

Clinton's enemies poised for renewed strikes against Iraq

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Whether British and American planes will resume their strikes against Iraq at the end of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan, will depend on whether Vice President Al Gore's political coup d'état attempt against the U.S. Presidency will be stopped. As has become increasingly clear in the first two weeks of January, the foreign policy disasters being launched almost daily out of Washington—provocations against Russia, China, Iran, North Korea, to name but a few—are the products of the Principals Committee, a tightly knit group of “foreign policy advisers” around President Clinton: Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Assistant Secretary of State for the Near East Martin Indyk, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Henry Shelton, Defense Secretary William Cohen, National Security Adviser Sandy Berger, and, leader of the pack, Gore. If President Clinton were freed from the pressures of the ongoing coup attempt in the Senate, he could potentially act to reverse the military aggression, as he did last November. If the coup proceeds, and war ensues, it will spell catastrophe for the United States and the world, as laid out by Lyndon LaRouche, in “Why General Shelton Must Retire Now” (*EIR*, Jan. 15).

As Ramadan was nearing its conclusion on Jan. 15, the political and military situation in the region looked as ambiguous as did developments on the international diplomatic plane. On the one hand, military actions continued to escalate toward the scenario *EIR* outlined last week, featuring massive air attacks combined with special forces operations on the ground. On the other, regional forces, both among Arab governments and the so-called Iraqi opposition, began to manifest their nervousness, that such a U.K.-U.S. mission which they were being asked to support passively, could involve them as well—as sacrificial lambs. And, despite continuing coordination between London and Washington, on escalating toward

war, a proposal presented by France for a different approach to the Iraqi crisis, has garnered the support of not only UN Security Council permanent members Russia and China, but reportedly also Germany, Egypt, and others.

The Iraqi leadership opted for a hard line as soon as the threat of renewed strikes was made explicit. Baghdad declared that it would no longer respect the no-fly zones, and started active military engagement with the American and British aircraft, escalating to up to three incidents per day. The Iraqi leadership had apparently concluded that it had nothing to lose and everything to gain from an intransigent stance: Knowing that the unilateral military action in December by London and Washington had shattered the UN, and that the revelations of espionage in favor of Israel, Great Britain, and the United States carried out by the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) had irrevocably discredited that agency, Baghdad calculated that further military conflict would only exacerbate the split.

U.K.-U.S. military aims

The military aim of the air skirmishes, from the U.K.-U.S. side, is evident. First, they intend to provoke Iraqi responses, until one aircraft is shot down, thus providing a classic *casus belli*. Second, consistent strikes against Iraqi radar sites aim at totally crippling Iraq's ability to defend against the kind of massive air offensive which is planned.

Forces in the region appear to have grasped the danger inherent in the strategy which General Shelton et al. have on the drawing boards, a danger which LaRouche spelled out in his recent document. Thus, the series of frenetic diplomatic meetings among particularly the Gulf states. On Jan. 13, a meeting was held in Cairo of the foreign ministers from Saudi Arabia, Oman, Yemen, Syria, and Egypt to map out a com-

Al Gore, Bush, and the Zionist war lobby

In January 1991, Sen. Al Gore, Jr. (D-Tenn.) led the Democratic Party Confederate faction into wholesale support for George Bush's Desert Storm, a genocidal war against the Iraqi population.

Months after the shooting stopped, on Sept. 19, 1991, Gore, in statements on the Senate floor, pressured President Bush to send Iraq back to the Dark Ages. Gore, who claimed to have undergone a "moral crisis" when he shifted his vote to support Bush's war, now chastised Bush for not having followed the advice of Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf (now "Sir" Norman Schwarzkopf) to go into Baghdad and eliminate Saddam Hussein. Gore called for the initiation of a war crimes tribunal against Saddam, and demanded sanctions against Iraq, in order to isolate it.

The environmentalist-minded Gore, who was then nearing completion of his book *Earth in the Balance*, a green *Mein Kampf* which warns against Third World development, also called for blocking Iraq's "access to knowledge and technology."

"In general," said Gore, "the world does not need the contributions of Iraqi space science or of Iraqi work in nuclear physics—practical or applied. The United States should work to completely block future Iraqi activity of any kind in these areas, to the extent they are dependent upon equipment, services, or training—including university training—available from any country with advanced capabilities." Gore claims that "there is no way to think about certain branches of science and engineering in Iraq except as tap roots for programs aimed at programs of

mass destruction."

In 1991, Leon Fuerth, Gore's longtime legislative assistant, and now his National Security Adviser, spoke openly about his, and Gore's, hatred of technology transfer to the Third World. With the abrupt crudeness that Fuerth is known for, he told a reporter, "The dual-use question is all too easily used as a cover for countries who want to obtain weapons technology. I don't give a damn if it hurts them economically."

In Desert Fox, the latest round of actions intended to crush Iraq launched on Dec. 19, Fuerth and Gore took over the critical meetings of the policymaking "Principals Committee" while President Clinton was in Israel, and were able to beat back any opposition to their plans to bomb Iraq. According to well-placed Washington sources, Fuerth and other longtime Gore advisers were determined not to let Clinton block an attack on Iraq as the President had done when he called off the bombings on Nov. 13, 1998.

Gore is committed to "going all the way," and will settle for nothing less than overthrowing Saddam Hussein and blackballing the nation of Iraq. One of Gore's closest cronies in this plan is Martin Peretz, a right-wing Zionist and publisher of the *New Republic* magazine, who lambasted Clinton for stopping the Desert Fox bombings after only 70 hours. Peretz, whom Gore acknowledges is his "mentor," is part of the "Committee for Security," which was initiated by two former Reagan administration officials, Richard Perle and Paul Wolfowitz, in February 1998. The committee was set up to pressure Clinton to go to war against Iraq, and to aim for "total surrender" and overthrow of the regime.

