
Book Review

‘Pax Americana’ Offers No Future for Iraq

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Die Zukunft des Irak—Pax Americana? (The Future of Iraq—Pax Americana?)

by Jürgen Hübschen

Wiesbaden: Dr. Böttiger Verlags-GmbH, 2005
640 pages, hardback, EUR 28.80

If a book is worth anything at all, the first sentence should tell a lot. In the case of Jürgen Hübschen’s book, this is indeed the case. He opens with the clear announcement: “This is no ‘anti-America book,’ even though a superficial reading might give that impression.” Key to understanding the articulate analysis that the author gives of the most recent Iraq War, is, indeed, his clear differentiation between the neo-conservative clique running the war policy, and the real America. Hübschen, who was military attaché at the German Embassy in Baghdad during the Iran-Iraq War, and thus knows the region like the back of his hand, is equally familiar with the United States. “I myself lived in the U.S.A. for a year,” he reports, “and as a soldier for forty years, have had the best collaboration with American comrades and have become friends with many Americans. It is precisely because I am a friend of the U.S.A., and know that President George W. Bush and his neo-conservatives are as little America as Saddam Hussein was Iraq, that I have written this book.” It is his identification with the real America, “which was admired and envied in the world, and which is a friend of Germany,” that he wishes to express, and to “support the real democrats, patriots, and Atlanticists in America.” Here, he writes, “I see myself also on the side of Lyndon H. LaRouche and his movement, which however, I do not personally belong to.”

In his first section, “The Idea of the ‘Pax Americana,’ ” the author catalogues the axioms of the ideology embraced by the neo-cons: from their perverted idea of mission, conceived as Bush’s “crusade against evil,” to their commitment to unilateralism, whereby Condoleezza Rice considers America’s acting in its own interests to be necessarily in the interests of all.

He handles his specimens with ruthless irony. For exam-

ple, in his depiction of the perverted notion of “freedom,” as expressed in bizarre styles of clothing, the author recalls the figure of the 80-year-old lady in a pink jogging suit and hair in curlers, at the supermarket. In this respect, he cites the “most recent example” of the outfit donned by Vice President Cheney at the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz; in contrast to other honored guests dressed in dark suits and hats, the American Vice President sported a parka with fur-lined hood, a ski cap, and hiking boots. Hübschen notes this as not only an expression of unconventional dress, but “also a sign of ignorance vis-à-vis people who think differently and other, foreign cultures.”

Other characteristics of the neo-con ideology include principles which *EIR* readers will recognize as stemming from those of Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt, though not so identified in this book. Hübschen singles out “black-and-white” thinking and the “friend-foe principle.” Hübschen is brutally frank in his presentation of the jingoistic perversion of patriotism, recalling the hoked-up story of the “heroine”

Jessica Lynch, as well as the plastic turkey that President Bush presented to the troops in Iraq on Thanksgiving.

The neo-con ideology leads necessarily to the assertion of the hegemony of America, as “God’s chosen land,” exerted through a worldwide military presence, propped up by “sa- traps and favorites.”

The author provides a valuable rundown of the personalities—and their *curricula vitae*—in the Bush camp: Cheney, Richard Armitage, John Bolton, Eric Edelman, Doug Feith, Michael Ledeen, Lewis Libby, Richard Perle, Karl Rove, Donald Rumsfeld, et al. Most relevant to the present conjuncture in Iraq, is his profile of Zalmay Khalilzad, now U.S. Ambassador in Baghdad, whose devotion to exporting “democracy” has just led him to lay down the law to the newly elected Iraqi leadership, that they must paste together a government according to his prescription, or be deprived of any U.S. aid.

One Long War

The central thesis of Hübschen’s book is that Operation “Iraqi Freedom” actually dates back to the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq conflict, and then to Operation “Desert Storm” in 1990-91: Neither of those earlier wars was ended with a peace treaty.

