

Book Review

THE BIG PICTURE

David Icke, *Alice in Wonderland and the World Trade Center Disaster* (Bridge of Love, 2002)

By Will Banyan

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Like most of David Icke's books, *Alice in Wonderland and the World Trade Center Disaster*, is an intriguing work, although not for the reasons most would assume. The purpose of Icke's book is simple: to show how the tragic events of September 11, 2001 fit into the plans of a dastardly "network of interbreeding bloodlines" – the Reptilians – to establish a "full-blown global dictatorship" (p.1). Published in October 2002, Icke's book seems straightforward – although rather long – account of why the "official" accounts of the 9/11 are a "lie." But it is a book burdened with problems, both in terms of the evidence Icke uses to prop up his claims and the logic, or lack thereof, that he employs to make his case. The primary flaw in this book, however, is that Icke fails to prove that 9/11 and the ensuing "War on Terror" fit into the alleged conspiracy to establish world government.

The problems emerge in the very first chapter where Icke informs us of the bigger picture, or the "real agenda behind 9/11". Icke tells us that behind the "manufactured movie we are told is 'life'" there is a network of families who are distinct from the rest of by virtue of having a "different DNA from the rest of the population" (pp.1, 2). At the end of his book Icke reveals that this different DNA is a product of interbreeding between humans and a "non-human race" (p.468). The consequence of this "corrupted DNA" is that these hybrids "do not have the same emotional responses as the rest of the earth people". Those of us without this corrupted DNA apparently have the innate capacity to avoid "extreme behaviour like torture, mass murder, abusing children and so on" (p.469).

Besides not having *any* scientific evidence to support these contentions, it is interesting to note that Icke is effectively reviving Social Darwinism, but with a twist. Icke is actually telling us that anyone who is politically powerful or extremely rich is that way because they are not genetically pure members of the human race. Under Icke's formula they are the hereditarily unclean who are devoid of the "natural" inclinations of all pure humans to be good and kind and collectivist in intent and deed. They seek to dominate, to have more material things than the rest of us, and even to kill, torture and rape us, because they cannot help it – it is written in their genes – and because of their "corrupted DNA" they are more easily possessed by "reptilian entities of the inter-space plane" (p.469).

This might leave you scratching your head in wonder as Icke brazenly asserts his claims to be true and chastises you for being too beholden to "the conditioned view of reality" if you do not believe him (p.469).¹ But Icke goes a bit further and proceeds to contradict himself when discussing the extent and power of this "Illuminati" bloodline. Icke begins *Alice in Wonderland* with the claim the Illuminati's "goal of global dictatorship" is now "within its sight and within its grasp" (p.1). This outcome apparently represents the culmination of the Illuminati's "long-planned agenda to impose centralised control of the planet and its people" and eliminate "diversity" which is "the controllers' nightmare" (p.5). Logically you would

think this means the Illuminati does not have that much control over us at the moment, evident in the diversity of our customs, nations, languages, etc. etc.

Wrong. Very wrong.

According to Icke the Illuminati plan is all about “keep[ing] humanity in ongoing servitude” (p.15); “ongoing servitude” means they *already are in control*. And so it goes, throughout the first chapter, Icke repeatedly rants against the Illuminati’s plans to takeover the world while telling us at the same time they already are in control of *every aspect* of our lives: our religious and political beliefs, our governments, military, companies, media and everything else that distinguishes our reality and the way we live, wherever we are in the world. In an explanation about the pyramidal structure of power, apparently dominated by the Illuminati bloodline families, Icke confirms this:

It is the same with transnational corporations, political parties, secret societies, media empires and the military. If you go high enough in this structure all the transnational corporations (like the oil cartel), major political parties, secret societies, media empires and the military (via NATO for instance), are controlled by the same families who sit at the top of the biggest pyramids...everything from the food we eat; the water we drink; the “medical care” we receive, including vaccines; the “news” we watch and read; the “entertainment” we are given; the governments that dictate to us; the military that enforces the will of the governments; and the hard drug network aimed at the destroying young people. The same families and gofers control all those areas and so much more (p.13).

