

with who I did vote for.” An unnamed active-duty senior officer who was also recently in Iraq, added, “I will tell you, in the circles I talk to, the only way to enable or enact change is to change the leadership.”

Col. W. Patrick Lang (USA-ret.), the former Defense Intelligence Officer for the Near East and South Asia, who runs the widely read website *Sic Semper Tyrannis 2006*, recently warned that rumors circulating around Washington about a Bush-Cheney “course correction” on Iraq, Iran, and North Korea are “hoey.” Colonel Lang wrote that Congress has a few options to curb the war party at the White House. They can un-authorize the war powers granted to the President in October 2002, and they can cut off the funds for a continuing Iraq misadventure.

All of these issues are on the table for voters on Nov. 7, and the institution of the U.S. armed forces has weighed in about as forcefully as ever to force a change in direction.

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## Documentation

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# General Hoar: Going Into Iraq Was a ‘Bad Idea’

*On Oct. 25, 2006, Gen. Joseph Hoar (USMC-ret.), the former Commander-in-Chief of the Central Command, appeared on the Joey Reynolds Show on WOR-Radio, along with former CNN military correspondent Chuck De Caro and EIR senior editor Jeffrey Steinberg. These are excerpts from the lively, and sometimes heated discussion.*

**De Caro:** If the generals leading CENTCOM, or the CINC, or the COCOMM and the DEPCOCOMM, if they *really* disagreed with [the Iraq war and occupation policy—ed.], why didn’t they simply resign? Answer that question, please?

**Hoar:** Yes. This is a very difficult problem and one that I’ve written about. And there’s no easy answer to it, because, as I mentioned earlier, our civilian leadership is responsible for making the decisions.

And it’s interesting that we went through this same issue with the Vietnam War. Gen. Harold Johnson, of course, in a session at the Marine Corps Command Staff College, in which I was present as a student, was asked this question by an Army officer in the class. And he said, “The reason I didn’t resign was I thought I could do more good by staying in the Army and fighting for what I knew needed to be done.” But in his memoirs, he said that his greatest regret was that he didn’t resign in protest. And I think we’re facing that right now.

There have been some general officers that have retired, which is different from resigning, rather than staying on and continuing to be a part of the way the war has been prosecuted.

**Reynolds:** Well, are you feeling that you are disappointed, so therefore, you have to withdraw? I know withdrawal is different from retreat. So, are you feeling that you had to do that, because of consent? You know, you withdraw your consent to go along, so you are now at a place where you’re retired and you’re outspoken?

**Hoar:** As of today, I’ve been involved directly almost on a daily basis with the Middle East for now 18 years. And you know, people like Tony Zinni and myself, who had some sense of that region and what was possible and what wasn’t possible. All of us had a chance to speak. I testified three times before Senate committees—the Foreign Relations Committee and the Armed Services Committee—and said it was a bad idea in 2002, and everybody said, “Thank you very much, General,” and most of these guys went ahead and voted in favor of going to war. And many of them said things during that run-up that I’m sure they would not like to have repeated today.

**Reynolds:** I want to ask you something about the French. They had that region in homeroom, the Foreign Legion; and the British certainly, they’ve had it for a long time. So, those guys have some wisdom. The English are on our side, I guess, or we’re on their side, however you look at it. But the French never really thought it was a good idea, and they were vocal about it. . . .

**Hoar:** Well, let me offer some thoughts on that, too, if I may.

You know the French were involved in two major counterinsurgency wars in the post-World War II era: one in Vietnam—or in Indo-China, because it really extended beyond Vietnam—and the other in Algeria. And the Algerian one is really important, because the army in Algeria was successful militarily. They whipped the intelligence problem. They had 50,000 Algerians working for them in their intelligence operation as spies. They killed hundreds of thousands of Algerians in battle, and the President of the Republic of France, a former soldier, a guy named de Gaulle, said: “We can’t do it. This is a political problem and the only solution is for the French army to withdraw and give Algeria its independence.”

And so, the French have been over this ground before, just as we have, in Vietnam, by the way.

**Reynolds:** Right. That’s why I said that.

**Hoar:** Yes. And they have learned by this experience. They were occupied during the Second World War. They fought an insurgency during the Second World War, and they come to a very different conclusion than we do. President Chirac fought as a lieutenant in Algeria, he had personal experience with this sort of thing.

And if you read the British experience in Iraq, from 1917 until 1930, you realize how futile their effort was. Winston Churchill, who was the Minister for Colonial Affairs, described Iraq as an “ungrateful volcano.”