

UN Focus of Growing Revolt at Imperial War of Aggression

by Mike Billington

An emergency Open Session of the United Nations Security Council began at 3:00 p.m. on March 26, and continued through March 27, allowing for a general debate by all United Nations members on the invasion of Iraq. The session was requested by the Arab League with support from the Non-Aligned Movement, and from a growing international alliance of nations which recognize this war—and the new U.S. strategic doctrine of pre-emptive unilateral war against perceived adversaries—as a severe threat to the world’s peace and security. Representatives of nations of Europe, Asia, Africa, and Ibero-America declared near-universal anger at the U.S. violation of international law and the United Nations Charter. They demanded that its “coalition” immediately withdraw invading forces from the sovereign state of Iraq, return to the UN the legitimate responsibility for the issue of Iraqi disarmament, and take responsibility for the death and destruction already imposed by massive bombardment.

The strong character of the statements at the UN and from governments over the week—some warning of a danger to civilization in the American expression of imperial arrogance—reveal that the response to the war is creating a potential strategic change, internationally. As the UN news service itself reported, many nations “could not understand how the Council could remain silent in the face of the aggression by two of its permanent members against another United Nations Member State.”

The UN meeting emerged from a resolution passed March 25 by the Arab League in Cairo. The Arab League had been divided and generally ineffective before the war began; its members wanted to prevent it, but were badly fissured on how to deal with the United States. With the “shock and awe” of the assault—seeing themselves threatened with attack or destabilization brought on by U.S. destruction and occupation of an Arab state—the members came together, with only Kuwait abstaining from a unanimous vote. The resolution

called for:

- “Immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. and British troops”;
- An emergency UN Security Council meeting to demand the “withdrawal of the aggressors”;
- An “emergency UN General Assembly meeting, if the UN Security Council refused to convene or take the necessary resolution to halt the aggression.”

This last demand is a reference to UN Resolution 377, known as “Uniting for Peace,” which allows the convening of an emergency session of the General Assembly when the Security Council fails in its responsibility to maintain peace and security. It has been used several times by the United States, including in 1951 to circumvent the Security Council veto by the Soviet Union against responding to the North Korean invasion of the South; and in 1956 to avoid the British/French veto of a response to their military seizure of the Suez Canal. Now, U.S. and British lawlessness requires circumventing their vetos.

At the Security Council meeting itself, Yahya Mahmasani, Arab League Observer to the UN, reported on the Arab League’s demands, adding that the intentional U.S. rejection of the inspection regime, whose inspectors “needed only a few months to discharge their tasks,” convinced him that “the question of Iraq was not one of weapons of mass destruction, but of the imposition of absolute power, plans, and schemes.” He continued: “At a time when there was hope for the end of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, I was stunned to see the invasion and occupation of Iraq. Instead of one occupation, there are now two to deal with.”

The World Unites

The extraordinary unity of purpose of many of the world’s nations against the U.S./British unilateral war policy, is what Lyndon LaRouche has called the “positive side to this situa-

tion.” With the most severe world economic collapse of the modern era, LaRouche said on March 21, “There are forces in Europe, as well as Asia, who recognize the importance of closer ties of cooperation, especially economically based, on technology transfer relations in the long term, between Western Europe and Asia. . . . The mobilization of a hopeful humanity, for a recovery from this horror show, is the one thing that could stop this war.”

The leaders of the new alliance of Germany, France, and Russia, as well as the “strategic triangle” of Russia, China, and India, have denounced the war officially, while pointing to the greater danger of the “unilateralist” policy that it represents. One expression came from Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov at a meeting of Russia’s Defense and Foreign Policy Council on March 22. “It is absolutely clear,” Ivanov said, “that we are at the threshold of a new phase in the development of international relations. . . . The key problem emerges as the relationship between a multilateral approach to the solution of international problems, and the tendency towards unilateral actions, which has taken the upper hand in U.S. policy of late.” Ivanov went on, “It is quite evident that not just the fate of Iraq or even the region is being decided, although that is of some significance, given the role of the Middle and Near East in international affairs. The question of the principles on which security, and the world order as a whole, will be built during the coming years and decades, largely depends on how this crisis is settled” (see *Documentation*).

