

There Are No Rogue States, Not Even Iraq

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

In the wake of the historic summit between North and South Korea, the U.S. State Department had to perform some fancy footwork, in an effort to extricate itself from an uncomfortable dilemma. If North Korea, officially categorized as a “rogue state” and included on the State Department’s list of seven states allegedly supporting terrorism, is engaged in a process of reconciliation with South Korea, on the road to reunification, then how can the United States continue to treat the government of Kim Jong-il as an enemy?

A rather discomfitted Madeleine Albright, was tasked to issue the new formulation, designed to solve the dilemma. Speaking on a radio show, June 20, the U.S. Secretary of State announced that there would no longer be a category of “rogue states” in the State Department’s official vocabulary, as it had outlived its purpose. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher explained that same day, that the new term would be “states of concern,” which term is “a better description, or a different description, because a single description, one size fits all, doesn’t really fit anymore.” Boucher pointed to signs of “evolution” on the part of the other six “rogue states,” saying that Libya had cooperated on the Lockerbie trial, Iran had experienced greater democracy, and so on. One could add, that relations are improving with Sudan, that the embargo against Cuba is being loosened, and, of course, that Syria has become a partner in the stalled peace process.

That leaves only one alleged “rogue state” left: Iraq. Or rather, if the entire category has been eliminated through this swift act of Orwellian Newspeak, and Iraq has become a “state of concern,” how can the U.S. administration continue to justify the genocidal sanctions and undeclared war against that

nation? Are we to understand aerial bombardments of civilians, and systematic starvation of an entire population, as the appropriate expressions of our “concern”?

Iraq as a Theater for War Games

The *National Journal* published an article on June 10, by James Kitfield, on the undeclared war against Iraq. In candid and cynical terms, the author documented how the United States (and U.K.) have been conducting a war against Iraq for almost nine years, with their Operation Southern Watch and Operation Northern Watch. These names identify the military aerial bombardments conducted in the two geographical areas of the country, on the pretext that Iraq is challenging the “no-fly zones,” established in 1991 and 1993, allegedly to protect the Kurdish and Shi’ite populations from the Baghdad government. Increasingly, since December 1998, when President Clinton ordered a sustained bombardment, on grounds that Baghdad had refused to collaborate with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspections team, British and American planes, flying from bases in Turkey and Saudi Arabia, have been conducting raids several times per week. At that same time, Iraq began to challenge the “no-fly zone” regime, and therefore, the flights.

“Indeed, exchanges of fire between Iraqi air defense units and U.S. and allied aircraft have become so routine that they rarely even rate mention in the papers. This is a conflict,” writes Kitfield, “that has gone on for nine years now, yet is all but unknown to most Americans.”

The mission is “surreal,” said one Air Force officer quoted, because the American people do not know what it

is all about. What then, is it all about?

In a nutshell, it is about coordination, maneuvers, regional deployment, shooting practice, and testing weapons.

The amount of sorties is significant: Since 1998, when the pace of the operation picked up, Iraq was accused of having made 470 “hostile provocations” in the south, and Iraqi aircraft allegedly violated the southern no-fly zone over 150 times in the same period. “Meanwhile, U.S. and allied pilots have flown *more than 175,000 sorties* supporting Southern Watch, more flights than were flown during the entire Korean War. That total omits all the missions of Northern Watch, which patrols northern Iraq and is run from bases in Turkey by the U.S. European Command” (emphasis added).

Since 1998, these allied forces “have dropped roughly 1,200 tons of munitions of various types on Iraqi air defense sites—at a cost of about \$64.7 million. The combined Southern and Northern Watch operations, meanwhile, cost an estimated \$1.1 billion annually.”

Kitfield lays out quite objectively, what the “benefits” of the war are. Among the “beneficial” effects cited by military officers, are the following: First, the Air Force reorganized what was formerly a “temporary” mission, into 10 Air Expeditionary Forces, capable of deploying regularly for extended periods. At any time, “two of the Air Force’s expeditionary groups are deployed abroad—usually one to Iraq and the other to the Balkans—for 90 days each.” This has helped “inject . . . predictability and cohesion into Operation Southern Watch.”

“They come as a team now,” boasts Gen. Anthony Zinni, commander of the U.S. Central Command, who is on top of the operations.