So there you have it. The very same Illuminati bloodlines Icke rages against, he also admits that they are already are in total control. In fact, they construct our entire reality, the “five-sense prison” (p.462), hence Icke’s use of the term “the Matrix”; luckily David Icke has been unleashed upon the world to point this out for us. What’s more, in this book, Icke reveals how the Illuminati orchestrated the 9/11 attacks to scare us into giving up this Illuminati controlled reality for another one, a new “Matrix”.

Exactly why the Illuminati need to take this step if they already have centralised control by being at the very top of the pyramid, is not really clear. Indeed, according to Icke, for the past few thousand years the Illuminati have been devising and implementing the means to rule us by dividing us into warring factions. In fact, according to Icke’s version of history, the Illuminati have actually spent more time instigating wars than planning for world government. To want to abandon that system, one that seems to have worked perfectly well, one would think, in facilitating and hiding Illuminati control and generating and feeding them the required dietary staple, the “energy of fear” (p.471), seems utterly without sense and contrary to Icke’s own arguments. Icke, though, has the answer. Sidestepping his other claims about “divide and rule”, Icke argues these divisions serve to distract us from the Illuminati’s plans; humans “are like moths”, he says “buzzing around a light”, mesmerised by their petty Illuminati-constructed concerns, but failing to “notice the preparations being made to smash them on the arse with a swatter” (p.17).

Icke seems unduly optimistic, if not unreal, in his assumption that our mindsets, all divided along religious, political, ethnic and national lines, will also make us ideal compliant citizens in a global community ruled by a single government. In fact, as most advocates of such a global order have lamented, it is these very divisions that continue to work *against* moves to centralise political power at the global level; divisions that need to be eliminated probably through re-education.² That fact would seem to suggest there was a colossal cock-up when

the Illuminati planners supposedly devised their diabolical scheme in Babylon thousands of years ago, or that they are not responsible for those divisions and are trying to get rid of them.

If we set it out logically we get a series of incompatible propositions from Icke about the reason why the Illuminati have supposedly conspired to create wars. So, according to David Icke, human conflict is designed by the Illuminati to:

1. Continue to feed the Illuminati with the “energy of fear”;
2. Shock us into accepting a “global fascist superstate”/world government; and
3. Keep us divided and distracted so we cannot see:
 - a. the Illuminati’s secret control of us; and
 - b. the Illuminati’s secret plans to establish world government.

Icke asserts that *all* of these objectives are integral components of single, secret plan for total global control. However, of these 1 and 2 are clearly *not* compatible because world government would presumably mean an end to wars and thus to the supply of the “energy of fear” from which they derive nourishment (as Icke memorably proves through reference to the film *Monsters Inc*). 1 and 3a *are* compatible, as it does not result in the cutting off of the required “energy of fear”. 2 and 3b *are* compatible, but only just, as the divisions created actually threatens the psychological unity required amongst the global public to make world government work. 1 and 3b clearly *are not* compatible, as world government – centralised political control at the global level – theoretically means an end to the divisions and wars that supplies the Illuminati’s “energy of fear”. Ultimately Icke’s explanation all seems a bit silly and the product of a profoundly confused mind. But it only gets worse when he tries to apply this theory to 9/11.

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The first few chapters of Icke’s book are devoted to destroying the credibility of US President George W. Bush and his administration as purveyors of the “official” story of 9/11. As Icke says at the start of Chapter 2: “Surely before we make decisions about what to believe we need to know if those who have peddled the official version of events can be trusted to tell us the truth.” Icke’s methodology is quite simply to present a catalogue of smear, unconfirmed rumours and other sensational allegations of corruption, dodgy business deals, gun and drug running, drug use, connections with terrorists and other shenanigans. The reader might observe that the implications of some of these claims actually conflict with the variety of alternative 9/11 scenarios Icke canvasses later; but there is a mere detail when you are out to save the world. Such tactics might also be acceptable if you want to indulge in some partisan muck-raking, but in terms of presenting a case that the official story of 9/11 is a lie, Icke’s deluge of detail does not help that much and again fails to make much sense.

