you're a commentator you can't wait six years to make your point on contemporary affairs. So there has to be a crossover point for an academic to be a commentator. The sacrifice is if you have a forty-eight hour deadline you don't have time to write two hundred footnotes. You need to condense the argument, especially for a general audience. You need to give it more pace to give it access. That's just the nature of different writing styles for different audiences. One website said Moore plagiarised because he took something from an Internet site. No, it wasn't plagiarised. He took some information and he was sloppy because he didn't footnote a lot of his stuff. That's what happens when you write a book on a deadline and you're not trained as an academic.

**ALFORD**: And he doesn't really care.

**LUCAS**: Yes. Does that mean his information is completely invalid? No. Should you take it at face value? No. Moore has to be read in the context of a number of people.

Moving on to Stone - the guy's got a subject position. You know what you're getting with an Oliver Stone film. He's not lying about it. Say 'it's bad history' - that's fair enough but take on specific points and declare your own political position. What drove me crazy with all these historians who said '[*JFK* (1991)] is bad history' is that not one of them said, 'I'm going to attack Stone from my own political and professional position'. Stone really challenged academics because he made a three hour movie with lots of information in it and had access to millions of people. Meanwhile, the academics have access to hundreds, maybe thousands of people. Would I take *JFK* as a historical document, an objective documentary? No way. It's got elements that need to be investigated.

The problem with your question about academics versus polemicists is that it treats academics as static (recorded truth) and polemicists as dynamic (opinions). This is where we get to Chomsky… a lot of Chomsky's work is extremely good research. You may not agree with him but he has known his stuff since the 1960s. I particularly admired the late '80s material he wrote with Edward Herman, who is an underrated historian and in many ways unfairly overshadowed by Chomsky. He had a lot to say. It's got depth to it. Chomsky got into hot water with some conclusions about Cambodia/ Kampachea that I think are questionable and you can see from his political position why he argued that and why it might have been ill-advised. The easy answer to that is the Americans did cause a lot of deaths by bombing Cambodia and they destabilised the country, as did other groups, which made it easier for the Khmer Rouge to get into power.

**ALFORD**: Chomsky had similar criticisms when he related Clinton's 1998 cruise missile attack on Sudan to 9/11.

**LUCAS**: Let's be very clear about that. Chomsky was making a provocative point that the outcome of the Sudan operation caused probably tens of thousands of deaths. He took that report from the former German ambassador to Sudan who was working for an institute in Harvard. He locked it down and gave people a source. And he was right. Look at the damage to the pharmaceutical industry in Sudan and the complete loss of drugs for animals and at least half the drugs for Malaria. Also, he didn't actually compare Sudan to 911…

**ALFORD**: Whereas Hitchens did?

**LUCAS**: Exactly. Chomsky's point was 'Let's realise that deaths are caused by the result of actions not only on 9/11. Let's realise that deaths are caused other operations'. He never said 'Let's make the two equal'. Hitchens accused Chomsky of making the comparison so that he could make his own comparison, saying Chomsky was wrong. But it was Hitchens who set up the false equation. Susan Sontag - incredible academic, great scholar - but she is a polemist at points. She said that you cannot treat these terrorists as crazies or cowards. Instead you have to look at the reasons why they did this.

**ALFORD**: And now of course they have the Susan Sontag Awards, for the most stupid comments from the Left. Seems strange, as Sontag's comments were hardly radical. I'd have thought if you were looking for a no-brainer then you could choose plenty of other stupid things that have been said on all sides of the debate.

**LUCAS**: Yes, but it's easy enough to go after Chomsky. Hitchens did that. That's his soft target. Sontag carries a lot of intellectual credibility. She is known in the literary community, she lives in New York. She's a novelist, essayist, an incredible critic of tyranny, one of the most well known intellectuals in the world. This was a target that had to be taken out and I use 'target' quite deliberately.

**ALFORD**: Are you saying that Chomsky was not seen as a threat in the debate because he had already been so tarnished by the Cambodia issue?

