

Editorial

No Peace Until Cheney's Out

Irregular war attacks are in full swing in Iraq, Israel, the Palestinian National Authority, and, as of late Wednesday night, in the previously relatively calm capital of Jordan, Amman, where three Western-based hotels—the Radisson SAS, the Grand Hyatt, and the Days Inn—exploded in nearly simultaneous attacks November 10, apparently by suicide bombers. The biggest blast hit the Radisson SAS hotel, where the explosion occurred at a wedding, with 250 guests. By Thursday morning, 67 dead and 110 injured had been reported.

But one anomaly in the Jordan attacks must be noted: Four Palestinians were killed, including Maj. Gen. Bashir Nafeh, head of Palestinian military intelligence, along with Col. Abed Allun, an official of the Palestinian Security Forces; Jihad Fattouh, the brother of the Palestinian Parliament speaker; and Mosab Khoma. The four were on their way back from Cairo, Egypt, reported Palestinian negotiator and government advisor Saeb Erekat. Both the Palestinian Authority and the militant opposition, Hamas, condemned the Jordanian attacks.

Meanwhile, a dubious Internet claim was made by the “al-Qaeda” in Iraq, led by Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, that they are responsible for the attack, uncharacteristically claiming that they were targeting the collaborators with Israel.

But there is also a question raised as to whether these attacks are tied to Israeli security services, which have resumed the policy of “targetted assassinations,” i.e., extra-judicial murders, and which have a history of carrying on networks in Jordan, killing Palestinian leaders.

The Cheney Factor

No conclusions can or should be reached, until a total forensic investigation is carried out. But, the targeting of Jordan, one of the two Arab countries which has signed a peace treaty with Israel, is both ominous and lawful, since Jordan has been repeatedly called upon, by the United States and the European Union, to

aid Road Map “diplomacy,” and has tried, at great risk, to oblige.

It is a simple fact that the “preventive war” policy of Vice President Dick Cheney, who is still in control of U.S. war policy, has put Arab countries in an untenable position. And George Bush’s recent war declaration against an imaginary march of radical Islam to create a “new Caliphate from Barcelona to Indonesia” is both laughable and tragic. With Bush’s identification of radical Islam as the enemy in the “war on terror,” it is Cheney’s “perpetual war” doctrine that is on the march.

The Amman attacks occur against a backdrop of continuous threats and destabilizations from Washington:

- Syria is targetted by a U.S. war and regime-change plan, which was to have been justified by a UN Security Council resolution—until opposition from UNSC members, especially Russia, prevented an immediate trigger. But a report from veteran military analyst William Arkin, on Nov. 8, says that the Pentagon already has a plan of attack drawn up, albeit scaled down from a full Iraq-style assault.

- Iran continues to be a major target of Bush Administration rhetoric, with threats being made in an unspecified, but still ominous fashion. Meanwhile, negotiations between Iran and the European Union have broken down for now.

- Israel has received a green light from the Bush Administration to resume killings of Palestinians, and invasions of the West Bank and Gaza. Predictably, these assassinations, including the killing of Palestinian children, presaged revenge terrorist attacks against Israelis.

More than anything else, the continuing occupation of Iraq, the targeting of Sunni populations, including civilians, by the U.S., and new revelations that the U.S. used napalm and phosphorous in assaults on Iraqi cities, inflames the region, and makes claims of progress for “democracy” into a total farce.

There is no peace possible with Cheney, “Vice President of Torture and War,” still in command.