“In UN Resolution 598 of July 20, 1987,” he writes, “a peace treaty between the two war parties [Iran and Iraq] was called for, but the resolution was never implemented. This lack of a peace treaty, the undefined international borders between Iraq and Kuwait, the unclarified question of war debts, the lack of a regulation for the development of the Rumaila oil field in the border region, and the non-existing

guarantee of unfettered access to the Gulf for Iraq were, alongside Kuwait’s demands for payment of back debt, which Iraq—rightfully and as agreed—had considered a gift, essential causes of the later attack of the Iraqi dictator against his neighbor in the Gulf.”

Through a detailed, yet readable chronology, the author reviews the leading events between 1979 and March 2003, when the last invasion began.

For Hübschen, there is no doubt that this latter was made possible by the events of Sept. 11, 2001. This “was the trigger and the moral justification in front of the international community,” he writes, “for the implementation of an Iraq strategy which had already been developed in the beginning of the 1990s, mainly by Paul Wolfowitz and Dick Cheney.” The concrete basis for the operation was found in the U.S. National Security Strategy or “Bush Doctrine” of Sept. 17, 2002.

Once the decision for war had been taken, it was a matter of finding—or creating—the pretexts to justify it. Hübschen reviews, one by one, the charges launched against Saddam Hussein, from possession of weapons of mass destruction to alleged support for international terrorism, and counterposes the facts to the fiction.

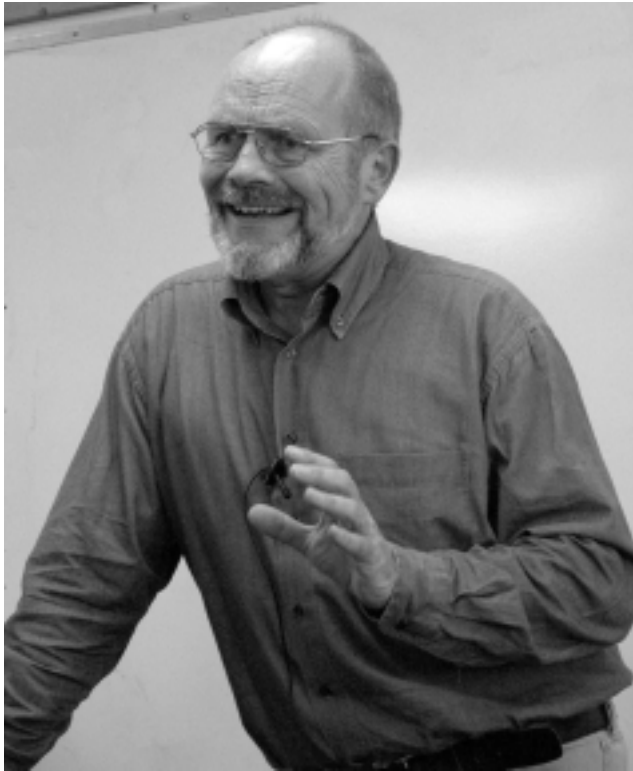
As to the true reasons for the war, Hübschen stresses the strategic role of Iraq, due to its immense resources—“oil, water, and people”—as well as its geographical function as a bridge to the Arabian peninsula and Far East, its propinquity to Central Asia and Turkey, on the route toward China. In the author’s view, U.S. policy had historically been based on the “Twin Pillar Strategy,” with Iran and Saudi Arabia as the pillars. After the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, this changed dramatically, and the United States looked to Iraq. Then, Saudi Arabia began to lose its privileged position, as leading neo-cons, led by Richard Perle, targetted the Saudi regime, and in April 2003, Rumsfeld announced the withdrawal of troops from the country. This shift in the emphasis given to Saudi Arabia, he believes, played an important role in the push for war.

Through a detailed description of each of seven phases of the war, Hübschen takes the pulse of the Iraqi population, showing how the worsening conditions of daily life and ongoing wanton destruction, continued to fuel anti-American sentiment, as the resistance gained in strength and sophistication. The author also presents the bungling errors of the occupying powers, who failed because they were doomed to fail: With utterly no idea of what a postwar Iraq should look like, or how it should be governed, the U.S. strategy could lead only to destruction of the country and growing instability for the entire region. Hübschen’s judgment on the net result of the war is annihilating, also considering its devastating effect on the morale of the U.S. Armed Forces.