Other benefits listed by the author include: “Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve squadrons are supplying 10% of the expeditionary forces, which has actually helped reserve commanders persuade Congress to pay for equipment upgrades and for modernization of their airplanes.”

Furthermore, “The unique requirements of the mission have also allowed the Pentagon to use some of the very latest-model bombs and missiles over Iraq in what amounts to *real-world target practice*” (emphasis added).

“Another benefit is that the live-fire nature of Southern Watch missions has resulted in one of the most combat-seasoned pilot forces of any peacetime period.” Kitfield quotes Brig. Gen. Hugh Cameron, commander of the U.S. Central Command Air Forces, saying, “You know, for an extended period after Vietnam, there were a lot of airmen who never even had the opportunity to drop a live bomb. Starting with Desert Storm and working for nearly a decade on Southern Watch, we now have a lot of combat veterans who have been shot at, and who have put real ordnance on a real target during real-world missions. There are tremendous benefits associated with that experience,” Cameron said.

The Human Costs of the ‘Beneficial’ War

Just days after Kitfield’s article appeared, a major exposé was published in the *Washington Post*, by Edward Cody, which painted the picture of the undeclared war, as seen from the ground. Cody visited a dozen of the sites targeted in the U.S.-U.K. air strikes, and told a gruesome story, entitled “Carnage Is Routine Beneath Iraqi ‘No-Fly’ Zones.” Cody corroborated reports by Iraqi officials, on the vast extent of casualties caused by the aerial bombardments.

Among the reports he cites, is one by Iraqi air defense spokesman Lt. Gen. Yassin Jassem, who said that 300 Iraqis had been killed and 800 wounded by the strikes over the past 18 months. Of those killed, 200 were civilians, he estimated. Cody writes, “The Iraq death toll has been substantiated in part by a UN survey that examined some incidents independently and accepted Iraqi reports on others.”

The Iraqis have said that there have been 21,600 penetrations of Iraqi air space by U.S. and U.K. planes since December 1998, when the Iraqis decided to challenge the flights. Cody reports that the Pentagon says there have been more than 280,000 sorties since the “no-fly” zones were imposed almost ten years ago—a figure higher than the one cited by Kitfield.

The correspondent visited the sites of the strikes, and saw that they were either in towns and villages, or in open fields, with civilians living nearby, “with no signs of any military target present or having been present near the sheep and the boys who tend them in scenes reminiscent of the Bible.”

Cody reports that the casualties, occurring now at the rate of one civilian every three days, “has prompted France to freeze participation in enforcing the no-fly zones,” and has “generated growing protests from Russia and has left neighboring Saudi Arabia and Turkey uneasy about continuing to provide air bases” for the strikes.

The article chronicles in excruciating detail, how civilians—women and children—have been massacred by the strikes. It relates the story of an attack on May 12, 1999, in a field at Abu Auani, near Mosul in the north, which killed 19 and wounded 46. After an initial missile attack, men ran to the scene to carry off the dead and wounded, and, as people gathered, another missile came down, hitting more. This “incident,” is one of the few which the U.S. acknowledged to be an “error.”

The Multiple Facets of Genocide

There is no exaggeration in the reports cited. Nor is there any exaggeration in the growing number of reports issued by humanitarian organizations, by UNICEF, and by fact-finding teams who have visited Iraq, on the genocidal effects of the ongoing sanctions regime, now entering its tenth year. The Iraqi civilian population is undernourished, sick, and prevented from having access to food and medicine it requires for survival.

Pro-sanctions advocates will respond, that Iraq has access to such goods, through the UN's oil-for-food program, whereby the country is allowed to sell a limited amount of oil, and use the revenues to purchase such items. In truth, however, the money goes first to reparations payments to Kuwait, then to payment for the UN's own operations, and only then, to Iraq.

As reported in the London *Guardian* on June 15, the reparations are bleeding the country's finances dry. Iraq has paid \$7 billion so far, but the UN Compensation Commission in Geneva, says that there are further claims amounting to \$276 billion, the first of which is \$21.5 claimed by Kuwait. Kuwait has already been given \$2.9 billion, for the destruction of property, and putting out fires from the war. It is now seeking payment, for lost revenues, and oil spilled or destroyed during the war.

