EIRNational

Iraq War-Party Is Under Attack by Republican Leaders

by Edward Spannaus

If the Richard Perle-Paul Wolfowitz cabal inside the Bush Administration don't succeed into dragging the United States into a war against 1 billion Muslims, they may succeed in something else: bringing down the U.S. economy. Reports in the financial press indicate that as much as $200 billion has already been pulled out of the United States by Saudi and other Arab investors, of a total investment estimated at $1.3 trillion.

Why the capital outflow? Since Sept. 11, a small but vocal group of neo-conservative war-hawks in the United States has been calling for the U.S. to cut off relations with Saudi Arabia, and even to seize the Saudi oil fields. The Saudis and others feared that this grouping could actually force a shift in Bush Administration policy, after the publicizing of a briefing given to the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board on July 10, by RAND "analyst" Laurent Murawiec, who urged the Bush Administration to declare the Saudis as the enemy. Disavowals by Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and other administration officials rang hollow to many. Perle remains in his position as chairman of the advisory committee.

The *Washington Post*'s Aug. 6 exposure of the war-party briefing—coming during a campaign launched weeks earlier by Lyndon LaRouche to destroy the ability of Senators John McCain and Joe Lieberman to blackmail the President into launching an Iraq war—has opened up the floodgates, exposing a deep rift in the Republican Party between the more traditional old-line leadership—largely grouped around the person of former President George H.W. Bush ("Bush 41"), and the neo-conservative warhawks in the current administration.

This GOP division, according to informed intelligence sources, has existed for some time. But recently the traditionalists concluded that the administration's policy agenda had been hijacked by the neo-conservatives and their allied Chris-

tian-Zionist circles, and that the Republican Party was heading for defections, losses in this year's mid-term elections, and in the 2004 Presidential elections, unless an effort was mounted to break the grip of the numerically small but highly vocal neo-cons and the pro-Likud Christian Evangelicals.

Perle in the Spotlight

Syndicated columnist Robert Novak, in his Aug. 22 column, pointed to what many observers see as the strategic significance of the Murawiec briefing. Novak noted that, two weeks after the revelations about the Defense Policy Board briefing, the Saudi government is still upset, and it is not at all satisfied with Rumsfeld's disavowal of responsibility for the incident.

"Few accounts of the bizarre incident paid much attention to the centrality of former Assistant Defense Secretary Richard Perle, the Rumsfeld-appointed policy board chairman and staunch friend of Israel," Novak continued. "Perle's arrangement of the Murawiec briefing is seen in both Washington and Riyadh as part of a campaign to recast long-standing U.S. policies." The campaign, Novak added, enjoys "strong, though certainly not unanimous, support in the White House and Defense Department." Novak called it the domino theory in reverse: overthrow Saddam Hussein to undermine the Saudi regime, and so on. American Presidents since World War II "have balanced support for the state of Israel with friendship for Arab nations headed by oil-producing Saudi Arabia," Novak concluded. "George W. Bush faces a choice of whether he wants to continue that policy, or venture down the road charted by Richard Perle."

Perle's sudden prominence was also reflected in *Time* magazine's prominent story in its Aug. 26 issue "Inside The Secret War Council," which ridiculed Perle and quoted him

as saying, on his invitation to Murawiec: "I didn't know what he was going to say, but he had done some serious research on Saudi Arabia." This, *Time* noted, was patently untrue. *Time* claimed, without much foundation, that Perle's ignorance of Murawiec's talking points rivaled his unfamiliarity with Murawiec's past—i.e., that in the 1980s, Murawiec had worked for "political extremist and perpetual Presidential aspirant Lyndon LaRouche" at *EIR.* And then, in a highly unusual piece of straightforward reporting, *Time* added: "By the end of last week, LaRouche was denouncing both his former associate and 'suspected Israeli agent Richard Perle' for pushing the U.S. toward war with the Islamic world."

Republican Opposition to War Emerges

This escalation of attacks on Perle, caps an extraordinary couple of weeks of rising criticism of the administration's plans for an attack on Iraq, emanating from prominent Republican figures. It commenced with an Aug. 4 appearance on CBS television by Brent Scowcroft, who had been National Security Adviser to Presidents Gerald Ford and George Bush (senior), including during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, and who is currently the chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB). Scowcroft said that the question of attacking Iraq is a question of setting priorities. "The President has announced that terrorism is our number-one focus. Saddam is a problem, but he's not a problem because of terrorism." Scowcroft went on to say that Saddam could be dislodged, but cautioned: "I think we could have an explosion in the Middle East. It could turn the whole region into a cauldron, and destroy the war on terror."

Then, in the first major defection from the GOP Congressional leadership, House Majority Leader Rep. Dick Armey (R-Tex.) warned that an unprovoked attack against Iraq would violate international law, and would undermine international support for President Bush's policy of removing Saddam Hussein. "If we try to act against Saddam Hussein, as obnoxious as he is, without proper provocation, we will not have the support of other nation-states who might do so," Armey said. "I don't believe that America will justifiably make an unprovoked attack on another nation. It would not be consistent with what we have been as a nation or what we should be as a nation."