The chapter about George W. Bush, “Born to be king”, is quite frankly a mess. With regards to Bush’s election, for instance, Icke struggles to reconcile his earlier assertion that America is “a one-party state masquerading as a free society” (p.35) with his later description of the 2000 election as a “coup on America” with Bush as the “unelected dictator” and an “impostor” (p.94). If the first is true then the circumstances surrounding Bush’s “victory” are immaterial and, contrary to Icke’s claims that Gore “meekly...accepted it in the end and slipped quietly away” (p.93), the prolonged legal fight over “chads” and whether Democrat voters in Florida had been denied their votes should not have happened in the first place. But it did, thus giving Icke his story. Nevertheless, Icke goes on and on about the result of the 2000 election as though Bush had corrupted an otherwise fair and legitimate process. By

brazenly contradicting his belief – stated ad nauseum in his other books, and this one – that democracy is total sham, Icke insults his readers' intelligence

Icke's attempts to link Bush to Osama bin Laden (OBL) are also somewhat dubious. Icke declares that Bush and the bin Laden family were "all extremely close" (p.77) and had "fundamental and consistent connections" (p.81). But how close? For all Icke's bluster all he is able to deliver are tenuous claims that one James R. Bath invested money on behalf of Salem bin Laden in Bush's oil company Arbusto back in the 1977 (pp.75-76). And that another Saudi, Sheik Khalid bin Mahfouz, "a financial supporter of Osama bin Laden's terrorist network" (p.78) invested money, also through a middleman, into Harken Energy, an oil company that Bush was a "shareholder, director and adviser." This occurred in 1987 (p.80). Note the dates because they are important and put this alleged funding in context. Between 1974 and 1978 OBL was not a terrorist but a student studying engineering at the King Abdul Aziz University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. While in the 1980s OBL was part of the Arab Mujahideen, fighting the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, an activity that met with tacit US approval. In these instances, the Bush links to the bin Ladens and OBL are not only flimsy and indirect – he doesn't show that Bush even met the bin Ladens – but in the context of the time, politically irrelevant and uncontroversial.

The only potentially controversial connection between Bush, the bin Laden family and OBL that Icke can establish is via the Carlyle Group. Both Bush Senior and Junior have had roles in the Carlyle Group in which the bin Laden family has also invested money (pp.83, 89). Bush Senior even met the bin Laden family twice on behalf of Carlyle in 1998 and 2000 (p.86). While one of Carlyle's many directors and consultants is also a director on the boards of two banks (one in Pakistan and the other in Lebanon), both apparently owned by the Mahfouz family (pp.85-86). But those connections still don't prove much, especially seeing that Icke is unable to show directly how these connections aided the 9/11 plot; and are probably irrelevant if we take seriously Icke's contention later on that OBL, "a CIA asset – and stooge" (p.398), is a "carefully created fall guy" and "a patsy" (p.407). Although, if we accept that argument, we are then required to forget Icke's earlier ranting that even the Carlyle Group's connections with the bin Ladens and "terrorism funders" like Mahfouz (p.82) are "outrageous in the circumstances" (p.87). In fact, according to Icke's warped logic, we should *not* believe that OBL was behind the most devastating terrorist attack on US soil *because* Bush once had business links with the bin Laden family. Surely this should be the other way around? Given his previous business links shouldn't Bush be protecting OBL and not publicly blaming him for 9/11, and not hunting down and killing OBL's henchmen? And how do things shift from the Bushes allegedly benefiting from bin Laden largesse to OBL being under the CIA's thumb?

