



[About DV](#) [Archives](#) [Donate](#) [Contact Us](#) [Submissions](#) [Books](#) [Links](#)

We think the price is worth it

by T.P. Wilkinson / March 17th, 2020

On 12 May 1996, Lesley Stahl, moderator for the US TV show “60 Minutes” interviewed former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

Stahl: “We have heard that half a million children have died. I mean, that is more children than died in Hiroshima. And, you know, is the price worth it?”

Albright: *We think the price is worth it.*

← Use original player

The “price” was US sanctions imposed on Iraq under colour of a UN Security Council Resolution, the effect of which was to deny Iraq access to basic medical supplies. Of course, the death toll in Iraq was not confined to the denial of medical supplies. Atomic waste contamination from the first Gulf War and continued military operations later would add to the death toll from cancer and preventable disease, due to the destruction of vital civil infrastructure, like water and sewage systems.

The world should probably be thankful that the corona virus (CORVD-2019) problem was not first submitted to the

US-dominated UN Security Council for deliberation.

← Use original player

As of this writing the intra-European borders are being closed and/or subject to control, suspending the provisions of the Schengen Agreement. The current President of the French was 19 years old when Ms Albright gave that interview. Today he declared war, adding that it is a “guerre sanitaire”.¹ That is a striking and also fitting contrast to Mr Xi’s declaration that the fight against the corona virus outbreak in China was “a people’s war”. This shows something elemental about the difference between the campaign to control the contagion in China and the campaign in the West.

Mr Xi’s term refers to the war the Chinese, led by the Chinese Communist Party, fought first against Japanese invasion and occupation and then against the Western colonial forces under Chiang—who had purged the KMT of the Communists at the West’s behest. For Mr Xi, the fight against the virus outbreak in Wuhan was a fight by the Chinese masses against a threat to their economic and social development. His term was a summons to defend China against forces he was diplomatic enough not to name.

In contrast, the Western (US-owned or controlled) mass media did not hesitate to give the novel corona virus the historic colour of the “yellow peril”.

- Macron’s choice of words shows that he represents the war of the (mainly financial) elite against the People, a state that Mme Le Pen’s supporters had long recognised, even if they found no vehicle adequate to defend themselves. After the outgoing PSF president had successfully neutralised what little socialism or French was left after Mitterrand’s reign, neutering the *Partie Socialiste Francaise*, M. Macron was exhumed from the cesspool of some chateau of ill repute to fend off the anti-EU front emerging, not only from the Right.
- Macron’s “guerre sanitaire” is a poor substitute for the more ideologically charged *cordon sanitaire*. It has nothing to do with health but with waste disposal and control, with hygiene. Naturally there are those who will insist that this is a reference to washing hands. But whose hands? M. Macron’s declaration of a “guerre sanitaire” conjures visions its opposite, the “guerre sale”, the dirty war, or what Sartre described, *les mains sales*. Both the French author Albert Camus (*The Plague*) and the Portuguese author Jose Saramago (*Blindness*) depicted the insidious and deceptive character of this kind of war by a ruling elite against its citizens. Saramago wrote a sequel, *Seeing*, however, which together with *Blindness* ought to instruct us in greater circumspection.

Today my grocer asked me if I could remember the 40s and 50s of the past century. He knows that I am not quite that old but also that as a history teacher I am familiar with records and remembrance of things past. Then he said, point blank, “we are in a state of war.” He was not talking about the efforts to prevent infection, the risk of sickness. He was talking about the unspoken state of hostility against person or persons unknown (or unnamed) that characterises the entire environment in which the West has ostensibly found itself within the past three weeks. Ostensibly the virus is the enemy. But sane people are not so easily deceived.

There are many details one could mention. I have been writing about this now since St Greta started to terrorise us with her apocalyptic spasms.

However, it might bear consideration. M. Macron no longer has yellow vests. Madrid can dispense with its Catalanian annoyance. Italy is prevented from active participation in the Belt and Road project. Germany, well, the Sphinx of Berlin will never admit what her government’s real objectives are. (We should recall that every high official who dared to openly mention German military activity in Central Asia was forced to resign.) The war against China has not ended — maybe it is only just starting. And then there is the war against *us*. I am sure that if asked today not only Ms Albright would reply, “We think the price is worth it.”

1. *Le Monde*, “[Nous sommes en guerre](#)”: Le verbatim du discours d’Emmanuel Macron [[🔗](#)]

Dr T.P. Wilkinson writes, teaches History and English, directs theatre and coaches cricket between the cradles of Heine and Saramago. He is also the author of [Church Clothes](#), [Land](#), [Mission and the End of Apartheid in South Africa](#). [Read other articles by T.P.](#)

This article was posted on Tuesday, March 17th, 2020 at 8:14pm and is filed under [Borders](#), [China](#), [COVID-19 \(coronavirus\)](#), [Europe](#), [France](#), [President Emmanuel Macron](#), [War](#).