

require the United States to pursue a virtual go-it-alone strategy against Iraq, making any military operations correspondingly more difficult and expensive. The most serious cost, however, would be to the war on terrorism. Ignoring that clear sentiment would result in a serious degradation in international cooperation with us against terrorism. And make no mistake, we simply cannot win that war without enthusiastic international cooperation, especially on intelligence.

Possibly the most dire consequences would be the effect in the region. The shared view in the region is that Iraq is principally an obsession of the United States. The obsession of the region, however, is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If we were seen to be turning our backs on that bitter conflict—which the region, rightly or wrongly, perceives to be clearly within our power to resolve—in order to go after Iraq, there would be an explosion of outrage against us. We would be seen as ignoring a key interest of the Muslim world in order to satisfy what is seen to be a narrow American interest.

Even without Israeli involvement, the results could well destabilize Arab regimes in the region, ironically facilitating one of Saddam's strategic objectives. At a minimum, it would stifle any cooperation on terrorism, and could even swell the ranks of the terrorists. Conversely, the more progress we make in the war on terrorism, and the more we are seen to be committed to resolving the Israel-Palestinian issue, the greater will be the international support for going after Saddam.

If we are truly serious about the war on terrorism, it must remain our top priority. However, should Saddam Hussein be found to be clearly implicated in the events of Sept. 11, that could make him a key counterterrorist target, rather than a competing priority, and significantly shift world opinion toward support for regime change.

No-Notice Inspections

In any event, we should be pressing the United Nations Security Council to insist on an effective no-notice inspection regime for Iraq—any time, anywhere, no permission required. On this point, senior administration officials have opined that Saddam Hussein would never agree to such an inspection regime. But if he did, inspections would serve to keep him off balance and under close observation, even if all his weapons of mass destruction capabilities were not uncovered. And if he refused, his rejection could provide the persuasive *casus belli* which many claim we do not now have. Compelling evidence that Saddam had acquired nuclear-weapons capability could have a similar effect.

In sum, if we will act in full awareness of the intimate interrelationship of the key issues in the region, keeping counterterrorism as our foremost priority, there is much potential for success across the entire range of our security interests—including Iraq. If we reject a comprehensive perspective, however, we put at risk our campaign against terrorism as well as stability and security in a vital region of the world.

Kucinich Forum Hears Opposition to Iraq War

by Suzanne Rose

Representative Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) has launched a campaign to open up the U.S. Congress to a discussion of why we should not go to war in Iraq, with a series of forums beginning on Aug. 20 on Capitol Hill. Himself opposed, he said that he wants to create an opportunity for bipartisan, diverse voices to be heard. The three speakers at his opening forum were Dr. Donald Cortwright, president of the Fourth Freedom Forum; Phyllis Bennis of the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS); and former UN chief weapons inspector in Iraq, Scott Ritter. By far the most relevant and effective presentation was Ritter's, in countering the propaganda campaign which is accompanying the drive to war. No one, however, challenged the underlying motive for war, which, as has been pointed out by Democratic Presidential pre-candidate Lyndon LaRouche, has nothing to do with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. U.S. Iraq policy is a foil in the strategic policy backed by Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, and allied financial elites to impose perpetual war on the world, in the midst of a global financial breakdown crisis.

Where's the Threat?

Ritter opened by criticizing the lack of democracy reflected in the want of debate on this issue, specifically in the one-sided Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings chaired by Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.) prior to the Congressional recess. Ritter said you can't make a case for going to war unless you discern a threat, and in his view, there is no evidence that a threat exists.

He specified, that before the inspections were ended in Iraq in 1998, Iraq had been disarmed. If Baghdad has tried to produce weapons of mass destruction (WMD) since 1998, which is the central argument for going to war, the Iraqi government would need an infrastructure, and that would be detectable from the outside. Ritter asserted, that every nuclear facility was destroyed and then blanketed with gamma detection sensors. The technology to detect poison gas production also exists, he said, though he was not sure it is being used. In response to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's recent assertions that Iraq is producing weapons of mass destruction in underground factories and on mobile trucks, Ritter said this is speculative: Iraq's geography is not conducive to building things underground, and the inspectors never detected any factories on trucks during their exhaustive and often surprise inspections. He also attacked those who want war against Iraq

for their own ideological reasons. This war has more to do with domestic U.S. policy than anything else, he charged, adding, that there are people who want to hijack our foreign policy to promote their own ideology and ambitions.