Once this amount has been paid, the account says, Iraq will be asked to pay interest on delayed compensation since 1990. This, calculated at 3% per year, would add up to a further \$320 billion, which means Iraq would be still be paying Kuwait reparations into the year 2125.

The report sheds further light on the policy that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker III articulated to Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, back in 1991 in Geneva, when he told him, the West would bomb Iraq back into the Stone Age. He neglected to explicitly say, that the UN regime, of sanctions and reparations, would serve to keep the country in the Stone Age.

The 'Zinni Option'

What this adds up to, is a picture of torture inflicted on an entire population and nation, which defies all rationality and morality. It is no wonder that, as the truth about Iraq—or part of it—has come out, some protest has been heard. First, in the international arena, three permanent members of the UN Security Council, France, Russia, and China, have voiced objections to the sanctions regime, and have balked at endorsing a resolution, presented by the British, which would extend the regime under new terms. What the British proposed, is that the oil-for-food program be expanded, on condition that Iraq accept a new form of UN inspection team. This, it is known, the Iraqi government refuses, demanding, instead, that the sanctions be lifted immediately.

Richard Butler, the former head of UNSCOM, who was caught spying on Iraq, and passing information to several intelligence services, including the British, the Israeli, and the American, has been deployed by the Anglo-Americans, to campaign for such a change in the sanctions regime. Appearing on British Broadcasting Corp. early in June, and then on June 15 on a *Washington Post* webcast, Butler said that the sanctions have failed in their stated purpose, and have become a "bankrupt and harmful instrument." Asked by the webcast host, the New York Council on Foreign Relations, what the next U.S. administration should do, Butler said, it should seek

a change in the regime in Iraq, but not by outside interference. Rather, he proposed what has become known as the "Zinni option," to change the regime by "the intervention of Allah—by natural causes—or by a successful internal political action run by Iraqis." General Zinni has argued, that a military coup organized from within the Iraqi military, would be the only viable option for violently overthrowing Saddam Hussein's government.

Furthermore, he said, the United States should propose to the other members of the Security Council, to do something to save the authority of that body, which has been undermined by the lack of on-the-ground arms control or monitoring in Iraq. He proposed, that the new climate created by the debate over the proposed U.S. national missile defense, be exploited to enact a new policy toward Iraq: agree to lift the sanctions, "provided that Iraq would accept into its territory reentry of arms control monitors." This "shift in U.S. policy," he said, would also help address the problem of the opposition to current U.S. policy, by Russia, China, and France. These countries, Butler said, "do have a problem with there only being one superpower." By lifting the sanctions on these conditions, one could get back into Iraq, do so in a way acceptable to the American public, and also, "deal with some of the anxiety that is felt, especially by Russia, France, and China, about a world dominated by one superpower, by including them in this solution, by it being a collegial solution."

Butler's proposal is commendable for its transparency. In effect, he admits that he—or rather the Anglo-American policy establishment which controls him—fears a political break, on the part of Russia, China, and/or France, which could occur in the context of the new world economic order, which is emerging in Asia and elsewhere. And, they fear it may concretize around Iraq, a country with which all three powers seek economic cooperation.

As for the ostensible "front-runners" in the U.S. Presidential campaign, both Al Gore and George W. Bush have signed on to the Zinni option. Of the candidates for nomination, Lyndon LaRouche is the only one with a moral, rational policy on Iraq, and for this reason, is viewed in the Arab world as the only hope for America. His ideas have been being debated in the Arabic press for months, most recently, in an interview with the London-based daily *Al-Arab International* (see below).

Gore, who has the distinction of having been the most vociferous advocate of war in the Senate back in 1991, has already lined up a meeting with the Iraqi National Congress (INC), a motley collection of "opposition" groups, used as the political cover for operations aimed at orchestrating a military coup. Bush, whose father joined up with Margaret Thatcher to start the endless war against Iraq, has made known his intention also to meet with the INC. So, Butler and his backers should be content, that neither of these two Presidential hopefuls would get out of line. Both could be counted upon to agree to the Butler proposal, to offer the carrot of

lifting sanctions, while demanding with a big stick that Iraq accept a new UN inspections presence, and, to use Iraq's predictable rejection, as a *casus belli*, to keep the undeclared war going. Both are on the record, in favor of changing the Iraqi government.