On the Senate side, the most outspoken has been Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.), who told the *New York Times* on Aug. 15, that the Central Intelligence Agency had "absolutely no evidence" that Iraq possesses or will soon possess nuclear weapons. "You can take the country into a war pretty fast," Hagel said, 'but you can't get out as quickly, and the public needs to know what the risks are." And, referring to the civilian neo-cons in the Pentagon who are demanding an invasion of Iraq, Hagel remarked, "Maybe Mr. Perle would like to be in the first wave of those who go into Baghdad."

Also of note are the comments by former Congressman Jack Kemp (R-N.Y.), who served in the first Bush Adminis-

A rally by LaRouche supporters at the Chicago financial district on Aug. 14. Lyndon LaRouche's campaign to stop John McCain and Joseph Lieberman's drive for war, with the circulation of 5 million leaflets on "The Electable LaRouche," has catalyzed opposition to the war policy in both political parties.

tration, but is more identified with former President Ronald Reagan. Kemp has pointed to the lack of evidence linking Saddam Hussein to Sept. 11, and has said, "I don't believe we are ready to start another war, when Afghanistan has yet to be pacified, and the Middle East remains in chaos."

Scowcroft then escalated on Aug. 15, with an op-ed entitled "Don't Attack Saddam," published following this article. The *Wall Street Journal,* which ran the Scowcroft piece, published its own Aug. 19 editorial, saying that it had simply offered its pages to give an airing to Scowcroft's view—which it dismissed as *Realpolitik.*

Scowcroft castigated the utopian gang (typified by Kenneth Adelman), who claim that an invasion of Iraq would be a "cakewalk"; on the contrary, Scowcroft declared, it would be very expensive and very bloody, with Israel likely to be the first casualty. "Even without Israeli involvement, the results could well destabilize Arab regimes in the region," Scowcroft warned.

Richard Perle, contacted in France by the *New York Times,* arrogantly denounced Scowcroft's arguments as misguided and naive.

'I'm Scared to Death . . .'

While Scowcroft diplomatically avoided directly naming the Perle-Wolfowitz cabal, former Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger displayed no such reticence in an appear-

LaRouche supporters in Seattle organize for infrastructure development, such as maglev train networks, instead of war.

When he was asked if Brent Scowcroft's views reflect those of President Bush's father—a matter of great speculation in the news media—Eagleburger answered: "I heard yesterday somebody saying that they thought this was the former President Bush putting Brent up to this. I don't believe that. I believe this was Scowcroft on his own."

Others have reported that there is great tension between Bush elder and younger, on the question of Iraq. Columnist Georgie Anne Geyer said she was told that on the question of invading Iraq, "the senior President Bush and the current President Bush could hardly speak about the subject, so different were their opinions."

More Military Opposition

One of the catalysts for this rising tide of opposition, has clearly been the role of the uniformed military, centered in the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who have let be known their own opposition to the war plans of the Perle-Wolfowitz cabal, through a series of calculated leaks to the news media.

ance on "Fox News Sunday" on Aug. 18.

Eagleburger said he doesn't think that militarily overthrowing Saddam Hussein is a legitimate policy at this stage, "unless the President can demonstrate to all of us that Saddam has his finger on a nuclear or biological or chemical trigger, and he's about to use it." And secondly, Eagleburger said, the Bush Administration has not demonstrated that "they have really thought through what it's going to take to overthrow him . . . or what we do when we overthrow him."

"I'm scared to death that the Richard Perles and Wolfowitzes of this world are arguing we can do it in a cakewalk," said Eagleburger, "when I think it will take some hundreds of thousands of troops, at least, to be sure that we can do it correctly, and we haven't seen any reserves called up." And he ridiculed Perle and Wolfowitz for claiming that "we've got all of these wonderful insurgents out here who will be able to govern immediately after we succeed."

Host Tony Snow then challenged Eagleburger, saying "this is the second time you've mentioned Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz," asking, "Do you think they're naive?"

"No, I don't think they're naive," Eagleburger answered. "I must tell you I think they're devious," noting that they have been committed to getting rid of Saddam Hussein for years, "because they think we should have done it the first time around," and that "they have convinced themselves that it would be done on the cheap," by using the anti-Saddam Iraqis. "I am scared to death that they are going to convince the President that they can do this, overthrow Saddam on the cheap, and we'll find ourselves in the middle of a swamp, because we didn't plan to do it in the right way."

General Norman Schwarzkopf, who led the U.S. attack on Iraq in 1991, went on NBC's "Meet the Press" on Aug. 18, to warn against those who claim that an invasion of Iraq will be easy. Schwarzkopf said that the Iraqi military has 400,000 active duty people, of which maybe 300,000 can be discounted, "but you can't discount the 100,000 Republican Guard and Palace Guard . . . a good military force . . . they have a lot of good equipment behind them."

