

War on Iraq Already Begun, Can Still Be Stopped

by Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

The early October war moves of the U.S. and British governments, against strong internal and international opposition and amid economic collapse, point to the necessity of stopping a war that has already begun.

Following the announcement by chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix on Oct. 1, that Iraq had okayed UN demands, and inspectors could arrive Oct. 15, the White House went into a “thwart mode,” as State Department spokesman Richard Boucher put it, and concentrated on ramming through resolutions for war powers, in the U.S. Congress, as well as in the United Nations Security Council. While Russia, China, and France signalled satisfaction with the UN-Iraqi accord, Secretary of State Colin Powell informed the world that “Our position is that [Blix] should get new instructions in the form of a resolution.”

From Finland, former President George H.W. Bush threw his weight behind the war, announcing, “I fully support the Iraq policy of my son.”

The war document that came out of White House meetings with members of Congress Oct. 2 (see *Congressional Closeup*), announced from the Rose Garden by George W. Bush, represented a deal between the President, right-wing Republicans, and the war-mongers of the Democratic Leadership Council who have been pressuring Bush for war since Sept. 11, 2001. The attendance at the press conference to release the draft pointed this up: Joe Lieberman (D-Conn.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.); Trent Lott (R-Miss.), Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.), Evan Bayh (D-Ind.), and Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.).

That same day, the proposed UN Security Council resolution being pushed by the United States and Britain was leaked by the *New York Times*, and is a lollapalooza, intended to make the resumption of inspections impossible. The resolution finds Iraq in “material breach” of existing UN Security

Council resolutions. It demands that Iraq provide in 21 days a complete inventory of its entire biological, chemical, nuclear, ballistic missile and related programs, including “any which it claims are for purposes not related to weapons production or material,” *before weapons inspectors can return to Iraq*. A further condition: UN and International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors must be allowed to conduct interviews in Iraq with Iraqis and their families, “without the presence of observers from the Iraqi government,” or to remove the Iraqis from Iraq for the interviews. The resolution demands the “names of all personnel associated with Iraq’s chemical, biological, nuclear and ballistic missile programs and the associated research, development and production facilities.” It would also establish an armed UN security force with the right to declare no-fly/no-drive zones, exclusion zones, ground and air transport corridors “which shall be enforced by UN security forces or by members of the Council.” And of course, it authorizes war if Iraq interferes with any of its conditions or actions.

Can the War Be Stopped?

Lyndon LaRouche on Oct. 2 called the resolution a witting fraud, designed to provoke rejection by Iraq and thus provide sanction to continue the war. With its demand for unfettered access to all Presidential palaces, without prior notification, and the deployment of a military force to back up the inspectors, the resolution’s intent is evidently to create the circumstances where Saddam Hussein can be assassinated. Thus White House spokesman Ari Fleischer’s statement Oct. 1, that “the cost of one bullet” to assassinate Saddam Hussein, would be preferable to costs of a war, was not just flippant arrogance; it conformed perfectly to the spirit of the UN resolution. That resolution also demands the identification of every Iraqi scientist and engineer—a hit list for assassinations

or kidnappings, in the tradition of Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge, who tried to liquidate all well-educated Cambodians.

LaRouche said the resolution, and the minds behind it, are insane. He suggested, that, if Bush pushes this in the UN Security Council, that body should respond by establishing a Sanity Commission to inspect President Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, to determine whether or not they have lost their minds.

In LaRouche's estimation, the war can still be stopped. Resistance is widespread in the United States population and among elected and other local leaders. It is coalescing around the alternative strategic approach launched by LaRouche with his mass circulation of 7 million leaflets and broadsides since July, his demand that war party leader Vice President Cheney resign, and his "Truth in U.S. National Security Policy" counterattack to the White House "pre-emptive war" doctrine in this week's *Feature*. If the U.S. House of Representatives will do nothing, the Senate could wield power to block any resolution giving Bush powers to wage war. Democratic Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia has taken the leadership in this fight, by exposing the role of Defense Secretary Rumsfeld in helping "make a monster," by supplying Iraq with chemical weapons. The offensive opened up by Senator Byrd (a 50-year veteran of the Congress), could contribute to blocking action by that body for war.

