

UN Resolution Is No Iraq Exit Strategy; LaRouche Doctrine Is

by Muriel Mirak Weissbach

According to President George W. Bush, a new Iraqi government will take “full sovereignty” on June 30 and introduce stability to the war-beseiged land. It will also provide the model for sweeping democratic reforms throughout the “greater Middle East” region. So far the propaganda pitch made in Washington. Other, informed sources, especially among Arab regional specialists, foresee an escalation of the armed resistance to occupation, and a repetition of the experience that the Soviets went through in Afghanistan: Regardless of their military occupation of all major cities, and hundreds of thousands of troops deployed, the United States, in this view, will be forced, sooner or later, to beat a humiliating defeat, tail between its legs.

The worst scenario being discussed in informed circles, is the partition of Iraq into three entities, which would immediately have devastating repercussions on the entire region. Or, that through a hasty, panicked withdrawal of U.S. forces, the country would sink into chaos.

Although the current debate about Iraq’s future revolves around the nature and outcome of a resolution to be debated and passed in the United Nations Security Council, in reality, what will happen depends less on that than on the shape and direction of U.S. policy. Will the LaRouche Doctrine, for an orderly withdrawal of foreign troops, in the context of a redefinition of U.S. policy for the entire Southwest Asia region, prevail, bolstered by a massive economic development program vectored on water and power infrastructure? If so, then the chances for a happy ending in Mesopotamia are good. If not, all Hell could break loose.

What The United Nations May Resolve

There was much ado in the last week in May about the resolution which the United States and United Kingdom had

presented jointly to the Security Council on May 24. The draft was a sleight of hand, which boiled down to redefining the occupation under a more palatable name, introducing an interim puppet government deprived of any real power, and legitimizing the war and occupation.

The draft calls for the Security Council to approve a sovereign interim government for Iraq, as of June 30, on which date the occupation should end, the Coalition Provisional Authority be terminated, and the interim government govern over a “sovereign” Iraq. Furthermore, an Iraqi national conference is to be convened, and elections held by December 2004—or, at the latest, January 2005—for a transitional national assembly which is to work out a constitution, on the basis of which democratic elections for a government are to be held. At the same time, the UN Security Council is asked to confirm the presence of multinational troops under a unified command, as per UN Resoluition 1511. This international force is to have the authority to use all necessary means to maintain security and stability in Iraq, including prevention of terrorism. The mandate of this force is to be reviewed after 12 months, or on request of the Iraqi interim government. Within this force, a special unit is to be built to protect the UN presence in Iraq.

The attempt represented by the draft resolution was so crude, it could not pass unchallenged. Many governments, led by those who opposed the war and refused to send troops, raised their objections: Russia, France, Germany, China, as well as lesser powers on the world scene: Saudi Arabia, Iran, Italy. China circulated a paper on May 27, supported by Russia, France, and Germany, with proposals for major changes to the resolution. The interim government which should take over on June 30, they said, must have “full sovereignty in questions of policy, economics, security, justice and diplo-

macy.” Furthermore, they proposed that the mandate for the multinational military force in Iraq be terminated at the end of January 2005 (when elections are to be held), and that meantime the provisional government be consulted on military operations other than self-defense by foreign troops.

Munir Akran, the lead UN delegate from Pakistan, declared that the three-page joint memo reflected the views of “a majority of the members of the security council.” He added that the memo contained the proposal that no UN resolution should be voted on, until an interim government were formed, and recognized by both the Iraqi population and the neighboring countries. “Before we confirm the formation of a provisional government, we have to know that it is generally supported,” he said.

The same point regarding support from Iraq’s neighbors, was made by the Russian representative Alexander Konusin, who said, according to Russian wire reports, “Our standpoints are identical.” He went on to explain, “If the government is recognized by the Iranian people, then the work on the resolution could be concluded within a short time period.” Konusin related this point to the Russian proposal for a reconstruction conference, to be attended by such neighbors as Jordan, Kuwait, Iran, Syria, and Turkey.

In addition, Saudi Arabia and Italy demanded that the resolution should give the UN “full powers” to transfer sovereignty and achieve security. Such powers would aim at “achieving security and stability and transferring power and full sovereignty to the legitimate government,” Saudi Prince Saud al-Faisal told the press, in the presence of Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini who was visiting Saudi Arabia.