"It's not going to be an easy battle," Schwarzkopf said, adding that "I think it would be much more effective if we didn't have to do it alone," citing the need for bases, including port facilities and air field facilities. A few days later, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. James Jones gave an interview to the *Washington Times* in which he warned that the so-called "Afghanistan model" does not apply to Iraq. Jones states that would be foolish to think that the Special Forces methods that were successful in Afghanistan, would necessarily be successful in Iraq. In contrast to what happened in Afghanistan, the U.S. military "would face a much tougher foe," in Iraq. "The defense of a homeland is hard stuff," Jones said, "because they're not going to go anywhere."

Changing the Presidency

EIR has been advised by well-placed intelligence sources, that whatever the level of publicly voiced opposition to the Iraq war plans, there is far, far more of it behind the scenes. Scowcroft's public statements are only the tip of a much

greater ferment within Republican ranks, one source said. One source said that top circles in both the Republican and Democratic Parties are stunned at what he called "the impeccable timing" of Lyndon LaRouche's launching of his campaign to expose and discredit McCain and Lieberman; LaRouche's efforts have had an enormous impact in creating the climate in which others have been able to speak out against the warhawks.

Lyndon LaRouche himself forecast, when he launched his campaign to destroy the influence of Lieberman and McCain, that ripple effects would be felt in the Republican as well as the Democratic Party.

In his 5-million-circulation "The Electable LaRouche" leaflet, LaRouche wrote that two urgent steps must immediately be taken: to shut down the political blackmail being exerted by the McCain-Lieberman cabal, and, secondly, to build a new bipartisan political infrastructure around the Presidency, which gives the President new policy-options.

This is what is now in the process of taking place.

Don't Attack Saddam

by Brent Scowcroft

The following article is reprinted here with the permission of the author. The op-ed, circulated by the Forum for International Policy beginning Aug. 18, has become a focus for a long-overdue national and international policy discussion about the war on Iraq. Mr. Scowcroft, National Security Adviser under Presidents Gerald Ford and George H.W. Bush, is founder and president of the Forum for International Policy.

Our nation is presently engaged in a debate about whether to launch a war against Iraq. Leaks of various strategies for an attack on Iraq appear with regularity. The Bush administration vows regime change, but states that no decision has been made whether, much less when, to launch an invasion.

It is beyond dispute that Saddam Hussein is a menace. He terrorizes and brutalizes his own people. He has launched war on two of his neighbors. He devotes enormous effort to rebuilding his military forces and equipping them with weapons of mass destruction. We will all be better off when he is gone.

Think Carefully

That said, we need to think through this issue very carefully. We need to analyze the relationship between Iraq and our other pressing priorities—notably the war on terrorism—as well as the best strategy and tactics available were we to move to change the regime in Baghdad.

Saddam's strategic objective appears to be to dominate the Persian Gulf, to control oil from the region, or both.

That clearly poses a real threat to key U.S. interests. But there is scant evidence to tie Saddam to terrorist organizations, and even less to the Sept. 11 attacks. Indeed, Saddam's goals have little in common with the terrorists who threaten us, and there is little incentive for him to make common cause with them.

He is unlikely to risk his investment in weapons of mass destruction, much less his country, by handing such weapons to terrorists who would use them for their own purposes and leave Baghdad as the return address. Threatening to use these weapons for blackmail—much less their actual use—would open him and his entire regime to a devastating response by the United States. While Saddam is thoroughly evil, he is above all a power-hungry survivor.

Saddam is a familiar dictatorial aggressor, with traditional goals for his aggression. There is little evidence to indicate that the United States itself is an object of his aggression. Rather, Saddam's problem with the United States appears to be that we stand in the way of his ambitions. He seeks weapons of mass destruction not to arm terrorists, but to deter us from intervening to block his aggressive designs.

Given Saddam's aggressive regional ambitions, as well as his ruthlessness and unpredictability, it may at some point be wise to remove him from power. Whether and when that point should come ought to depend on overall U.S. national security priorities. Our pre-eminent security priority—underscored repeatedly by the president—is the war on terrorism. An attack on Iraq at this time would seriously jeopardize, if not destroy, the global counterterrorist campaign we have undertaken.

The United States could certainly defeat the Iraqi military and destroy Saddam's regime. But it would not be a cakewalk. On the contrary, it undoubtedly would be very expensive—with serious consequences for the U.S. and global economy—and could as well be bloody. In fact, Saddam would be likely to conclude he had nothing left to lose, leading him to unleash whatever weapons of mass destruction he possesses.

Israel would have to expect to be the first casualty, as in 1991, when Saddam sought to bring Israel into the Gulf conflict. This time, using weapons of mass destruction, he might succeed, provoking Israel to respond, perhaps with nuclear weapons, unleashing an Armageddon in the Middle East.

Finally, if we are to achieve our strategic objectives in Iraq, a military campaign very likely would have to be followed by a large-scale, long-term military occupation.

But the central point is that any campaign against Iraq, whatever the strategy, cost and risks, is certain to divert us for some indefinite period from our war on terrorism. Worse, there is a virtual consensus in the world against an attack on Iraq at this time. So long as that sentiment persists, it would