A Way Out

What is perhaps most remarkable in Hübschen’s treatment of the total failure of the “Pax Americana,” are his pro-





EIRNS/Stuart Lewis

Author Jürgen Hübschen addresses a briefing to EIR staff in Leesburg, Virginia last year. "It is precisely because I am a friend of the U.S.A.," he writes in his book, "and know that President George W. Bush and his neo-conservatives are as little America as Saddam Hussein was Iraq, that I have written this book."

posals for alternatives which could—even at this late hour—save Iraq from total catastrophe.

In his final chapter, the author presents a "Code of Conduct" which should underlie an approach to finding solutions. Among these principles are, "Let the others be different," "Human dignity makes up the core of cooperation among states and peoples," and "Every state has legitimate rights"—all of which derive implicitly from the notion of national sovereignty and the inalienable rights of the human individual. "This 'Code of Conduct,' " he writes, "must first of all be accepted by the U.S.A. In acknowledgement of this general basis, the Bush Administration must give up its basic position and its claim to a 'Pax Americana.' " "This means withdrawing from the scene, and allowing the United Nations to play the central role. This is the "only and last chance to find a solution in Iraq at all," Hübschen writes.

The basic premises for a "Road Map" for peace include: "International guarantees for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. Unlimited freedom of action for the political leadership of Iraq." In addition, concrete problems left over from the past must be dealt with, among them, implementation of the truce between Iran and Iraq; clear delineation of the Iraq-Kuwait border; agreements on contested oil fields,

Iraqi access to the Persian Gulf, and a solution of the Kurdish question among affected states.

Hübschen proposes the establishment of a task force to support the work of the Iraqi government. This would be under UN leadership, and includes representatives from NATO, the European Union, the Arab League, the International Court, and the Non-Aligned Movement. The task force should suggest concrete actions to the Iraqi government, from closing down Abu Ghraib prison, to removing checkpoints and road blocks, to strictly separating the Iraqi government from any installations of the occupying forces. The Iraqi government should work out treaty arrangements with all foreign forces now in the country, toward an effective "exit strategy." This includes all matters related to the stationing and withdrawal of troops, and the reorganization of Iraq's own military and security forces. Hübschen also insists that the contracts made illegally under the occupation, as well as the privatization measures, and confiscation of infrastructure, must be reviewed, reversed, and new agreements struck. Finally, the author makes the crucial point, that no stabilization for Iraq or the region is thinkable, unless a durable peace is struck between Israel and the Palestinians. In this respect, he points to the Road Map, or better, the "Abdallah Peace Plan," named after then-Crown Prince (now King) Abdallah of Saudi Arabia.

Reviews of the book have appeared in several major German publications, most recently in *Orient* magazine, the magazine of the German Orient Institute, and in *Die Bundeswehr*, the publication of the German Armed Forces. Both praised the book's professionalism, and the author's frank judgment that the neo-cons' Iraq strategy has turned out to be a dismal failure. Both also appreciated the author's keen insight into the inner workings of U.S. politics; as the *Die Bundeswehr* review put it: "Several evaluations of political observers and a deep look in the internal American debate on the Bush policy, allow the reader even to participate in what goes on behind the scenes."

One discordant note rang out in a review appearing in the pro-neo-con establishment daily, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, whose author, Wilfred von Bredow, ranted about the "monster pamphlet about the American evil deeds in Iraq." The reviewer seemed most upset by the principled distinction drawn by Hübschen, between the American people and institutions, and the neo-con cabal. The mere mention of "impeachment" was the last straw.

Hübschen's book is gaining increasing attention, and for good reason: While U.S. domestic politics is bubbling with talk of impeachment of Cheney and Bush, largely due to the lies of the Administration about pre-war Iraq, and the utter failure of their war, a new sinister threat is emerging on the horizon: that of another neo-con adventure in the region, this time targetting Iran. Hübschen's book is the best guide any political or military professional could desire, to learn the lessons of Iraq—before it is too late.