

Empire No More!

By Ken Coates,

Reviewed by Tony Benn

HISTORY IS VERY important but of course we are living history every day and if we are to learn from it, it has to be updated regularly and this is best done by those who are politically active and have played some part in explaining what is going on when it actually happened. No-one is better than Ken Coates at doing that for he is a teacher and an activist of the most creative kind, having done years of writing and campaigning, advocating workers' control, with the Russell Foundation, a founder of European Nuclear Disarmament and the European Network for Peace and Human Rights, as well as the author of countless books.

Empire No More! is our recent history as he saw it and it deals with questions of the war in Yugoslavia, the nuclear arms race and Star Wars, the role of Europe and NATO, which the Americans would like to have been the Foreign Legion available to the Pentagon.

He deals with the first Gulf war and the latest war against Iraq when Blair decided to stick with Bush and break with Europe, supporting the most right wing Republican president of all time and the policy of 'full spectrum dominance', which emerged from the Pentagon when Clinton was president.

On all these issues Ken Coates writes with authority and now that war on terror dominates our lives he helps us to understand the American empire, its role in the world and sets into context the torture in Iraq and the contempt with which the Red Cross is treated.

He identifies the issues of human rights that emerge, shows how poverty cannot co-exist with peace and seems to suggest that the Statue of Liberty has been shrouded and replaced by Guantanamo Bay.

It is indeed a world in disorder, with the United Nations bypassed and paralysed by the Anglo-American conspiracy and Ken knows that what we have to do is to understand all this, to cooperate with others world-wide, as it is now happening in the peace movements, the anti-globalisation movement, the environmentalist movement and the social forums that have been set up.

This book is a guide book for us all and armed with his descriptions and his analysis we will be well equipped to campaign together to shift the balance of wealth and power away from the multi-nationals, the media and the money men back to the people whose future is now threatened.

I recommend it wholeheartedly to those who sense what is going on but will certainly gain from the depth of understanding that the author has and shares with us.

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