But the main problem with chapters 2 to 4 is that Icke never establishes that either Bush or most of his administration supports the goal of world government. Sure, he lists a dizzying array of plots and dodgy business connections, but he cannot cite a single word from any of his protagonists in support of that objective. The reason for that is – with the sole exception of Richard N. Haass, who was the head of Policy Planning at the State Department until he left in July 2003 to head the CFR – none of the key policy-makers working for Bush support that goal or anything approaching it. In fact most belong to the "neo-conservative" clique that is intent on asserting US global dominance. That's not to say that Icke is completely blind to this neo-conservative agenda, currently supported by Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and based on plan devised by Paul Wolfowitz, Zalmay Khalilzad and Lewis Libby in the early 1990s. For Icke actually mentions it on page

115, noting how in 1992 a group set up by Cheney and led by Wolfowitz, put together a document called *Defense Strategy for the 1990s*, which called for the US to “shape” the world and “preclude the rise of another global rival”. But that’s as far as he goes – Icke doesn’t even use the term “neo-conservative”.

The source of Icke’s information is an article by Nicholas Lemann in the *New Yorker* (April 2002), titled “The Next World Order”. It’s a good article, but it’s a pity Icke did not use it further and actually chase up the ideas of the neo-conservatives. That failure to follow-up also accounts for one of the notable omissions in *Alice in Wonderland*, name its failure to mention the Project for a New American Century (PNAC), the primary organisation promoting the neo-conservative agenda. This is not a minor error for it has shaped the Bush Administration’s agenda more than any other organisation. Moreover, anyone following up the ideas of the Bush team prior to 9/11 would have found mention of PNAC in media reports.³ PNAC wasn’t a secret.

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Another problem with Icke’s book is that in his rush to put out something he ends producing little more than a compendium of possibilities about what really happened on 9/11. Besides asserting, repeatedly, that the Illuminati was behind 9/11, when it comes to who actually carried out the attacks, Icke’s explanations shift more than the sands of the Sahara. From page to page, paragraph to paragraph, even sentence to sentence; Icke dances between the two main theories, that: (1) the Bush Administration had foreknowledge of the attacks by Mohammed Atta and his followers, but let them happen; and (2) that the attacks were deliberately carried out by covert elements at the behest of Bush and the Illuminati, and therefore the evidence against Osama Bin Laden and Al Qaeda is all faked. Sure, Icke extracts plenty of political and polemical mileage from this approach, but he also avoids reaching any firm and consistent conclusions.

In fact, by canvassing every alternative explanation, Icke only succeeds in generating a contradictory account that serves to confuse rather than inform. For example, Icke freely disputes the identity (p.272) and even the existence of Mohammed Atta (p.287-88), and then canvasses the possibility that Atta and other hijackers received training at US Air Force bases (p.304), before then suggesting the planes may have been remotely controlled to crash into the World Trade Centre (pp.336-44). So, David, what actually happened? Did Mohammed Atta or someone bearing his name, participate in the attacks or not? No coherent answer is likely as Icke’s book isn’t about answers; it’s all about discrediting the “official version”.

Icke also makes an unbelievable, yet elementary blunder when discussing apparent ineffectiveness on 9/11 of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the North American Aerospace Command (NORAD). He accuses NORAD of unusual sluggishness in deploying its aircraft, including an entire “18 minutes” between the transponder of Flight 11 being turned off and the FAA informing NORAD (pp.220-221). In fact Icke, after dutifully citing FAA regulations on contacting NORAD, positively bursts with frustration: “This could not be clearer”. Citing the case of golfer Payne Stewart’s Lear Jet going off course in 1999 Icke claims that “When air traffic controllers realised that all not well, the FAA contacted NORAD and fighter jets were scrambled to check out what was happening (p.217). With this fact tucked under his belt, Icke progresses the story of inconceivable FAA-NORAD delays, prompting numerous impatient outbursts such as: “It’s insane”; “It gets sillier”; “Oh do come on, this the land of clouds and cuckoos”; and “Utter garbage.” Icke also makes frequent reference to the “FAA-NORAD reaction time” and “every-other-day reaction times” (p.217),

but never explains precisely how long that time is or should be. He doesn't even say how long it took for the FAA to notify NORAD and for NORAD to scramble its aircraft in the Payne case. Whatever arguments might be made about FAA-NORAD failing to meet the threat on 9/11, this elementary flaw seriously undermines Icke's case. Indeed without telling us that time he has no case.⁴