This is the policy being foisted on Clinton, at the time that this same crowd is pushing "Gore for President."

—Michele Steinberg

mon stance for the Arab ministerial meeting scheduled for Jan. 24. At that meeting, which was originally tasked to prepare an Arab summit on the Iraq crisis, a resolution prepared by Saudi Arabia is to be discussed, proposing lifting the UN sanctions on Iraq, while maintaining controls over Iraq's acquisition of military equipment. Another meeting, this time of the Gulf Cooperation Council members, was scheduled to take place the following day.

At the same time, representatives of the "protected peoples" in the U.K.-U.S. juggernaut have begun to voice their fears of what lies ahead. Over the Jan. 10-11 weekend, the leaders of the two Kurdish groups in northern Iraq, Massoud Barzani (Democratic Party of Kurdistan) and Jalal Talabani (Patriotic Union of Kurdistan), met and reportedly decided to ignore political differences, in light of the impending crisis.

At the same time, Talabani's PUK called for extending the no-fly zone which is supposed to protect them. "The international community should enhance Iraqi Kurdistan's security by extending the no-fly zone to cover the 40% of Iraqi Kurdish territory not presently patrolled," said a statement of the PUK distributed to wire services on Jan. 12. The PUK is based in Sulmaniyah, which is south of the current no-fly zone, which ends at the 36th parallel. Such a demand reflects fears of the consequences of the insane Shelton strategy of setting up a puppet regime in Iraq.

One of the leaders of the group slated to hoist the flag of the puppet regime, expressed similar fears, if not panic at the Shelton strategy. A representative of the so-called Supreme Council of the Iraqi Opposition, based in London, told a journalist on Jan. 14 that his group is strictly opposed

to a "limited" operation in Iraq, such as taking positions in Basra, or Baghdad. Rather, he said, the group is pushing for a prohibition against any deployment by Iraq of heavy military equipment, such as tanks or artillery, in the entire southern and western parts of the country. The objective of this group, whose leader Mohammad Bakr al Hakim recently conferred with the Kuwait leadership, is to liberate "the whole of Iraq."

To round out the regional picture, the new Turkish Prime Minister, Bulent Ecevit, announced on Jan. 12 that he would not allow Turkish air bases to be used for sustained strikes against Iraq. In remarks to NTV television, Ecevit said, "I am worried that air raids will increase after the end of Ramadan." He added that although he hoped Iraq would "be more in accordance with the world, I also hope that the United States will produce peaceful solutions." Ecevit referred to claims that a U.S. plane had fired on an Iraqi missile site, because it was about to be attacked, by saying, "This is the excuse they are using."

The French proposal

In this context, the French Ambassador to the UN, Alain Dejammet, presented a new proposal to the UN Security Council on Jan. 12, at a closed-door meeting of the Permanent Five members (the United States, France, Russia, China, and

Britain). The proposal calls for a different kind of monitoring system to be introduced, and for a partial lifting of the embargo. French Foreign Minister Hubert Védrine said the proposal had been discussed in Moscow with his counterpart, Igor Ivanov. Védrine commented cryptically, "There are Russian ideas, there are French ideas, they are close and complementary, but there is not a single procedure." Nonetheless, Russia appears to support the proposal. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan greeted the idea favorably, seeing in it a means of stitching together the Security Council, which had been torn to shreds by the December raid. Regional sources say that Germany and ten other members of the Security Council would also back it, during a larger meeting on Jan. 15.

The U.K. was expected to oppose the proposal, while U.S. State Department spokesman Jamie Rubin did not reject it out of hand.

The gist of the French proposal, is that the chapter of inspections must be closed. It states that "the recent bombings may have weakened the Iraqi military potential but they have also created a new situation which renders further investigations on the past programs almost impossible." This acknowledges the fact, already accepted by all but the British and UNSCOM mission head Richard Butler, that the UNSCOM espionage ring no longer exists. The French proposal suggests that the oil embargo be lifted, and that a different kind of monitoring be introduced, which would be "preventive" rather than "retrospective," i.e., would prevent Iraq from using oil revenues to purchase weapons deemed illegal, but close the chapter on the past. The embargo itself is disparaged in the French document, as something which "has become a wrong tool to achieve the goals of the Security Council. It needs to be lifted." Finally, the French paper calls for a new entity to do the monitoring, one which would be an independent, "renewed control commission," in place of UNSCOM. Also, oil revenues would not flow through the escrow accounts, as they do under the oil-for-food program, but would go directly to Iraq.

According to the Jan. 14 *Jordan Times*, the Iraqi response was not negative. Following a meeting of the leadership with Saddam Hussein, an Iraqi spokesman said, "Iraq sees a need for a balanced dialogue based on good intentions under the umbrella of the Arab Nation . . . to find practical solutions to the situations." The spokesman also said, "If solutions are desired in a serious manner that serve the Arab Nation's interest, they should be based on pan-Arab security"—a reference to ongoing Arab diplomatic maneuvers.

The greatest merit of the French proposal lies in the fact that it has been made, and made publicly. It could be a life-saver for the U.S. administration to grab, and extricate itself from the impending disaster. Serious positive motion toward a diplomatic solution to the crisis by the Clinton administration, would expose the British and their man in Washington, Al Gore, as the war-mongers behind the current drive toward conflagration.

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