**LUCAS**: Nobody is putting Chomsky on the front page. Sontag's piece was in the New Yorker, for people in New York, an elite magazine. Chomsky is referred to in the New York Times between September 11 and the end of 2001 (apart from some items on his linguistics) only once and then only as a wider piece on the antiwar movement. Even then he's labelled as a perpetual dissenter. He was already marginalised except in the pages of the Nation and that's where Hitchens went after him.

I will be very honest and clear – yes, I've written a book which I hope has academic grounding but I've written a polemic. Yes, I've identified Hitchens as one of the people I want to challenge. Whether that's unfair of me, people will have to judge. But let's be clear that the lines of this intellectual battle were set up before 9/11 and redefined after 9/11 and that's to rule certain people beyond acceptability. That's where I have a problem. I don't agree with Hitchens but think his work should be considered, debated and negotiated. Hitchens didn't afford the same respect to Chomsky. Or for that matter to Norman Finkelstein, Howard Zinn, Susan Sontag, or Bell Hooks - all of whom he tried to dismiss with one or two lines in various places.

**ALFORD**: Hitchens has responded to you in various media. Online he has made the point that he has written a lot of dissenting material and, indeed, was one of the key people revealing the US' 1998 war crime against Sudan. Do you downplay this side of Hitchens too greatly in your book [*Betrayal of Dissent*]?

**LUCAS**: You'd have to ask Hitchens what he says about the book. From my position, one reason why my book was so provocative is precisely because Hitchens was such a critic of power and US power, for example in *The Trial Of Henry Kissinger* and in his criticism of America's bombing Sudan. Whether he is criticising power or Bill Clinton is a more difficult and provocative question though. What I say in the book - and whether or not it's unfair to Hitchens people can judge - is that the key case for Hitchens to consider was [the 1999 NATO intervention in] Kosovo. Hitchens makes an argument that swings from being against the NATO intervention to being in favour of the intervention and he shifts within a few weeks. I have no problem with that: Kosovo is a very complex issue because there's a case for 'liberal intervention/ humanitarian invention'. I still have problems coming to a position on that. But when Hitchens worked out his position he said we've got to fight Serbian fascism. On that case I'd say 'back up here' because whatever the rights and wrongs you lose a lot of complexities by reducing it to 'we're fighting Serbian fascism'.

The second point is that Hitchens was in a very difficult position as an intellectual within the US because he'd filed the affidavit in the Clinton impeachment hearings. Hitchens was being accused of snitching. Remember that affidavit didn't go after Clinton so much as it went after a former friend of Hitchens', Sidney Blumenthal, who was an advisor to Clinton. Hitchens was saying that Blumenthal was perjuring himself in testimony before a grand jury. A lot of people didn't like that. They thought he'd sold out Blumenthal and, again, we can discuss the rights and wrongs of the case. The significance is that Hitchens was under a great deal of pressure when Kosovo arrived and I've argued (and I may be unfair because I don't want to downgrade the merits of his arguments)… but in part his break with the Left or his debate with the so-called Left - that he set up over Kosovo - allowed him to stake out a case on a different issue.

This is a position which had merit. But from this point he starts to call himself the "contrarian". Wait a minute. By the time you call yourself 'the contrarian' you're basically saying 'my position is the only dissenting position'. Lots of people have problems with the Clinton administration. I have problems with Clinton administration but I'm not going to say I have 'the contrarian's' position on it. Hitchens still calls himself 'the contrarian' but he's a contrarian who is supporting the current US government's policy. Who's he being a contrarian against?

**ALFORD**: The majority?

**LUCAS**: No way. The majority of American public opinion supported the American action [in Kosovo]. The majority of American intellectuals supported Clinton on this. You might make a case that he's be a contrarian against the Left. What does that mean, to be a contrarian against the Left? And then we've come full circle with the interview. It's a constructed term. I don't want this just to be about Hitchens. He's a symbol of something much wider. This is also about David Aaronovitch, Johann Hari, Nick Cohen, George Packer and Michael Walzer (although that's more complicated). If you look at the so-called Left they quite often go after Chomsky, occasionally Finkelstein, and in this country they go after George Galloway, John Pilger and Tariq Ali. Well guess what, folks, there were a lot pf people who oppose the war for a lot more reasons than those people I've just named. And if you're really serious about debating the war then you have to consider the opinions of Jonathan Freedland, George Monbiot, Polly Toynbe, Toby Young, Simon Jenkins, Matthew Parris in this country and, in the US, Katha Pollitt, Jason Vest, Jason Leopold, Alexander Cockburn… would you like me to keep going? People defined the antiwar movement to set up a straw man.