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There are other inconsistencies in *Alice in Wonderland* that seem to defy explanation. For instance, in an expose about Bush's alleged cocaine use, Icke notes that Pope John Paul II claims to have once met and praised John Hatfield, the late author of *Fortunate Son*, where these allegations were first made, urging him to continue to spread the "truth" (p.70). So what? Well, given that earlier Icke indicts the Vatican as among those forces secretly controlling the US (p.25), and the Catholic Church as one of those dastardly Illuminati-controlled religions seeking to "imprison" our minds (pp.10, 20), we might ask why he now decides the head of the Vatican has sufficient moral authority to endorse Hatfield's book? Especially given that Icke also uses *Fortunate Son* and seems sceptical that the cause of Hatfield's death in mid-2001 was a suicide? If we follow Icke's suggested logic, then we should actually see the Pope's endorsement of *Fortunate Son* as proof that it was an Illuminati attempt to hobble Bush's campaign for the White House. That Icke takes the opposite course, though, suggests another conclusion about the real purpose of *Alice in Wonderland*...

Then there is Icke's stunning hypocrisy. On page 387 Icke implores people to let go of the official story of 9/11 and "look at the evidence dispassionately." This is a tall order, given the intense passion and all-consuming anti-Bush bias and hysteria that permeates *Alice in Wonderland*. Icke rarely presents a coherent case; he merely piles on the invective and any piece of evidence, which appears to contradict the official case. One need only consider these examples of Icke's "dispassionate" examination of the evidence when it comes from official sources: "The official version is a blaze of contradictions"; "Personally I would have great reservations about any information that comes out of the Pentagon"; and "I find it difficult to accept that all these statements can be true." Plenty of passion there.

Also on page 387 Icke also has a go at a *New York Post* reporter whose 9/11 article, Icke informs us, was merely "a 'clips job'...he took his information from other media articles and had no idea of the sources." This is first class hypocrisy. Look in Icke's footnotes in every chapter and you will see, in direct contradiction of his earlier contention that the media toes the 'Illuminati' line, countless articles cited from *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, *Newsweek*, the *Guardian* and other newspapers supposedly controlled by the "Illuminati". And Icke isn't using these sources, which supposedly rely on "information...from official (Illuminati) sources anyway" (p.18), to construct his "official 9/11 story" straw man, but to actually *refute it*. And that not only pins Icke as a hypocrite, but it undercuts his entire theory of newspaper editors and journalists kow-towing to their Illuminati bosses.

But even worse, Icke's clip job also involves not checking out the sources of his various accounts. For instance, one of Icke's favourite pieces of evidence as to the essential untruthfulness of the official 9/11 account is that "seven, maybe more, of the 19 [hijackers] named by the FBI were found to be still alive!" (p.271). But what are the sources for Icke's claim? If you look in the footnotes you will find a smattering supposedly Illuminati-controlled tabloids mentioned including: the *Orlando Sentinel*, *Daily Telegraph*, *The Independent*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Guardian*, and the *Arab News*. Every single one of

these reports is from between the 17th and 27th of September 2001 and most drew on the *Arab News*, which itself drew on Middle Eastern papers to put forward the story that some of the hijackers were still alive. At the stage all these reporters had to go on was the FBI list of names, nothing more. Most of those stories, though, were based on mistaken identity or merely finding people with the same names as the hijackers. The FBI did not release its photographs of the hijackers until September 27th, which resolved the mix-up.⁵ So why didn't Icke follow these reports up to see if they were still current and correct? You know what they say about not letting the facts getting in the way of a good story...

It is because of this hypocrisy and sloppiness that Icke's account of the alleged conspiracy behind 9/11 is of little value other than as a compendium of obtuse information on the attacks. But Icke's book is also important food for thought because of the sheer amount of information that Icke is able to glean now from mainstream media and conspiracy-orientated websites *now*, rather than decades after the event, would seem to indicate that *if* 9/11 was an Illuminati operation, as he claims, their control over information dissemination has been unbelievably amateurish. In fact the so-called "Illuminati High Council" is leaking like the proverbial sieve.