The key points raised in contention to the draft relate to the issue of sovereignty. If, as the draft proposes, the U.S. military presence and control is to remain, unlimited, then any talk of sovereignty is a farce. As French Ambassador to the UN Jean-Marc de la Sabliere said, the mandate for the U.S. command in Iraq must be limited by a clear date. Were a sovereign Iraqi government to call for U.S. troop deployments after that, the French diplomat said there would be “no problem.” European diplomats said outright that the draft’s proposal for the U.S. troop presence to be reviewed after 12 months, was a barely concealed “trick.” French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier said the resolution could gain credibility only after substantial “changes” were made; The transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqis, he added, must be “honest, clear, complete, and not artificial.”

Thus, the stage was set for a serious exchange to take place in the Security Council, as opposed to a formal rubber-stamping ceremony.

It is not only the agreement or disagreement of UN member nations which is important; also decisive is the response of the Iraqi people themselves. As several Arab experts on Iraq told *EIR*, there is considerable skepticism there about the UN draft for an interim government, because that government will not be empowered to make real decisions. For instance,

it will not be able to annul laws passed (illegally) by the Coalition Provisional Authority. It will have no power to say that the military occupation must end. If the Iraqis do not have a clear, binding plan given them for a troop withdrawal, and for sovereignty, within a specified time-frame, said one leading Iraqi expert in Germany; and if key aspects like security, military movements and oil are not under their sovereign control; then the Iraqi population will *not* agree. A decision must be made in this direction.

In the words of another Europe-based Arab regional expert, “It is not the wording of the UN resolution which counts, but the facts on the ground.” If the resolution constitutes merely a face-lift, and simply “renames” occupation, the Iraqi people will not accept it. Both analysts emphasized that the United States, from the beginning of the Iraq adventure, had demonstrated a total lack of insight into the mentality of the Iraqi people.

LaRouche Doctrine Supported for ‘Exit’

After much haggling and, hopefully, principled debate, a UN resolution may be agreed upon. However, if America and Britain stick to their hard line, nothing will come of it, and Washington and London will have to go back to the drawing board. No UN resolution, no matter how good, can provide a way out of the crisis, unless the parameters of the discussion are radically redefined. The crucial need is for a comprehensive *concept* of a new policy for the region as a whole. This is what Democratic Presidential hopeful Lyndon LaRouche articulated in his LaRouche Doctrine, first issued April 17 (see *EIR*, April 30).

LaRouche’s approach locates the solution to the Iraq crisis, as well as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in the broader context of a new American strategic vision for Southwest Asia: a vision which emphasizes the need for a regional security arrangement based on economic cooperation on, especially, infrastructure projects (water, energy, transportation). Such an approach requires that the keystone nations of the region—Egypt, Iran, Syria, and Turkey—be recognized as such, and be actively engaged in the regional effort for reconstruction.

The support which the LaRouche Doctrine has garnered over the past weeks reflects the understanding, among key political and intellectual forces in the region, of the need for such a conceptual approach. In the last week of May, coverage of LaRouche’s proposal and related material circulated widely in the Arabic press, in the following publications: *Al Urdun* (a Jordanian paper), *Arab Renewal*, Middle East Online, Tahrir.Net (*Al Jumhuriyya*), *Al Shaab* (the latter two from Egypt), *Al Riyadh*, and *Al Ba’ath* in Syria. In addition, the proposal was presented in an interview with this author, broadcast on May 24 on “The View” talk show on Nile TV, Egypt’s main English-language satellite station.

At the same time, more endorsements of LaRouche’s Southwest Asia doctrine came from leading figures in the

Arab world. Dr. Ahmed Al-Kedidi, former Tunisian MP and senior diplomat, and currently professor of Media in the University of Qatar; Ibrahim Salah, a Muslim scholar in Switzerland; and Syria's most senior strategic analyst and Professor of Epistemology in the Faculty of Art and Human Sciences at the University of Damascus, Dr. Imad Shueibi. Shueibi described the LaRouche Doctrine as brilliant idea.

