

Establishment Figures Revolt Against Neo-Cons

We reprint here some of the recent public rumblings of military figures and Republicans against the policies of the Bush Administration.

Gen. Brent Scowcroft (USAF-ret.), *Welt am Sonntag*, Nov. 14

The German weekly published a report on the speech of former National Security Advisor Scowcroft, at the Nov. 13 forum sponsored by the newspaper on “Bundeswehr und Gesellschaft” (the German Army and Society). It has been retranslated here from the German.

“... Sept. 11 was a sudden awakening for us. We knew that the world looked completely different. This was a deep shock. . . . For the first time, a conflict was brought into our home. No one should underestimate the consequences of this experience—they are reflected in part in the most recent Presidential election. . . .

“Shortly thereafter, the U.S. government made the first big mistake. Europe offered its military assistance in the Afghanistan war, but we thanked them and refused it. . . . That was the beginning of the transatlantic crisis. It sharpened increasingly as, in consequence of the terror attacks, the traditionalists among American politicians and military men lost influence. . . . Suddenly the transformationalists set the tone. They argued that through the terror attacks a new, far more dangerous world had arisen, which left no time for traditional procedures.

“... The slogan was: just act first, and later the world will surely learn that the action was right. The holders of this view were also convinced that the solution to the problems of terrorism was to change the Near East, by building democracies there.

“Thus, beginning with Iraq, an entire focus of crisis would be cleaned out. Our current experiences have naturally shaken this conception, but it has not yet been destroyed. . . .”

James Baker III on “The Larry King Show,” Nov. 11

The former Secretary of State and a central figure in the circles around former President George H.W. Bush, Baker stated his view of a sane way to proceed in the Middle East:

“There is now in an Israeli—in an Israeli prison a man named Marwan Barghouti, who is one of the young guard of Palestinians. And if the Palestinians are going to make this

work against the really hard-line elements, the Islamists and some of the people of Hamas, they’re going to have to have a coalition of the young guard and the old guard. And it would be really a very positive step in the right direction if Israel would release Marwan Barghouti so that he could participate in bringing about this transition.”

Gen. Merrill “Tony” McPeak (USAF-ret.), *Rolling Stone*, Nov. 3

General McPeak, Air Force Chief of Staff (1990-94), said in an interview: “The people in control in the Pentagon and the White House live in a fantasy world. . . . I blame Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and the people behind him—Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz and Undersecretary Douglas Feith. The Vice President himself should probably be included; certainly his wife. These so-called neo-cons: These people have no real experience in life. They are utopian thinkers . . . and they have the courage of their convictions, so it makes them doubly dangerous.”

Gen. Wesley Clark, *Washington Post*, Nov. 14

General Clark writes that the Fallujah operation is “a battlefield success on the road to strategic failure.” We have troops in Fallujah “because of a political failure,” Clark says. An election is necessary, “but you can’t bomb people into the polling booths.”

Anthony Cordesman, *New York Times*, Nov. 14

Cordesman, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, ridiculed the Fallujah campaign. “How much money and aid effort does it really take to jump-start an economy, rather than provide welfare for Fallujah?”

Laurence Eagleburger, CNN.com, “Interview with Paula Zahn,” Nov. 15

The former Secretary of State under George H.W. Bush and a spokesman for the Republican inner-circle opposition to the neo-cons, Eagleburger stated, with reference to the nomination of Condoleezza Rice as Secretary of State: “I do not believe that you should have in the Secretary of State someone who has spent their last four years in the White House next to the President. . . . I do believe you need tension between the State Department, the Defense Department, and the National Security Council.”

Nicholas D. Kristof, “The Bush Revolution,” *New York Times*, Nov. 17

Kristof, another member of the Republican grouping opposed to the neo-cons, wrote: “Rice was run over so many times by Mr. Cheney in the first term, that she’ll be docile at State. . . . Condoleezza Rice is smart, diligent, and honest, but she has zero record of pushing back. And that’s what Mr. Bush needs—somebody besides Laura, who will tell him when he’s about to do something stupid.”