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One of the more interesting but unsurprising features of much commentary by "conspiracy theorists" in the wake of 9/11 is the growing criticism of the Bush Administration's "imperialism" and its contempt for international norms. Icke is no exception to this rule; in fact *Alice in Wonderland* is filled with his unrestrained anger and disgust with what he sees as a superpower out of control.

Referring to George Bush Senior's role in the 1990 invasion of Panama and "war crimes" against Nicaragua in the 1980s, for instance, Icke rages that the US, like "all playground bullies...claims immunity from that which they impose upon others" (p.43). Commenting on the "mass murder" of the First Gulf War, Icke fumes at how "there is one law for America, Britain, France and Germany, etc., and a very different one for those they choose to bomb, kill and mutilate" (p.51). "The United States and the UK", he writes, are "the diabolical duo of world terrorism" (p.53); in fact "these two are the bullies of the world" (pp.62-63). Sounding more like a Noam Chomsky or a John Pilger railing against US imperialism than a Jim Marrs or a Stan Deyo warning of an insidious plot to establish world government, Icke claims that the US Government "has supported and imposed some of the most grotesque dictatorships across the world to suit its own agenda..." (p.61).

The "War on Terror" provokes more outrage and equally outrageous statements. At one point Icke claims the "War on Terror" was a program actually devised by George Bush Senior and Henry Kissinger "that allows them to target any country they choose" (p.63). What happened to the neo-cons? And don't ask for any evidence for Icke's claim because there isn't any. Icke's tirades, though, continue. The criteria for joining the Anglo-American anti-terror coalition, notes Icke, was "will you do what the United States and Britain tell you? If yes, you're in and against terrorism; if no, you are a supporter of terrorism. These guys really are the bullies of the world" (p.183). The invasion of Afghanistan was another case of "the playground bully at work, and it was just another cold-blooded slaughter" (p.186).

But Icke's all-consuming rage against Bush and Blair carries him into more dangerous ground and he indulges in some moral relativism that would make some opponents of the US cheer, though others might cringe in horror. Referring to the US-led invasion of Afghanistan

that killed, according to Icke, “at least 5,000 Afghan men, women and children”, he identifies Bush and Blair as “war criminals” of greater magnitude than “those they condemn and put on trial” such as the “former Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic, who “may not be a nice man” but he is “not in the class of Blair and the Bush family when it comes to the slaughter of the innocent” (p.412). Suddenly the moral vacuum in the centre of Icke’s world is revealed: Milosevic, the orchestrator and funder of wars in the former Yugoslavia for personal political gain that is estimated to have killed nearly 200,000 people, is granted the benefit of doubt and is described tepidly: he “*may not* be a nice man.” Not “is” or “is not” a “war criminal”, just “may not” be a “nice man”. Bush and Blair, on the other hand, are clearly guilty as sin, there is no doubt: “Bush and Blair *are* war criminals.”

Reading Icke’s repugnant whitewash of Milosevic and increasingly shrill denunciations of the United States, one is also prompted to ask: what about world government? There are few answers for Icke seems to have been completely swept up by the views of other more leftist researchers, such as Michael Ruppert and Gore Vidal, on the essentially imperialistic nature of Bush’s enterprise in Central Asia. Sure, these assessments are not far off the mark, but in adopting them Icke seems to have lost sight of his original theory about world government being the planned end result of 9/11. These sentiments, however, do have consequences for Icke’s political philosophy, such as it is, the most obvious being that he reverts to the anti-American pro-UN rhetoric of his days as the leading spokesman of the UK Green Party. This gets Icke into all sorts of trouble.

Just read a little more closely and one discovers that in *reaction* to the human suffering caused by the US *problem*, our would-be saviour has mysteriously embraced the *solution* of international law. Icke takes the US to task for ignoring a World Court ruling against it over its actions in Nicaragua (pp.42-43), and its “blatant defiance” (p.51) and “fundamental violation” (p.54) of the Geneva Conventions during the First Gulf War. Colin Powell, he charges, has a “long record of breaking international human rights legislation” (p.126). Icke also mentions with obvious approval that an “International War Crimes Tribunal” found leading members of the first Bush Administration “guilty of war crimes”; though he then observes, with equally transparent anger, that “Nothing” was done (pp.51-52).

