

caught up in his subjects and the unfair politics of the world that it's hard to imagine him being able to write about anything objectively.

But in the countries examined in *Freedom Next Time*, the under-reported facts speak for themselves with an irony Pilger no longer needs to underline. Pilger writes of the 'official' freedoms in places such as South Africa, Iraq and Afghanistan, devoting five long chapters to the stories of people that have struggled for years to win freedom—and, by and large, been denied it.

The fascinating opening chapter, 'Stealing a nation', deals with the depopulation by the British of the Chagos Archipelago in the Indian Ocean. It was a forced evacuation that passed the world by, barely reported in the media, the Chagossians being kicked out of their island home in the 1960s to make way for the US and its military base.

As Pilger points out, it was only 30 years after they lost their nation, when some of these 'men Friday' returned from exile to their homes, that the media stumbled upon the story.

Pilger's analysis of progress in South Africa since the fall of apartheid suggests that despite majority black rule, economic power remains in the hands of the wealthy white elite while black South Africans sink further into poverty. His evaluation of



A beacon of light in dark times

Freedom Next Time, by John Pilger.
London: Bantam Press, 2006. 356pp.
ISBN 0593055535

IN *Freedom Next Time*, the renowned investigative journalist and documentary maker John Pilger writes of 'empire, facades and the enduring struggle of people for their freedom'. These are themes common to his entire body of work, for Pilger has over the last 30 years made a name for himself as a journalist on a mission to unveil the injustices of the world. In doing so, he has become so

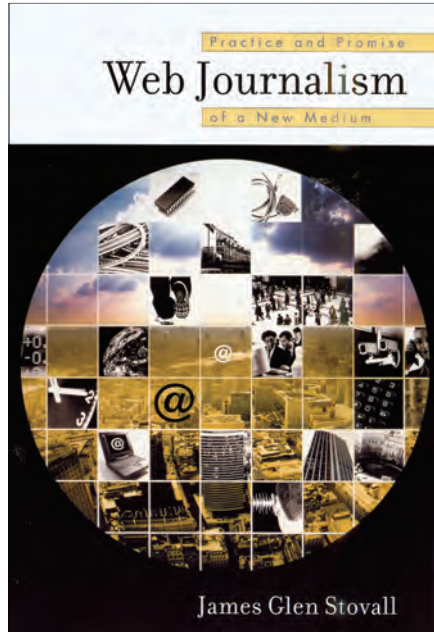
Nelson Mandela casts at least some of the leader's glowing legacy in a whole new light. The chapters on Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine are similarly filled with fascinating reading that's nevertheless pervaded with a flat sense of pessimism.

Still, reality seldom makes comfortable material, and with its enduring focus on the disposed people of these countries, Pilger's work actually does become the 'beacon of light in dark times', as Noam Chomsky has labeled it.—*PETER GRIFFIN, journalist and documentary maker*

Thoughtful web challenges

Web Journalism: Practice and Promise of a New Medium, by James Glen Stovall.
New York: Pearson, 2004. 239pp.
ISBN 0205353983

ONE of the ironies of the digital media revolution in New Zealand is the limited use of web media and web casting at journalism schools compared with across the Tasman. While many Australian media and communication schools have developed major and varied online publishing such as Queensland University of Technology's East Timor project (Tickle, 2003) and the Papua New Guinea corruption reporting model (Tanner, 2004), only one NZ journalism course has a fully fledged 'new



media' paper. Few journalism schools operate their own innovative online news services, preferring to encourage students to file for traditional media, mostly community newspapers.

Although there is a growing range of online media texts on the market, journalism educators are always on the alert for a new good one. *Web Journalism* is more of a thoughtful critique of online publishing than a 'how to' training text. While it tackles the challenges posed by the Daily.Me syndrome, it also questions the ability of journalists to think afresh. Stovall argues that journalists are trained to think lineally and they