China’s new political leadership has demanded an immediate end to the invasion, and pledged to coordinate efforts with the international community to that end. Despite tensions between India and Pakistan, both have denounced the aggression and called for U.S. withdrawal. India’s External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha called on the UN to act to end the invasion, while Pakistani Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, visiting China, said that Pakistan “did not and would not support war.”

Pressure on UN Secretary General

The Non-Aligned Movement recently reconstituted itself, under the leadership of South Africa’s President Thabo Mbeki and Malaysia’s Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, to confront “unilateralism” as the new name for colonialism. With strong support from Indonesia’s President Megawati Sukarnoputri (the daughter of Sukarno, a leader in the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement), Dr. Mahathir is acting to bring the developing sector nations into international action against the U.S. war policy.

Dr. Mahathir introduced a resolution denouncing the war to Malaysia’s Parliament, stating, that “Rather than being futuristic by discussing the rebuilding of Iraq after the ongoing destruction, the UN should be realistic and practical in addressing the demise of international law and the suffering of innocent Iraqis.” He called for the resignation of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who is preaching “unity” against



LaRouche campaign organizing in Houston. “The mobilization of a hopeful humanity,” said LaRouche, “for a recovery from this horror show, is the one thing that could stop this war.”

those who are trying to stop the U.S./British criminality. Dr. Mahathir said the Secretary General “is not a free agent, he is very much subject to pressure, and therefore, whatever he says is not reflective of the opinion of the UN.”

In his speech to the Malaysian Parliament, Dr. Mahathir said that the “rule of law no longer exists, because the very people who coined this term are themselves the violators.” He called on the UN to act to demand immediate withdrawal of the invading forces, and to resolve that: “Pre-emptive war against weaker nations by the superpowers and their allies should altogether be banned. Unilateral attacks should be illegalized, and the world should act against anyone breaching this principle and international law.”

In Ibero-America, Mexico’s President Vicente Fox, despite open threats of American economic retaliation, has refused to support the war, saying, “These are times in which to guard the higher interests of the nation. These are times of unity.” His words won the praise of former President José López Portillo, who said that Mexico was ready for any U.S. retaliation, “if it is for the blessed dignity, to save the dignity and the pacifism of the Mexican people.” Brazil’s new President Lula da Silva, who had called for a heads-of-state summit of all nations opposing the war, on March 23 sent a letter to

Pope John Paul II, praising his firm stance against the war and the “great spiritual leadership” he is providing as a “rallying point” of nations in defense of an international order based on multilateralism.

The Pope, speaking to military chaplains on March 25, said that “war as an instrument of solving disputes among nations has been repudiated, even before the UN Charter, by the consciousness of a large part of humanity, except in the case of defense against aggression.”

Documentation

Ivanov: ‘New Phase Of Relations’

Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, speaking on March 22 at a meeting of the Russian Defense and Foreign Policy Council, said, “It is absolutely clear that we are at the threshold of a new phase in the development of international relations. The war against Iraq is the first really major international crisis since the end of the Cold War.”

Ivanov noted President Vladimir Putin’s statement of March 20, declaring the U.S. invasion of Iraq “a serious political mistake . . . that these military actions are being carried out contrary to world public opinion, and contrary to the principles and norms of international law and the UN Charter. Nothing can justify this military action—neither the accusation that Iraq supports international terrorism (we have never had and do not have information of this kind), nor the desire to change the political regime in that country, which is in direct contradiction to international law.”

Ivanov said that after Sept. 11, “the international community reached a new level of understanding the nature of today’s threats and challenges. For the first time since the Second World War, a broad coalition of countries began to be formed, united by their common interest in counteracting those threats, above all international terrorism. The question is whether the creation of that coalition will turn out to have been merely an episode, or whether it may become a model for a new system of global security, which would enable us jointly to meet such challenges as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime and the drug trade, and regional conflicts, and to solve a range of other complex problems.”

Russia believes that such a system can only work if based on international law and involving cooperation through the UN, he said. “Accordingly, the key problem emerges as the relationship between a multilateral approach to the solution of international problems, and the tendency towards unilateral actions, which has taken the upper hand in U.S. policy of late. . . . The Iraq crisis is the first serious test, in this regard. It is

quite evident that not just the fate of Iraq or even the region is being decided, although that is of some significance, given the role of the Middle and Near East in international affairs. The question of the principles on which security, and the world order as a whole, will be built during the coming years and decades, largely depends on how this crisis is settled.