Ritter debunked the idea that Iraq would proliferate WMD through Islamic terrorist networks, even if they had them, by describing an operation Iraq has in its North to eliminate Islamic fundamentalist infiltration of the Kurds there. Soldiers are being trained for this mission at a camp south of Baghdad, which had been formerly used for training hostage-release missions. The U.S. government has been giving a false picture of the purposes of this camp, Ritter said.

He confirmed that contrary to the pro-war propaganda, the UN inspectors were not thrown out by Iraq, but pulled out six days before the U.S. bombing campaign in 1998, after Iraq had been manipulated into creating a provocation, which then became a pretext for the bombing. After seven years of inspections and destruction of weapons of mass destruction capability, Ritter said he was confident that Iraq was disarmed, and incapable of projecting military power beyond its borders. Iraq, he said, is no threat to the region.

Alternatives to War

Phyllis Bennis of IPS argued that the United States would be violating international law, if Iraq were attacked, because Article 51 of the UN Charter allows a country to wage war to defend itself only if there has been an armed attack. She said that any pre-emptive strike is a violation of international law.

Dr. Cortwright advocated a series of alternatives to “contain Iraq,” rather than going to war. He called the consequences of a pre-emptive attack so dangerous that no one who was truly concerned with future terrorism, would contemplate such an action. “If we go to war, it will make the terrorist threat worse. It would recruit people to taking extreme actions against us. It would undermine international cooperation.”

Neither Ritter nor Cortwright believes the Bush Administration wants inspectors to return to Iraq. It would be contrary to existing law passed by Congress in support of a regime change, when it authorized support for the opposition Iraqi National Congress. Ritter also does not believe Iraq will allow inspectors in, as long as the U.S. policy is for a regime change. Cortwright said the new inspectors might be more acceptable to the Iraqis, because they would be less likely to be manipulated and used for spying as the previous UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspectors were, because they will not be the agents of any state, but civil servants working for the UN.

Kucinich said he expects many other opponents to the war to surface after Congress reconvenes. He is not opposed to responding to the Iraqi offer to U.S. Congressmen to visit, but said it would have to occur in tandem with the return of inspectors. He hoped Russia could be drawn into the process of finding a resolution, and referred to the U.S. Congressional delegation which worked with Russia to negotiate a solution to the war with Serbia in 1999.

Rumsfeld's 'Feith and Bum' Corps: What Is Defense Policy Board?

by Michele Steinberg

To say that Richard Perle's Defense Policy Board “advises” Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld is an legend that has popped up increasingly in recent weeks, especially following the exposure of the notorious July 10 anti-Saudi briefing, where Laurent “of Arabia” Murawiec delivered a Power Point presentation identifying the Saudis as enemies of the United States. Rumsfeld, who claimed to know nothing about the scheduling of the briefing, later called Murawiec “a resident alien,” who had nothing to do with policy. A few days after Murawiec's briefing was exposed, Frank Gaffney, head of the right-wing extremist Center for Security Policy, was praising Murawiec as “Laurent of Arabia.”

The fact that Murawiec's employer, the RAND Corporation, disavowed any connection to the anti-Saudi briefing, and critics described the quality of the presentation as “sub-undergraduate” grade, should be a warning that the Defense Policy Board's agenda is not “policy,” but propaganda. And that propaganda is in the hands of a notorious troika of Likudnik agents and followers of the pro-fascist Vladimir Jabotinsky within the Defense Department: Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Douglas J. Feith, Defense Policy Board Chairman Richard Perle, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz.

Run Rings Around Rumsfeld

It is absolutely true—to the dismay of traditional Republican Party strategists—that Rumsfeld, who is showing the signs of age, as well as the stress of the Afghanistan war disaster, has fallen increasingly under the sway of Defense Policy Board, which has also been called “the Wolfowitz cabal.” The troika of Likudniks has worked together for over 20 years in a network of neo-conservative think tanks, during which time Rumsfeld was in semi-retirement after serving as the Secretary of Defense for President Gerald Ford.

Defense Department sources have told *EIR* that the troika runs rings around Rumsfeld, as they fight to make U.S. policy identical to the aims of Israeli war criminal Ariel Sharon: ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians, preemptive war against Iran and Iraq; and the breakup of Saudi Arabia and seizure of its oil fields.

The Defense Policy Board is an extension of the neo-conservative gaggle of Israeli moles that surrounded then-