In a discussion with *EIR* on May 26, Shueibi said: "The LaRouche Doctrine is extremely important as it engages the nations of the region in the solution, thusly putting Iraq in its correct and natural geo-strategic context rather than in the failed geo-political objectives of the Bush Administration. It also represents an exit for the U.S. from the trap it has put itself in. This initiative will also give the United States its lost credibility and respect in the region, and changes its relations with the nations here. It has to be borne in mind that, historically, the U.S. did not have historical conflicts with the Arab nations. Therefore, our hope is that this initiative would lead to a shift in the overall American policies for the benefit of all parties."

Decisive, will be the extent to which such positive responses from the region's political elites are evaluated in Washington, particularly among those "institutions of the Presidency"—military, diplomats, congressional and press circles—who have so far moved with LaRouche to expose the war party's policies, and to move against its leading antagonists.

The Military Dimension

One crucial aspect of the post-June 30 status of Iraq, which has been utterly ignored in the UN resolution, is the role of the Iraqi military. In the LaRouche Doctrine, the disastrous de-Ba'athification process, which had coincided with the CPA's dissolution of the military and security apparatus, must be reversed, and those qualified, trained military (with the exception of those guilty of serious crimes) rehabilitated in a new army. LaRouche outlined how, as a first step, the U.S. military should withdraw from conflict with any part of the Iraqi population, and move into established bases outside urban areas. Iraqi forces should assume responsibility, then, for security and defense.

This process is, in a certain sense, underway in some locations. In Fallujah, where U.S. forces failed to take control over the city, an agreement was made with Gen. James Conway, for American troops to withdraw and Iraqi forces to take over under the command of an Iraqi officer. As of May 28, a similar arrangement was being made in Najaf, one of the two holy cities, where radical Shi'ite militia leader Moqtadar al-Sadr had been waging battle against the occupation forces. Al-Sadr's militia was to withdraw, as were U.S. forces. This was the result of moves undertaken by the Shi'ite religious leadership in Iraq. Reportedly Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani sent a note—via Iraq's national security advisor, Mowaffrak al-Rubaie—to the Americans. It was "a strong warning . . . to

end the standoff in Najaf peacefully," according to Hamed Khafaf, an al-Sistani aide. Had the United States refused, he added, the ayatollah "would not stay silent."

Although pointing in the direction of LaRouche's solution—in that U.S. military forces are having to withdraw from conflict with the Iraqi population—these developments are inadequate, and could be the prelude to disaster: One leading Continental European military source familiar with Iraq told *EIR* that if security and defense responsibilities are given over to the various militias throughout the country—the Peshmergas in the Kurdish North, al-Sadr's Al Mahdi force, the Shi'ite Al Badr Brigades, and the Sunni resistance forces—this could make the ingredients for internal strife. What is required is for a national all-Iraqi force to be reconstituted, under the leadership of well-known, professional military officers, who are recognized as nationalist, patriotic figures. In a parallel process, the foreign military forces must be withdrawn from the country.

It will not be easy for UN special envoy Lakhdar Brahimi to come up with viable candidates for the much-awaited Iraqi interim government. The Bremer-appointed Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) has utterly discredited itself and, with few exceptions, its members will not be eligible. Members of the government will have to qualify as representatives of the nation. As several Arab specialists have emphasized to *EIR*, this cannot be understood in ethnic or religious terms. Iraq does have an ethnically and religiously diverse population—with Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims, Christians, ethnic Arabs, as well as Kurds, Turkomen, etc., all of whom deserve representation. But politically speaking, the population is defined along other lines: The three main political forces in the country are the Arab nationalists (Ba'athists, Nasserites, pan-Arabists), the Islamists (moderates and militants) and the leftists (socialists, communists, and progressives).

To allow these political forces to compete in future elections will require an orderly process of organizing political parties, something which is utterly ignored in the UN draft resolution. (In fact, as has been critically noted, there is no reference whatsoever there to the process of organizing elections.) During the period of the occupation, political "parties" have grown up like mushrooms, numbering, in one account, up to 180!

Indications are that Brahimi will attempt to name persons to the interim government who are "neutral," and may even select a group of non-political technocrats tasked with organizing elections, above all, and administering affairs.

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