

Powell UN Debacle Shows LaRouche's Crucial Role

by Michele Steinberg

In his internationally webcast Jan. 28 State of the Union speech, Lyndon LaRouche, candidate for the Democratic Party Presidential nomination in 2004, bluntly stated that there is no reason for the United States to have to engage in war against any country—especially Iraq, or North Korea. There is no threat that the United States cannot handle diplomatically with help from friends and allies, LaRouche said, as the unchallenged political and military power on Earth—America's economic disintegration notwithstanding. Thus there is no justification for a war on Iraq; and the same is true for North Korea.

However, that international cooperation is not there. Because of this Iraq war drive, being used as an excuse to launch a new imperial war policy, said LaRouche, "the United States is being held in contempt in most nations and among most people in the world," a contempt that is "growing rapidly under the past two years of this Administration." The immense sympathy for the United States, "over what happened in New York and Washington, D.C. on Sept. 11, 2001 . . . is now dissipating." LaRouche added, "And that is not good for our national security."

Speaking as the shadow American leadership, vitally necessary because of the weakness of President George W. Bush, LaRouche laid out his own mission—to help ensure that this President successfully gets through the next two years. The nation needs a leadership that *can* avoid the Iraq war, just as World War I and World War II could have been avoided with real leadership.

"War is not inevitable!" said LaRouche. "A war in Iraq is not inevitable. Unless cowards permit it to happen, and fools in government, it will never happen. Because Iraq is not a nation to be bombed. Iraq is not a theater of war. It is a detonator of war; a war which would become a worldwide war. . . . This must be stopped now. . . . Anyone who says you've got to go to this war, because of this reason—they don't know what they're talking about; they're fools. It must not happen."

Why Powell Was Sent

The Bush Administration's next action, dispatching Secretary of State Colin Powell to the UN Security Council on Feb. 5 to deliver a bellicose speech about Iraq, only proved

more than ever that LaRouche's leadership role in the United States is crucial. Powell's speech was a diplomatic debacle that failed to win further votes in the UN Security Council for a U.S.-led war on Iraq. But the story behind the Powell speech is more complicated.

On Feb. 5, right after Powell spoke, LaRouche, in discussions with close associates, accused the White House of sending Powell to the UN as part of the Administration's response to LaRouche's State of the Union address—a reaction in anticipation of how the international community would respond to the example of real statesmanship demonstrated by LaRouche in his webcast on the afternoon of Jan. 28. Some Washington sources had explained that the unusually late date (Jan. 28) of the Bush State of the Union speech was precisely in reaction to LaRouche. These sources reported that the delay was both because some in the White House wanted to hear what LaRouche had to say first, and also did *not* want LaRouche to deliver an alternative *after* Bush spoke. The Administration monitored LaRouche's remarks closely, sources reported.

LaRouche characterized what did happen at the UN as follows: Powell did the job he was assigned to do. But those who were expecting a commitment to war to come out of it from the United States will be disappointed. Powell got stuck with the job, because he would not evoke a strong reaction. Powell is seen internationally as someone who is sane. Within the bounds of what Powell was ordered to do (with a very bad script, one might add), he probably kept things at the borders from the edge of war. The risk of war is admittedly increasing, observed LaRouche, but it has nothing to do with what Powell did. Powell was sent in to be embarrassed. If Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, or one of the other war party hawks had been sent in, there would be a veto in the UN Security Council.

How the American Presidential system works has to be understood. There is a small group of utopian nut-cases that are now desperate for this war, a war that neo-conservative Israeli agents like Richard Perle and Michael Ledeen make very clear is aimed at the entire Islamic world, and perhaps, at France as well. But, the Presidency is trying to wriggle around it—pretending to be seriously committed to war, while aiming at not having a war.

A Disastrous Diplomatic Failure

The diplomatic failure of the deployment of Powell to the UN on Feb. 5 was not Powell's failure, said LaRouche. Powell was assigned to present the Administration's case and he did his duty—regardless of his own views. In fact, as events unfolding on Feb. 7 show, LaRouche was more than insightful about the Powell assignment! The information on terrorism and Iraq, and on other matters of weapons of mass destruction, from a British dossier are a hoax. On Feb. 7, the evidence began unravelling at a rapid rate. First,

according to BBC, British intelligence circles, fed up with Tony Blair's amateurish and obsessive war talk, leaked information that a "dossier" released by Blair and praised effusively by Powell at the UN, is a joke—including information plagiarized from a 1997 term paper prepared by a graduate student. Then, the *Wall Street Journal* on Feb. 7 quoted German Interior Minister Otto Schilly asserting that there is no evidence—after an 18-month investigation by German intelligence services—that Abu Musab Zarqawi, a.k.a. "al-Zarqawi," is a core member of al-Qaeda; nor is there evidence that Baghdad is linked to al-Qaeda. Al-Zarqawi was named as the centerpiece of the alleged Iraq/al-Qaeda link by both Powell and by President Bush in a Feb. 6 Rose Garden speech.