**ALFORD**: I agree, it is often a straw man…

**LUCAS**: I have real problems with Tariq Ali's position, for instance, although I think there's some substance to it. But the fact is Ali and Pilger – to take two examples Hitchens goes against - these people came up as activists in the late '60s. So, bear in mind that this is a bit of a scrap among people who grew up at the same time. And when that happens, other people who came from different periods, backgrounds and entry points don't get a look in. I'd love to see Hitchens or the other people I've named who supported the war make of a piece written by Matthew Parris a month before the war. It was one of the most thoughtful pieces on the war. Parris asked, 'What if WMD are found. Do we then say that the war is acceptable? What if we find Iraqi people are better off?' No. Parris concludes that the reason to oppose this war is because it's an extension of American power. I have some sympathy with that position but that's not why I'm citing it… Parris writes for the [London] Times, he's a former Conservative MP identified with the centre right. And that's a very provocative piece.

**ALFORD**: I read the article and Parris seems to be saying that even if the invasion is benevolent he'd still oppose it because its success would encourage empire building. But if it is indeed benevolent, doesn't that miss the point?

**LUCAS:** I'm not sure he would have used 'benevolent'. He's arguing US power will be used again and again. I suspect that the aftermath of the war in Afghanistan raised doubts so he drew the line at Iraq. So, by the way, do Toynbee and Freedland. Parris says even if Iraq goes well there's going to have to be another line crossed somewhere. Will it be Iran, Syria…?

**ALFORD**: That's the danger…

**LUCAS**: Exactly. That's where we get beyond Right and Left. Where any country has that much power and can deploy it there's a serious issue. If Iceland had the military force of the Americans we'd be talking about being anti-Icelandic.

**ALFORD**: So it would still be a concern if Iceland were a totally benevolent superpower. Why? Due to mistakes it might make?

**LUCAS**: My opposition is based on two grounds. One, the question of so-called benevolent intervention raises problems, which we're going to have to discuss. My quick reaction is that it has to be on an international basis. Second, and here's a challenge for you: show me one member of the Bush administration who is pursuing humanitarian intervention. The one person put up by supporters of the war is Paul Wolfowitz - one of the greatest myths ever! Go back and look at what he's written and you show me where he's talked about the fact that he has this great idea of liberating the country. Rubbish! Where was Wolfowitz the US ambassador in the 1980s? Indonesia. Did we see him calling for liberation of East Timor from Indonesian rule? Did he call for cutbacks to Indonesia? Or any kind of action against the Suharto regime? No way.

**ALFORD**: Yes, he seems totally preoccupied with maintaining US power. He doesn't strike me as someone interested in humanitarian issues. I mean, check out the 1992 'No Rivals' document, which he wrote…

**LUCAS**: The reason one should criticise the call to freedom is because the people calling for freedom are devaluing it. Whether the Iraqi operation leads to freedom for the people - and one would hope it does - that doesn't change the fact that this wasn't the American motive for going there in the first place. Remember the rioting, looting in Iraq? We know from James Fallows in the Atlantic that American post war planning was thrown out and that Rumsfeld himself said, 'Stuff happens… freedom's untidy'. Please. If we'd seen rioting anywhere else in the world the Americans would have come out and condemned it. But because it happened in Iraq and was a result of an American military operation and its own lack of planning then all of a sudden it becomes a good use of freedom to tear the country apart?

**ALFORD**: We have to leave it there. Thank you very much Professor Scott Lucas.

*Scott Lucas' book,* The Betrayal of Dissent: Beyond Orwell, Hitchens and the New American Century*, is published by Pluto Press* (2004).