War 'No Matter What Saddam Does'

The political battle to halt the war is a race against time, since the military action is under way and being steadily accelerated. LaRouche and *EIR*'s assessments agree with recent estimates issued by two leading military observers, Jacques Isnard of France and Amir Oren of Israel, that the war has already begun. Writing in *Le Monde* Sept. 25, Isnard stressed that the targets of increasingly frequent aerial bombardments by Anglo-American fighter-bombers in the "no-fly" zones, have shifted from Iraqi anti-aircraft positions, to command, control, and communications centers. Isnard noted other significant indications of the military escalation: The expansion of Al-Udeid air base in Qatar and its becoming the location for a command center of the U.S. Central Command; the deployment of additional U.S. and British air, ground, and naval forces in the Persian Gulf region—5,000 in Kuwait, 5,000 in Bahrain, 2,000 in Oman, 2,000 in Turkey—and B-2 bombers at Britain's Diego Garcia base in the Indian Ocean. Sixty-four thousand American soldiers should be in the Gulf by mid-October, wrote Isnard, not counting the personnel (plus planes and helicopters) on board six U.S. aircraft carriers to arrive before year's end. Finally, he cited reports in *Aviation Week & Space Technology* that six U.S. military reconnaissance satellites have been positioned to cover the Middle East region.

In an article in *Ha'aretz* on Sept. 20, Israeli expert Oren stated that future history books will identify Sept. 5, as the "date on which the second Iraq war started." That day, "planes of the Western alliance, which lifted off from Kuwait, at-

tacked a command and control facility of the Iraqi air defense network at H-3." The H-3 site "was the western terminal of the [old] oil pipeline built by the British through Iraq and Jordan to its Mediterranean outlet" in Haifa. The air attack involved "nine American F-15 and three British Tornados," escorted by "dozens of interceptor, control, refueling, rescue and electronic warfare aircraft."

In the 1967 and 1973 Israeli-Arab wars, H-3 was the starting point for Iraqi attacks against Israel, and, in turn, the target of Israeli air attacks. In 1991, the H-3 base was thought to be the place where the Iraqis had chemical warheads, which they did not use. This time, though, when attacked by the United States, Iraq "might try to launch chemical or biological material at enemy targets, both military and civilian." Oren concludes: "Therefore, the bombing of the H-3 base was the first combat operation, and not by chance in the western Iraq sector, of the current campaign—a campaign that will not be called off, no matter what Saddam Hussein does."

On Sept. 30, another expert observer—editor Charles Heyman of the military publication, *Jane's Fighting Armies*—agreed. Heyman told BBC: "History will record that the war against Iraq actually began three weeks ago." Heyman pointed to the important new factor, that the targets of U.S.-U.K. bombardments were now both inside and also outside the no-fly zones.

No Cakewalk

Judging from statements made by Rumsfeld, Cheney, Wolfowitz, and Richard Perle, the Administration must believe it can conduct a "blitzkrieg," and declare early victory. Thus, Perle, for example, in an Oct. 2 interview to the German financial daily *Handelsblatt*—in which he otherwise brutally insulted Germany's Chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, for not supporting an Iraq invasion—said the war would be "targeted, effective, and quick."

Significantly, military experts who have had ample war experience from two countries, Great Britain and Israel, have been voicing their concerns that such "blitzkrieg" fantasies are absurd. Most recently, Israeli military historian Martin van Creveld offered his expert views. Writing in the German daily *Die Welt*, on Sept. 27, van Creveld noted that, unlike 1991, this time neither Iraq's Arab neighbors nor Turkey wants to provide basing rights. A massive aerial war will not succeed alone in ousting Saddam Hussein, van Creveld said; therefore, ground troops will have to be deployed, and airports near Baghdad will have to be taken, to allow for further troops and matériel to be flown in.

The Israeli historian, who reports that he had heard of such war plans in Washington, warned that they could fail. He recalled that German air landings in Holland in 1940 and in Crete in 1941, had heavy casualties, and nearly ended in fiasco. He concluded: "If the actual plan looks like this sketch, the Bush Administration would be well advised to rethink—or to risk a spectacular defeat, like that of the French under comparable conditions in 1954 in Dien Bien Phu."