Lift the Sanctions

However, at the same time, inside the United States, there has been a steady, albeit low-volume, drumbeat in favor of lifting the sanctions. This year, an election year, has witnessed increased activity on the part of Arab-American organizations, to put pressure on their elected representatives, to move against sanctions. A group of 70 Congressmen signed a petition to President Clinton in February urging a policy review toward Iraq. Some of the Congressmen have even sent their aides on a fact-finding trip to Iraq, an unprecedented move.

And now, with the redefinition of "rogue states," pressure is building for a wholesale review of U.S. military policy more broadly — pivoted on the debate around Clinton's proposed National Missile Defense and Theater Missile Defense. If North Korea is making peace with South Korea, then why deploy a defensive system against its presumed missiles? The question has been raised, and some are responding with the truth, admitting that North Korea has always been a code name for the real perceived enemy in Asia, the People's Republic of China, but one can not say so.

Furthermore, it is U.S. military policy, to be able to fight two major theater wars simultaneously, the two theaters being Asia and the Middle East. If the ostensible threat disappears, what then?

In Asia, following the Inter-Korean Summit (see "Inter-Korean Summit: 'Open the Roads, Re-Link the Rails!'" *EIR*, June 23, 2000), this question is being placed on the table quite openly. In the case of Iraq, it is not being posed in that form, but it should be. When one considers the nature of the crime being perpetrated against Iraq and its people, one asks, "Why?" Iraq clearly represents no military threat to the United States; its economy and productive labor force have been strangled by the embargo, and claims of its being close to developing a nuclear capacity are fraudulent, as former inspectors have testified.

The only reason for maintaining de facto a "rogue state" status for Iraq, is that the Anglo-American policy elite is in a terminal, systemic crisis, and is *seeking war*. The dinosaur is dying, and is thrashing and kicking as it goes. Iraq — and also Iran — are the designated targets in this war scenario, not because they represent military threats, but inclusively, because they constitute vital components in the Eurasian Land-Bridge infrastructure project, to bring Asia and Europe into an integrated economic process. It was Iraq's potential to become an industrialized powerhouse, generating such economic growth and cooperation throughout the region, that made it a prime target ten years ago.

The Persian Gulf is a region where, thanks to Desert

Storm, the Anglo-Americans have a war machine essentially in place. As Kitfield's article documents, they have been maintaining war readiness, by continuing virtually uninterrupted live-fire maneuvers in the region, using Iraq as the battleground.

Take away the bogeyman Iraq, and you must face the perspective of dismantling the naval and troop presence in the Persian Gulf, withdrawing the occupying forces from Saudi Arabia, and the bases in Kuwait and Turkey. This is precisely what many governments in the region, led by Iran, are demanding: that all foreign military leave the area, and allow for sovereign states to arrange for their regional security. That option, of course, is by definition unacceptable to the Anglo-Americans.

It may be unacceptable, but, as the unfortunate Mr. Butler was quick to note, there is a growing movement of nations that object to the idea of there being one superpower, and that are coming together, in regional groupings, to set up regional monetary, financial, and trade arrangements which could defend them from the systemic collapse of the globalized current regime, and lay the basis for an utterly new, economic world order. Theirs is a perspective for peace among nations, based on such mutually beneficial economic cooperation, a perspective in which the very notion of "rogue state" is abhorred.

This, a morally superior concept, is destined to prevail.

The Way Out of The Crisis



A 90-minute video of highlights from *EIR*'s April 21, 1999 seminar in Bonn, Germany.

Lyndon LaRouche was the keynote speaker, in a dialogue with distinguished international panelists: **Wilhelm Hankel**, professor of economics and a former banker from Germany; **Stanislav Menshikov**, a Russian economist and journalist; Schiller Institute founder **Helga Zepp-LaRouche** from Germany; **Devendra Kaushik**, professor of Central Asian Studies from India; **Qian Jing**, international affairs analyst from China; **Natalya Vitrenko**, economist and parliamentarian from Ukraine.



Order number EIE-99-010.
\$30 postpaid.
EIR News Service
 P.O. Box 17390
 Washington, D.C. 20041-0390
 To order, call
1-888-EIR-3258 (toll-free).
 We accept Visa and MasterCard.