Pursuing this further, Icke even manages, within a single page, to switch from damning the United Nations as an “Illuminati front” to quoting approvingly former UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali’s complaint that America “sees little need for diplomacy...” (p.55). To add insult to injury Icke then attacks America’s voting record at the UN, noting that it has “consistently opposed resolutions to limit the production and testing of biological and nuclear weapons, as it has on a stream of humanitarian and freedom issues” (p.56). Can this really be the same United Nations Icke has repeatedly attacked as a “stalking horse for world government”?

In later chapters dealing with the “War on Terror”, Icke again looks to international solutions to the world’s problems. For example, he notes that in the aftermath of 9/11 “Calls in America and elsewhere for a peaceful response to September 11th were lost in the clamour and lust for revenge” (p.186). But what were those calls for a “peaceful response” to 9/11, and who made them? Icke, not surprisingly, doesn’t spell these out as they involved calls for the formation of an “international tribunal” to prosecute Osama Bin Laden and other Al Qaeda members, rather than invading Afghanistan. Advocates of this approach believed 9/11 had provided “an opportunity” to “devise common procedures among nations around the world...”, including establishing a “universal terrorism court.”⁶ Some might think that sounds

like a building block for world government, but Icke evades that issue, strangely choosing instead to criticise Bush for *not following* such advice...

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When Icke does finally address the question of how 9/11 serves the Illuminati agenda for world government, he flubs the issue monumentally. Posing the question of “Who benefits from 9/11?”, Icke provides the answer thusly:

The Illuminati and their agents in government... They want centralisation of power in all areas of our lives until the world government, central bank, currency, army, police force, intelligence agency, and micro-chipped population is in place. They want an excuse to send their armies into any country whose regime is not playing ball, or whose land and resources they desire to control. One event has given them all of these things since September 11th 2001 (p.205)

A few logical flaws immediately come to mind when reading this answer. First, by presenting one of the effects of 9/11 as providing an “excuse” for military adventurism, Icke is suggesting that the Illuminati are not in control, thus contradicting his earlier assertions that they have long been in full control. Second, he is attributing to warfare a third purpose of actually consolidating Illuminati power, one that appears to conflict with the other alleged objectives of giving the Illuminati sustenance and keeping humans divided.

There are more problems. Despite identifying the Bush Administration as the implementers of this plot, the only evidence he cites of this intention are two quotes, one from British PM Tony Blair and the other from former Democrat presidential candidate, Gary Hart. Both these quotes talk in very vague terms about 9/11 being a chance to “reorder this world around us” (Blair) or to “carry out...a New World Order” (Hart) (pp.204-5). Those quotes don't tell us much and it is revealing that Icke cannot provide similar or even more revealing statements from Bush Administration officials. That would probably be because the “new world order” that most of Bush's advisers envisage does not revolve around world government. As countless media articles have told us over the past year, Bush is largely in thrall to a cabal of “neo-conservatives” whose agenda is for “the United States to rule the world” by maintaining its “overwhelming military superiority” and preventing “new rivals from rising up to challenge it.”⁷

Of far greater importance, though, is the fact that *Alice in Wonderland* is absolutely silent on the intense criticism from both the supposedly “Illuminati-controlled” media and groups such as the CFR, of Bush's pre-9/11 foreign policy. Criticism that was soon replaced by the transparent hope and expectation that 9/11 would force Bush to drop his “narrow, right wing agenda” (Friedman) and “hawkish, nationalistic and unilateralist policies” (Lobe) and instead transform the US into a “better global citizen” (Friedman), through a “greater embrace of multilateralism in American foreign policy” (Evans).⁸ Bush, however, did not meet their expectations prompting a torrent of abuse from such Establishment organs as *Foreign Affairs* and *Foreign Policy*. Most of this was on the public record prior to the release of Icke's book, and has enormous implications when one thinks about the actual purpose of Bush's agenda within the bigger picture of the “New World Order.” But, just like the existence of PNAC, *Alice in Wonderland* is completely silent on the matter.