On certain other aspects of the speech, the statement of Lt. Gen. Amir al-Saadi, the science advisor to Saddam Hussein, was well taken. Al-Saadi said, according to the *Washington Post* on Feb. 5, "What we heard today [from Powell] was for the general public, and mainly the uninformed, in order to influence their opinion and to commit the aggression on Iraq." It may turn out to be even worse—with Powell having been set up to deliver faulty information.

Powell's prepared 90-minute presentation could have been called a prosecutor's "show of force," complete with a slide show of satellite photos, audiotapes of wiretapped conversations, mug shots of al-Qaeda assassins, and animated cartoons of secret mobile weapons labs. The "facts" were then wrapped in neo-conservative, imperial rhetoric, threatening the United Nations with making itself "irrelevant" (a phrase loved by those who do not want a coalition, but want the United States to act as an imperial power) if the Security Council were to vote against taking military action against Iraq. But the speech is already being widely discredited.

In addition to the al-Zarqawi matter, another area involving satellite photos is especially suspicious. Powell exhibited satellite photos purporting to show that Iraq had moved materiel before the inspectors arrived. As noted above, the allegation that al-Zarqawi is a top al-Qaeda leader backed by Iraq is discredited by the German Interior Minister. Both Powell and Bush asserted that al-Zarqawi had master-minded the Oct. 28, 2002 assassination of American diplomat Lawrence Foley, who worked for the State Department's Agency for International Development, in Amman, Jordan.

On the satellite photos, Powell divulged in three examples that "on Nov. 10, [2002]" and "just two days before the inspections resumed," trucks and caravans were photographed by U.S. satellite observation removing materials from declared weapons sites. "We saw this kind of house-cleaning at close to 30 sites." Yet this information was never provided to the UN Security Council, of which the United States is a permanent member.

This is nothing short of what would be considered with-

holding of evidence, or even government misconduct and obstruction of justice, in a case brought under U.S. Constitutional or international law! Was the objective of the Bush Administration to humiliate the UN inspectors by withholding information that they would be going to empty sites? Or is the Feb. 5 "evidence," more "smoke and mirrors," than a "smoking gun?"

In addition, the al-Zarqawi/Baghdad story of a link to the Foley assassination may turn out to be a "Gulf of Tonkin" type lie, that is, an invented explanation for an incident that is designed to provide justification for an unjustified war.

As LaRouche emphasizes, in truth seeking, whether in economics, or war, or science, "facts" are not "facts" out of context. In effect, even if the remaining allegations in Powell's performance are true, the presentation *proves* LaRouche's point from the Jan. 28 webcast—that the United States, as the unchallenged superior military and economic power in the world, is big enough, sophisticated enough, and has enough clout in the world to resolve the crises of Iraq and North Korea *without* going to war.

Allies Unconvinced

As of Feb. 6, the votes in favor of U.S. military force to take over Iraq, at the UN Security Council, were only 4 out of 15, and Powell's performance had failed to gain more support. Statements on Feb. 6 from France, Germany, Russia, China, and the Arab League all show that, despite the media frenzy of black propaganda, Powell's presentation a day earlier had not swayed any of the opponents of an Iraq war, especially the opposing nations on the Security Council. On Feb. 6, Russian President Putin had a phone discussion with French President Chirac, and the two men reiterated that they want the weapons inspections to continue. France's Foreign Minister offered a proposal, in response to the Powell speech, that the weapons inspection team be greatly expanded, to allow also for monitors to be left behind at all inspected sites; and that France begin surveillance flights over Iraq.

UN weapons inspectors Hans Blix and Mohamed El Baradei were in London on Feb. 6, where they reiterated their demand for more time to finish their jobs. On Feb. 7, they were going to France and then on to Baghdad. Even Powell said that their Feb. 8-9 work in Iraq will be critical for determining whether or not there will be a war. On Feb. 6, Iraq allowed the first interview with an Iraqi weapons scientist to take place without a government observer.

War is not inevitable with leadership provided by LaRouche, and an expanding number of allies committed to winning the peace with him. As he said on Jan. 28, "We must save this nation with a President who does not have the qualifications in himself, a President should have for a crisis of this sort. I do. Therefore, I shall assume my responsibilities to him, as well as to our institutions and our people."