“We have no interest in a precedent being set in international relations, for the violent change of political regimes in sovereign nations. This is a question of principle, having nothing to do with Russia’s relations with any particular regime, including the one in Baghdad. Based on our own historical experience, we do not believe it is effective to ‘export democracy,’ as there used to be the ‘export of revolution.’ All the more so, when it is a question of the Islamic world, where such methods can only breed a new wave of extremism and terrorist activity.”

Ivanov called the interaction of France, Germany, Russia and China in the UN Security Council (UNSC) a departure from the “bloc discipline” of the past; “yet another indication of the strengthening tendency towards a multipolar world order. I want to stress that the concept of multipolarity, as we understand it, is not a cover for some kind of combination in the spirit of anti-Americanism, but rather a reflection of one of the realities of the world today, in which various centers of influence exist, and no one nation is in a position to decide all problems by itself.”

There must be normal cooperation among Russia, the United States, and the EU, Ivanov said. “Of course, the most important thing now, is to stop the war as rapidly as possible and return the Iraq problem to the channel of political settlement through the UNSC.”

Mahathir Condemns ‘New Imperialists’

Malaysia’s Prime Minister Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, speaking to Parliament on March 24, forcefully stated the tasks facing the nations of the Non-Aligned Movement (which Dr. Mahathir now heads), in response to the launching of a new imperialism:

“The world today has entered a very alarming and dangerous phase following the attack on Iraq by the United States and its allies without the sanction of the UN. This has left a black mark in the history of the world, which saw a superpower and its allies, in blatant disregard of international law, humanity, and justice, attacking a state that is no longer able to defend itself, let alone pose a threat to a superpower. That Iraq is dangerous and a threat to the whole world, with its weapons of mass destruction, is ridiculous and unacceptable as a reason for launching such an attack.

“Sadder still, the use of the latest weaponry and wholesale bombings of Iraq, which has been forced beforehand to de-

stroy its defense system on the orders of the UN Security Council, is really unjust. After having suffered for 12 years under UN-imposed economic sanctions resulting in the loss of 1.5 million lives due to the shortage of food and medical supplies, the Iraqis now face bombings and rocket attacks against which they are defenseless and devoid of any means to protect themselves. . . .

“The Security Council and the UN have themselves been marginalized by the United States, which discards all international law. . . . Today, smaller and weaker nations are no longer safe, as the UN could no longer protect them from superpower aggression. The UN and international law are meaningless now. We have reverted to the Stone Age where might is right. . . . The rule of law no longer exists because the very people who coined this term are themselves the violators. . . .

“Israel and the United States have in fact threatened to use nuclear weapons as they deem fit in certain circumstances. . . . Of late, what is obvious is that it is not Iraq’s weapons of mass destruction that is uppermost, but the objective has shifted to ousting the Iraqi government and pursuing the strategic goals of the United States and its allies. Their strategy is not only to defeat Iraq, but also station American forces permanently in West Asia to monitor and intimidate the governments and the people there. This means democracy is unlikely to flourish and instead authoritarian rules by foreign powers and their puppets will be a feature of the world system. . . .

“Pre-emptive war against weaker nations by the superpowers and their allies should altogether be banned. Unilateral attacks should be illegalized and the world should act against anyone breaching this principle and international law.

“We are relieved that at least there are superpowers which oppose the American and British actions. We highly commend France, Russia, and China together with Germany and several other European nations for their opposition. We regard highly, Americans and Britons who protested against their own governments alongside people from all over the world through anti-war demonstrations.

“It is clear that this is not a war between Europe or Christians and Muslim countries. The opposition to the war by the leader of the Catholic Church Pope John Paul, the Archbishop of Canterbury of the Anglican Church, and the Archbishop of Britain’s Catholic Church, proves that Christians at large are against U.S. actions. This is not a Crusade. This is a war between the superpowers, the United States and Britain, and Iraq, a weak Muslim state. This is the actions of imperialists still in pursuit of world dominance. After launching attacks on the economy, they follow suit with military strikes. If the targeted country is strong, surely they won’t attack. This is a cowardly act of a bully. . . . Only the Americans and the British people could bring their governments to stop attacking Iraq and persuade them to return to the UN fold. If the governments which bypass the UN are unseated by their own people, then probably the new ones may re-embrace the UN.”