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What's going on here? It is Icke's contention that the purpose of the 9/11 attacks is to use the shock to force us all to suddenly accept world government. In an ironic demonstration of the

potential truth of that theory, through his own hysterical opposition to the US “War on Terror”, Icke seems to be finding plenty of things to his liking in both the United Nations and the concept of international law. In fact, the “War on Terror” appears to have triggered in Icke a reawakening of those values and beliefs he acquired in his Green Party days. Of course, that’s Icke’s due, however his failure to confront his deeper inclinations makes this book far more confusing and incoherent than those that precede it.

At best *Alice in Wonderland* is a compendium of inconvenient facts, rumours and half-truths about the Bush Administration and 9/11. There *are* lots of interesting tidbits, but there are no coherent explanations. But because of Icke’s obvious reluctance to commit himself to any particular story, he does not produce a comprehensive refutation of the “official story” or a single convincing alternative scenario, merely a mish-mash of possible alternatives. But for the most part the book is a testimony to the disintegration of Icke’s theories about the Illuminati and the alleged world government plot. The world is, unfortunately, too complicated for his cosmic theories and he slowly drowns in the detail. Unable to resolve the contradictions within what he dismisses as the “illusion” of the “five-sense prison”, at the end of *Alice in Wonderland* Icke descends ever further into the world of the “Infinity Camp”. He encourages us to look beyond the “manufactured and manipulated illusions” of what we “see, hear, touch, smell and taste” and grasp the possibility of parallel universes. For Icke “reality” is an illusion, one that the Illuminati has conspired for thousands of years to establish through science, to limit our vision, to prevent us from perceiving the “Great Infinity”; that there is no death and we all belong to an “infinite consciousness.” Nice. But for all of Icke’s messianic fervour he stays firmly in this prison with all of us... He *cannot* escape it – as his recent physical exhaustion attests – except through his dreams.

End Notes:

¹ Discerning readers will observe that *Alice in Wonderland* is replete with choice invective directed at non-believers, including suggestions of stupidity or of being entranced by social conditioning.

² For example, in the aftermath of 9/11, Ronald Richardson, from Boston University, wrote in the *Boston Globe* (29 December 2001) that: “The way to peace lies in finding a common ethical basis for communication that would constitute a global identity as humans over above the competing ties of ethnicity, religion, and nation that separate us.” Richardson argued that the US should mount “a national campaign of education for world citizenship”, involving a “globally conscious primary and secondary education.”

³ One of the earliest reports on the existence of PNAC and the involvement of Cheney, Wolfowitz, and other key Bush Administration officials in its deliberations was L.F.Kaplan, “Containment”, *The New Republic*, 5 February 2001, p.18.

⁴ For details of the Payne case see the National Transport Safety Board report on the Payne case at <http://www.nts.gov/publictn/2000/AAB0001.htm>.

⁵ See “Panopoly of the Absurd”, *Der Spiegel Online*, No.37, 2003.

⁶ See for example P.R. Williams & M.P. Scharf, “Prosecute Terrorists On A World Stage”, *Los Angeles Times*, 18 November 2001; A-M. Slaughter, “Secret Trial by Military Commission is Not Justice”, *International Herald Tribune*, 19 November 2001; and G. Robertson, “America could settle this score without spilling blood across Afghanistan”, *The Times*, 18 September 2001.

⁷ D. Armstrong, “Dick Cheney’s Song of America”, *Harper’s Magazine*, October 2002.

⁸ J. Lobe, “One Year On, Bush Presides Over More Dangerous World”, *Inter Press Service*, 22 January 2002; T. Friedman, “Let’s Roll”, *New York Times*, 2 January 2002; and G. Evans, “A dose of optimism to treat the September 11 blues”, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 November 2001.